

About the book

The author has taken as his subject an exegesis of human suffering and the ways and means of escaping it. It is perhaps the oldest subject to rock man's intellect, oldest but ever fresh for suffering continues. He speaks inspiringly, and in verse -a reason why the jottings deserve the light of day.

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OF TRUTH AND DELIVERANCE

(A journey from agony to hope)

[In 2686 inspired verse-lines]

by
Dr. MADHU SUDAN MOOKHERJEA
[Formerly Reader in English,
Bhairab Ganguly College, Calcutta]

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For ten long years**

**And also to
All those
Whom I tried to love, but failed**

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the author

M. S. Mookerjee

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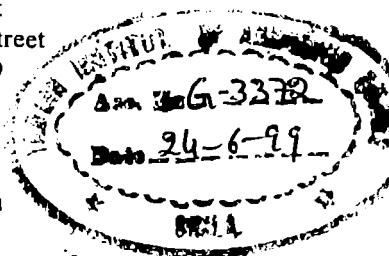
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FOREWORD

This venture of speaking on Truth and Deliverance, on Reality and Unreality, may seem overambitious in a person from the discipline of literature because it is not his natural field. But the Lord did Condescend to accept the services of the squirrel in building His bridge over the sea of Ignorance and redeeming Truth taken captive by the Demons. So this humble effort to instil transcendental knowledge in free verse may find due excuse from the readers. If it leads to moral and spiritual re-awakening in only one of them, my pains will be adequately rewarded.

May I also note here the inspiration behind the writing of the book. Once I heard of a controversial book called Satanic Verses. I had no Knowledge of its contents. But the title struck me as very, very odd. Why take the trouble of writing about Satan and his thoughts? Was it not more useful to write about God and His Grace? So came the Beatific verses or Philosophic verses in answer to the imaginary Satanic Verses. The verses were composed on the upper deck of a double-decker state bus by the author exhausted after his day's labour evening after evening travelling from Shyambazar to Gol Park. The book was so called till the other day. But my publisher (Who is my dear wife) tells me that the name does not indicate the contents. So a change had to be made reluctantly. With a deep, deep bow to the readers.

5/4 A.P.C. Park
Bagha Jatin, Calcutta-86

Madhu Sudan Mookherjee
25 December, 1998

God is.

God is Truth and God is Law

God is Absolute Truth and Absolute Law.

You and I and it is God.

God is *isness* Absolute—

Our *isness* is His,

But our *wasness* is not His,

Nor our 'to be' as to be is His.

8

Who coughed there? It is He.

Who laughed, who wept, who sneered?

It is only He, the Absolute He.

Who stole, who blasphemed, who killed?

It is only He, the Absolute He,

Catch him, judge him, lynch him!

No, you can hardly see him now, he's gone!

15

He appears and disappears

In the billionth part of a lightning

And leaves a long trail of a shadow behind.

You punish not Him but only a wraith,

You punish in shade a chimera.

You punish a non-existent Ego merely.

21

The Absolute He is beyond—

The day and night, the sun, the moon and the stars,

He is beyond 2 O'clock and 12 O'clock,

Beyond causes and their consequences,

Beyond justice and its miscarriage.

Beyond wealth, its terrible uses and abuses

Beyond man as man and bird as bird

Indeed, He is both Absolute zero and Absolute all.

29

Truth and Untruth are two poles—
 They lie merged in each other;
 God is Truth, His creation Untruth,
 By Untruth, Truth reveals itself,
 By itself, Untruth is naught,
 Being in Truth, it makes a brave show. 35

In Untruth, there can be no dimension, .
 No length, or breadth or height
 No east or west or south or north,
 No past or present or future
 No eating and digestion and growing up,
 No getting and spending and accumulating
 No birth or death or re-birth following death,
 Yet there is all this because of the subliminal Truth. 43

Knowledge of Truth is impossible
 Because knowledge implies a knower
 And there can be no knower or known,
 Like all other actions—
 The action of knowing is incomprehensible.
 Knowledge of Untruth is possible and it's important,
 Because we must see its negative character;
 The negative flows in a circuit to positive
 And flows back again, simultaneously.
 The *Lingam*, the symbol of Truth,
 Is in a fixed union with Untruth,
 The union is Amrita or deathlessness
 And beyond Amrita is Truth. 56

Our consciousness is a messy thing,
 It makes fun of the fundamental
 Producing colourful images of the One,
 Deceiving Self and the selves
 Simulating growth, decay and death
 With Hope as its ally,

And it is the precious little we are masters of,
The world is in our consciousness.

64

Our wakeful consciousness is a fake
With an average life-span of sixteen hours,
And the world is no more than a writing on water,
Because it cannot stay non-intermittent—
It is non-intermittent only by report
And the report is patently false.
Because the individual disappearance of the world's a fact,
It follows that there is a communal disappearance also,
Or disappearance would be meaningless.
We cannot see things beyond our ken,
Although the sages can.
The fact that they can
Proves that our consciousness is interpenetrable,
It is, in effect, one,
And the barrier of matter is a make-belief,
Except in the consciousness itself
It is non-existent.

81

Paradoxically, our dream-consciousness is more potent.
The totality of wakeful consciousness
Is dissolved and held at fingers' tips
And then re-arranged to form the dreams.
In dreams consciousness asserts its own supremacy,
Its enjoyment of self is open and unchallenged.
The fallacy that there is more than I
Is dimmed and hence
'I' can play with 'I' ness.

90

It's a pity that wakeful consciousness gropes in error
And halts to see the wraith of second
And fights in the shade a battle won already,
And dies pining in sight of victory.

94

For such befoolment, what solace?
 For such confusion, what clear light?
 It is in the recognition of the fact
 That the two consciousnesses must vanish periodically
 And prove what they really are—
 A make-belief, a high drama in the self itself. 100

In deep sleep is our third consciousness
 More potent than even the second
 For in it, all experience is dissolved
 And stored carefully for instant use.
 It's the fountain-head of creation
 Held captive by its sheer potency.
 An actor badly needs rest
 After a show is over,
 And the wakeful dream and the sleepful dream
 Are mere shows with which
 The self recreates himself,
 And then plunges headlong
 To a dissolution in slumber. 113

In slumber, the self does not see or hear or desire,
 He enjoys his own potency
 At the intersection of Untruth and Truth. 116

Still, the Untruth does not melt into Truth
 And declare the end of show,
 For then the game is cheaply called,
 And it's beneath the dignity of Truth
 So to betray itself. 121

The three consciousnesses in their whirl
 Bring into effect this world—
 This grand magic of make-belief
 The phantasy of Divine *Maya*.
 She is a dancer who decorates her stage well.
 And delights and deceives in a thorough manner.

Yet the dancer is a shy girl
Who will disappear—
The moment you see her identity
And call her bluff.
But you cannot do so
Till you've rid the three consciousnesses
By bleeding them white methodically
In a prolonged and sustained bid to be in Truth. 135

The fourth consciousness is divinely given
When we've studied and rejected
The chimerical other three.
But in holding that there hangs a question
As to who is giving whom.
As such, we identify ourselves
With our body and mind and our past,
But in the Self, there is no body, no mind and no past,
As a result, there is no prayer and rejection
No working towards Salvation—
In our essence, we're Salvation itself. 146

Nevertheless, praying is all important,
We get what we pray only—
Praying to God within us,
To God around us,
To God inhering
The three consciousnesses we intend to reject. 152

The business of rejection, therefore,
Is a mere denial of the "I"
Limited to the body, mind and the world.
When the denial is total and complete
The fourth consciousness flashes from within
Like the sun that has been hidden under dark clouds,
The "I" expands into infinity
And melts into an unbreakable bliss.

The body is thereafter unnecessary
Except as a valued beacon to others.
It is surrendered at will
And may be picked up again at will
If the sage so desires
For service to humanity groping in darkness.

166



Nature, the Non-Absolute is a miracle
 Surpassing human thought.
 It is creative imagination of God
 Born of the desire of multiplying Himself.
 God is One, His imagination One
 The miracle is that One is One
 All the time, although creation is complete.
 His imagination is never without Him,
 It is never outside Him, and
 Being mere imagination, it is limitless. 10

The Non-Absolute destroys itself every moment
 To re-create the altered form the next
 And such a moment is infinitesimal
 So that we have an illusion of stability.
 In the midst of growth and decay
 Creative imagination is intermittently whole and simultaneous
 Howsoever slowly it may manifest itself
 To the clouded human eye. 18

The illusion of matter is most damaging
 For there is never any matter to speak of.
 The three 'Guna's or primordial tendencies
 Produce the illusion of matter—
 The 'Satwa', 'Raja' and 'Tama'
 The desire to know, to act and to sleep,
 The first leading to pleasure,
 The second to displeasure,
 And the third to a state of depression.
 The first exposes and enlightens,
 The second gives a restless driving force,
 And the third envelopes in darkness of ignorance. 30

The three 'Gunas' or basic tendencies

The preponderance of the first
 Makes one quietly active and happy,
 Of the second makes him restless and passionate,
 And of the third, lazy, unintelligent and ill conceiving.
 The 'Guna's are always together, always fighting
 Bound in a constant rivalry for supremacy,
 They're mixed in varying proportions
 To produce the variety in creation.
 The so called inanimate nature
 Is teeming with life overcome by sleep.
 Men, birds and beasts are beset
 By a keen desire to act and impress upon,
 As a result they are perpetually restless.
 The Gods in Heaven are lovers of knowledge
 And act in peace in a disciplined manner.

45

The combination of three things, divisible infinitely
 Will produce infinite variety,
 And therefore no two leaves are the same,
 No two men either.
 This variety is a trap for human intelligence,
 It makes him forget the One he is looking for.
 It makes him romantic longing for strange new things,
 Looking and looking and never resting
 Till death starts knocking at the door,
 Variety in nature is man's undoing.

55

From being to becoming

The creative imagination in its potent state
 Is but a perfect blend of the 'Guna's
 Held inactive by their very equality;
 An explosion splits them up and sets one 'gainst the other
 So that there's at once a wide spectrum of tendencies
 With an urge to expand in its every particle,
 And every particle splits into two—the taker and the taken,

The 'taker' is a cluster of sense organs
 The 'taken' is the world imagined by them,
 And the devolution has its own stages,
 The miracle in its working is rational enough. 66

First comes the essence of sound
 Within which space develops in its elemental form.
 From sound comes the finer sense of touch
 Within which is the elemental air.
 From that air evolves a quintessential form
 Within which lives the elemental fire.
 From that fire comes the essence of water
 And from that essence the fine sense of smell
 Within which develops the microcosm of earth. 75

And as these go down from the essential ether
 To essential earth,
 They gather the qualities of the former elements.
 Thus, ether corresponds to sound alone,
 Air to sound and touch,
 Fire to sound, touch and form
 Water to sound, touch, form and liquidity
 And lastly, the essential earth carries with it
 The properties of sound, touch, form, juiciness and smell. 84

The three 'guna's are inwoven
 In all these five elements
 So that the creative process relentlessly proceeds.
 The 'satwic' parts of the five elements
 Yield the five sense-organs respectively
 Of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling.
 They again boil together to produce
 The mind and the intellect that must work within. 92

The Rajasik parts produce the five organs of action—
 Of speaking, holding, walking, reproducing and excreting:

They again boil together to produce
 The five 'prana's or life breaths
 Covering, sustaining all parts of the human globe
 We have thus a structure of seventeen finer essences
 Which constitute the astral body,
 Being at bottom creative imagination
 This body, golden and pregnant of matter,
 Can multiply itself into million similar forms.

102

From this astral body which is always within,
 We come to the material body or globe
 Through mutual assimilation and preponderance.
 An element's half combines with one-eighths of the other four
 To create the material from the astral—
 And so we have earth, water, fire, air and ether—
 As perceived by the five senses,
 And even then, perceived within, not without
 Because a thing of imagination is perceived within only. 111

Thus the 'guna's are three fine magicians
 Constantly supplying the motives for action,
 Constantly varying, dancing, as it were, in a whirl.
 The 'Satwa' predominates in the morning at four or so
 After the night's sweet sleep is over.
 With the sun rising higher
 It is replaced by 'Rajas'
 Urging one to action and initiative.
 As the day wears away in the west
 The 'Satwa' takes over briefly for a while
 And then 'Tama' takes the reins over bringing the subject
 Behind the curtain for rest
 After sixteen hours of ceaseless acting.
 This is the norm, but men do vary it
 Only to find nature up against them.
 Therefore, study and meditation
 Is recommended in the early hours of the day
 With fasting to keep the 'Rajas' down.

At eight or so, a man is ready for work
 After he has received a hearty breakfast.
 Five or six hours of work
 Is most that a man should be forced to do,
 Because he was made not to feed and grow,
 But to think and expand.
 After the mid-day meal,
 A bit of rest is compulsory,
 Or the fight between 'Rajas' and 'Tama'
 Is too painful to bear.
 With sun declining
 The superiority of 'Rajas' crumbles away
 Unless propped up by cups and cups of beverage.
 Then 'Satwa' takes over briefly for a few hours
 Giving welcome chance for study, chanting and meditation.
 Hence begins the most trying time of the day.
 Tama in the form of sleep
 Comes to overpower the wakeful consciousness
 Leading men to dreams and desires
 Then leading him to full sleep
 To be brought back chained
 To another wakeful consciousness.

151

Sleep, its use

Sleep has been called the picture of death,
 And sleep of this sort is indeed so,
 Because it retains in great potency
 The germ of Ignorance or *Maya*.
 The evening therefore is recommended
 To be exclusively used for prayer and devotional songs
 So that by the grace of God
 Sleep may turn out to be what it is,
 A union with the Self itself,
 The Sat, Chit and Ananda,
 The One that is True, Existing and Blissful,
 Which arises on a negation of the wakeful consciousness,
 And of its protege, the dream, as false and chimerical.

164

Again in children 'Satwa' predominates,
 He is most light-hearted and happy,
 And ceaselessly active over his things
 But never fretting, never getting out of patience.
 Adolescents are hovering between 'Satwa' and 'Rajas'
 The cross-pull makes him behave so awkwardly.
 Adulthood shows dominance of 'Rajas'
 Driving men to restlessness and discomfort;
 His attempts at impressing himself on the world
 Often draw a blank making him crazy with anger.
 The declining sun of old age
 Is covered by the darkness of 'Tama'
 Except in those in whom wisdom
 Has led to ripeness.

178

Maya or Illusion

Man, therefore, is a helpless float
 Tossed by the waves of 'guna's
 On the eternal sea of Ignorance.
 His ego is his undoing
 Which makes him identify himself
 With the evanescent material body
 And his mind with the promptings of the 'guna's';
 He forgets that these are mere visions
 Which the Self sees with pleasure.
 Instead, the taker part runs after the taken
 To clasp it fully in a blind rage;
 But the grasp is eluded ever
 Because the taker and the taken
 Are vanishing continually and getting re-born—
 A phenomenon we misname 'change'.

193

The role of ego in man is mysterious
 This microcosm helps him see the world
 In such wildly varied forms and colours.
 The baby who has no ego sees the world, a lump.

He has no power to distinguish,
 He has not learnt to say. "I" and "mine".
 As the sense of "you" and "I" come to him
 He finds the world rather attractive.
 He creates it, in fact, to his predilections,
 And fills it with things he can love or hate,
 Matching a thing in imagination with its opposite.
 We know things by their opposites only
 As light by darkness or good by bad,
 So child creates things opposed to his I-sense.
 He thinks he receives impressions of things
 All coming from outside himself
 Whereas, in fact, his I-sense calls for the opposites
 And creates slowly this magic world of variety
 Merrily within his own self itself.
 Anything big has something small as its opposite,
 Anything white has something dark against it,
 So he has it all—earth, water, fire and air,
 The fields, the rivers, the hills and the sea,
 In this charming dream, he calls out—"how sweet!"
 And so spreads his hand to catch 'em one by one. 218

Take the ego away, the balloon bursts at once—
 The very purpose of birth is undone.
 We are born to pursue pre-fixed sensual aims
 And go through a living death with bliss behind,
 Our stream of consciousness is a stream of desire
 A long, painful continuing death
 Where desires are met through nothingness alone. 225

We thank God when a fraction of desire is met
 We fail to see it's but a fraction of death itself.
 So the river of death runs through fields of fancy.
 We think, we act, and so earn rewards
 And often admit a punishment as just.
 Thus on and on, and round and round

We roll on in a vicious circle,
 Created by our own ego and desire.
 If ego can be made to vanish in the blue,
 We'll have a rare glimpse of the stratagem of nature,
 We'll see it all as the work of imagination.
 There is no deed or doer
 There is no reward or retribution,
 The vicious circle is not there at all,
 Only a dreamer dreaming it all.

The Search for Happiness

The rage is mainly for three things
 Happiness, children and wealth.
 Happiness in the sense of material or mental pleasure
 [The two are one and the same thing]
 Is a mirage that attracts and kills.
 The senses carry the pleasurable feelings
 To the mind and overpower it.
 Intelligence which sees beyond is submerged
 Under the hectic activity of the mind and the senses. 249

So it is that man is often times a monkey
 Restless through desire and dissatisfaction.
 Let us take a self-made man, established in life,
 He is steady and unruffled most of the times,
 But one morning his dress is not properly ironed
 Or he misses a delectable meal
 Through someone else's fault,
 Or a lucrative contract goes out of his hand,
 Or someone sneezed or coughed in the morning,
 And he frets and fumes for half a day.
 A happiness which is so easily breakable
 Is no happiness at all—
 It is the mirage man is running after
 To end in death with groaning. 263

Sex and its power

People say that sex is the central motivation
Behind all actions of man
As he is after it from his youth till dotage.
Whether he is led blindfolded by nature in this
For her own reproductive purposes
Is another matter.
To say this is not to say enough for man
Is too great to be this fool of nature.
The fact is man loves his Self—
The principle of love within, his God
Who loves him and draws him continually,
And being instinctively aware of the divinity of things
He feels impelled to love something or someone continually
In a misguided search for the Thing Itself.
Hence to a rake, sex is the thing of all things,
To a miser, money and to a moralist,
Immediate moral regeneration of the world.
In this mad hunt for an object of love,
Man has loved man or woman or dog or simply a baboon,
But in his love for a woman
Something else may get mixed up.
As stories can tell only of love,
Most of the stories tell of this love alone,
And so hetero-sexual love stands magnified
Beyond all normal proportions.

288

The Search for a Son

A woman appears before man
As an abundant source of sense pleasure,
(They are made so differently),
But in this man fails to distinguish
The inner source of his joy in a woman,
From what is purely superficial and external.
Instinctively he knows he can foil
Death's stratagem against him
By leaving a son behind, his other self.

To fulfil this desire for a son
 (In his urgent bid to perpetuate himself)
 Man needs the co-operation of a woman
 And hence is man's natural bondage.
 No wonder, the woman exploits it to the full,
 And holds her husband in tutelage—
 As far and as long as she can.
 In retaliation, man often ill-treats her
 And neglects her altogether or even deserts her
 When his chief object is fulfilled.
 Hence to purify and make selfless
 This heterosexual love is next to impossibility.
 As family life is based on such love
 Family life is often dull and desiccating.
 It often degenerates into an economic
 And physical relation merely
 With hardly any prospect of liberation.
 When the poets deplore the sorrows of life,
 They have in mind the maladjustments
 Between the father and the others in the family. 317

Family peace

A little co-operation brings comfort to all,
 A little sacrifice by someone or other,
 A little forbearance when things go wrong,
 A little awareness of the supreme fact
 That no one is really related to any one else
 Except so far as God resides in him or her. 323

To see love crumbling away to skeletons,
 And yet to continue co-habitation
 Is the horror of all horrors
 And there is no justification for such denial of the soul,
 Such death of life for mere living. 328

In a matriarchal society this was never permitted
 Mother being head she would call the slave to book

And even dismiss him
Whenever he failed in his approach of love.
But man being more swift-footed and intelligent,
Finally took revenge by assuming the control of society.
His first act was to confine women
To home, child-rearing and attending on his pleasures. 336

The Liberation of Women

Woman now wants to escape
From this unbearable position
And agitate for freedom through economic equality.
Her desire to rise above the mechanical bond
Is commendable if it can remain
Concomitant with a steady development of character.
Unfortunately, the social situation of to-day
Can't give protection to a single woman
Looking resolutely for love or God,
So far it can, it helps both her and man. 346

Having failed to generate this atmosphere of freedom,
Modern society has gone the other way,
Trying to prop up brittle marriages
With a general boosting up of sex.
Artists, poets, film-makers and clothiers
Have conspired to this end
And try to produce the illusion
That sex is the God we're bound to worship.
The illusion works up to a certain extent and age
Producing a profound despair thereafter. 356

The solution to this problem of the age
Is not far to seek, nor difficult to attain.
It is a little training in self-restraint.
A little training to swell the capacity to love.
When one human being approaches another
He goes to meet God in him or her
And selfless love is the key that opens the door.

Equipped with this self-restraint and love
 We may build a home that resembles heaven,
 And yet enjoy the fruits of the earth as well. 366

Unfortunately, over-eating breaks the chain of restraint,
 And turns innocent love into lust
 Closely followed by violence, his trusted servant,
 And then we see broken homes and battered spirits,
 Roving and putting family and society on fire. 371

The Search for Wealth

Then let's come to the subject of wealth
 And the mystery why man seeks it so hard.
 Not long ago, we had no agriculture
 And the regular production of crops. .
 In spite of strictly socialistic rules,
 Men often died of starvation
 [Which explains cannibalism]
 And the spectre of hunger hung close before his eyes.
 Agriculture solved the problem only partially,
 As it gave rise to property, kingship and exploitation. 381

The spectre of hunger is in our blood also,
 In a millionaire it lies deep within,
 Driving him to search for wealth and security.
 He does it blindly and excessively
 And never stops at any degree of surfeit.
 Only few men stand outside this mad circle
 And so they're called 'Bairagi' or other-worldly. 388

Moreover, his untenable position as patriarch
 Makes him seek wealth and power through wealth
 So that he can keep his 'harem' safe at all times.
 This has given rise to grasping money for money's sake
 And all the ills consequent thereupon,
 Including assassinations, bloody clashes and wars.

This has led to a mad race of technology
 To make security infinitely secured,
 A dangerous Gordian Knot which can't be loosened
 When a dire need comes on us for it.
 Why put earthy man so much above the earth?

399

But we cannot condemn man's lust for wealth,
 Just as we cannot condemn any activity of man,
 It would be making a basic mistake about his nature.
 Man is the child of *Amrita* or pure bliss,
 To seek joy continually is a 'must' for him.
 Unfortunately, he seeks it in the wrong places
 Till he knows who he really is.
 So man seeks joy in playing, hunting and mating,
 In eating delicacies and dressing like a snob,
 In travelling and seeing the unknown,
 In building a fortress full of wealth,
 And sometimes with his genius smiling upon him,
 In rendering free service to humanity,
 In acquiring knowledge of philosophy,
 Or in expressing himself through art.
 When his frustrated soul is blinded by rage,
 He finds joy in lying, torturing or killing,
 Or even in suffering a sea of agony.
 So man, a puppet in the hand of *Maya*,
 Carries on from his puberty to his death.

419

The Mystery of the Human Body

A simple solution is humbly suggested
 Although it is before us all the time,
 It is a close observation of this our body
 And how it functions from birth till death.
 In itself the body is useless, dead stuff,
 Subject to decay and dissolution.
 It functions with the life-breath inside
 Becoming de-funct when the breath is out.
 The life-breath, the more precious element,

Must, therefore, have a setting elsewhere,
Where it may live in a lighter atmosphere
Or how could it come and incorporate itself
In a tiny sperm of flesh and blood?
Life, therefore, is something of a circle
Which periodically assumes the burden of flesh and blood ,
Then disburdens itself in a natural course.
Fear of death is thus the silliest of follies
And men have shed such fear again and again
Pursuing a noble goal or ideal.
To do so continually is the secret
Can uplift man from his present debasement. 440

In the absence of such a noble goal,
We can still overcome the fear of death
Through an age-old effective prescription.
We may picture to ourselves our own dead body
Lying prone on the floor before us.
As before, we must do it continually
And not let the vision give us the slip.
A part of the mind is set apart for this
Even when it's busy doing other work.
Mentally, we allow the body to rot and decompose
With other concomitant factors attending it.
Slowly we may merge with that body itself
And mentally be one with that hideousness.
This will be enough to drive the fear of death
To that limbo where it deserves to go.
All serious work begins only after that. 456

The Way to Liberation

Hoarding of useless wealth should go first,
The desire to decorate the body in a silly way
To distinguish it from those of others
Follows as its corollary.
The desire to leave an offspring behind
To perpetuate the line indefinitely

Is so deep-rooted in human psyche
 That it is not eliminated except under a deep shock.
 Neither is it needed in any way
 If infatuation is kept under control.
 And indulgence in corrupt practices
 To see the boy or girl established in life
 Is the thing to be avoided at all cost—
 Even death from starvation is more welcome,
 And such resolution born of faith
 Never fails a man in a trying situation.

With the body-sense diminished continually,
 The urge to have sensual pleasure
 Loses its sharpness and sting,
 Although things are enjoyed in full, but reluctantly
 With perfect mental aloofness and joy.
 Occasional sacrifice of pleasure is then welcome
 It fills the actor with a happy feeling.
 Slowly the truth dawns on him
 That this body was really made as a sacrifice,
 For the gods and everything godly on earth.
 He begins then a newer blissful life,
 Melting his flesh and blood away in the service of man.
 The path is straight and truthful
 And once a man puts himself in it
 He builds up his character brick by brick,
 And character is the thing that accompanies him
 Till the dissolution of the universe itself.

489

The Setbacks

Undoubtedly, the setbacks are many.
 Once a man embarks on this bold course
 His ego is the thing that deludes him
 And pulls him back again and again.
 Instantly this path of self-sacrifice is taken
 The elements rush to him offering service.

His is better paid, better fed, and better looked after,
 Even his half-uttered wishes are automatically fulfilled,
 He feels and rightly, that he is one in ten thousand.
 It is time for his ego to catch him unawares
 And take him prisoner to his penthouse of senses;
 Such lapses in the spiritual path are so common
 That it makes the path look questionable.
 This is the delusion that blinds the unfortunate
 Towards what can really deliver the goods.
 Natural and social scientists believe in experimentation,
 So let's not grudge the spiritual scientist do the same.
 Let's not say if the path of the spirit could cure all ills
 Poverty and disease would have disappeared long ago,
 The fact that they remain calls for
 A social and administrative service
 For betterment of human lot.
 This is correct in so far as
 The social service is but a manifestation
 Of the spirit of sacrifice that is within.
 Bereft of that spirit within
 Social service assumes arrogance and hypocrisy,
 Providing ultimately shelter to corruption.
 Nevertheless, social service in any form
 Is welcome, for groaning man needs relief.

519

Poverty, how to remove it

The problem of poverty has stirred great men to action,
 To writing a new political philosophy,
 To organising charitable societies,
 To individual donations small or large,
 To co-operative movement for consumers,
 To violence, murder and banditry,
 But the problem is not yet fully solved.

526

Spiritualists think and rightly
 That the problem has been tackled from the wrong end.

Material poverty, being relative, is endless
For there are always men richer than you,
And they sharpen your desire for more.
Thus, mostly poverty is in the mind,
It is incurable through mere accumulation.
A searching light will show
That behind this universal mental poverty,
There is ignorance about who our fellows are.
We naturally think that our fellows are
Our competitors, rivals or even enemies
And we should glory in beating them hollow.
When we say that they are our brothers
God being the common Father of all,
We only mouth a truth we do not understand.

542

God and his children constitute one family
Indeed, it is one Self, mentally subdivided.
The divinity of man is a patent fact
Lost sight of when man thinks he is alone.
This is where poverty strikes its root
And spoils for good the well-being of man.
Man is never alone, he is with God
Which means he is with all matter and men.
Very truly someone's happiness is but his happiness,
And someone's misery is his own.
Still when someone is well-fed and pleased
Another may be forced to starve and weep.
And this erects the great barrier that spoils all peace.
In this crisis we must think of the basic oneness
And wait and pray till the worst is off.
A pot has a bit of sky in it,
And when it is moved, the sky appears moved also.
Again, the pot may be full of acrid smoke
Of which the rest of the sky is free.
But the sky remains where it is unique, and all embracing.
Our poverty lies in seeing the smoke only,
In feeling that the little bit of sky is personal to us.

And in not seeing the all embracing, eternal endless sky.
 If we could make our calculating small heart as large
 Our poverty would find no room to stay longer,
 So only by giving we receive manifold. 568

So our poverty comes from the ignorance of the fact
 That all men and all matter is but our own self
 And deserve to be loved as such.
 Or in other words. the innate sense of our divinity
 Such as a child has
 Brings for our use the elements needed for life.
 Lacking it, we are disconnected from the elements
 And can win them with hard labour only.
 Hence very rightly. the materialists recommend hard labour
 To fight poverty. but catching the problem by its tail only.
 The wisdom of the ages which has coined the word
 'Waste not, want not'. is on surer spiritual grounds,
 For it recommends the most careful use made
 Of the minutest food-particle or other articles of use,
 And that is one way of showing reverence for them. 583

But better than reverence is love
 Which means total identity with the object of love
 And love is the solution to all problems on earth
 Including the problem of poverty also.
 Under this porcess we are to love the elements
 In their minutest appearances
 And make proper use of them for the elements
 Which constitute our body and mind.
 Hence we have a farmer loving his land and manuring it,
 A teacher teaching till the student melts with the joy of learning,
 A statesman denying his self for his land.
 'nver these circumstances the spiritual poverty
 Is removed, and with it mental and material poverty also.
 For man is the child of *Amrita*
 And *Amrita* stands for infinite life and riches. 598

Then how can the child of *Amrita*
 Be unfed, unclothed, unsheltered?
 Is it because we've too many to look after?
 Past history, the stories in the Bible
 Prove the contrary. Men died of starvation
 Even when there were too few of them on earth.
 They still die to day with foodgrains rotting in the godowns,
 Lethargy and red-tapism do not explain it all.
 The sufferer has first exhausted himself,
 Spiritually and mentally of the iota of love
 For men and matter surrounding him.
 So they deny him in unison
 And let him sink and learn in his arrogance
 Hence he dies crying and starving.

612

Does it mean we should take up this posture
 He's served right, let him die?
 No—a hundred times no, for as human beings
 Our duty is to love, love and love
 Leaving it to God to punish as He thinks fit.
 The talisman of love works miracles
 When we know how to use it with intelligence.
 Love of men as mere physical and mental entities
 With all the age-old inhibitions and barriers
 Is unlikely to achieve perfection,
 The love of man for God is the thing
 That works miracles even on earth.
 So, we must see God in the man
 We are to serve and love
 And then proceed with awe and reverence.
 The man thus venerated and served in the meantime
 Is slowly acquiring divinity that was innate in him.
 Indeed creation was made to appear earthy
 So that divinity could express itself through inter-action
 And be a source of joy to all concerned.

632

Today, the world is bent on removing poverty

Through physical and material means,
 New projects are undertaken with zest
 And rehabilitation goes on continually.
 The efforts in countries where men are patriotic
 Succeed prodigiously, in the rest
 Corruption, a Giant, swallows all charitable efforts.
 From the national and social angle
 The approach is correct and praiseworthy
 Although, it leaves something to be desired.
 In this regard, the universal belief is true,
 In respect of food and wealth
 The gods supervising over our senses
 Are the real givers,
 Men are humble and energetic takers only
 Hence *yagnas* with the sacred texts correctly uttered
 Are recommended to please the gods.
 This is to be done with single-minded devotion
 Till be god of nature is moved to relent.

651

The Yagna for the removal of poverty

The Vedas recommend a sacred mono-syllabic word
 The essence of all creation and all knowledge,
 The invocation to God Himself,
 The source of endless power—‘*Aum*’.
 Its reverential utterance is the best *yagna*
 That we can all and everytime perform.
 Its efficacy, all sages aver, is too, too high,
 And can remove poverty in the shortest of time.
 No one is barred, so there’s no harm trying.
 All that we need to do is to sit easy,
 And, of course, in straight-backed position
 And clear the mind of all the imbecilities
 That rush to it continually,
 And utter worshipfully the sacred syllable
 Twenty-one times at every sitting.
 The sound should come from the bottom of our structure,
 And should’nt be a loud-mouthed insincere thing.

668

The Aum in rescue of poverty

The little sound *Aum* is a myriad minded thing
 Both the symbolic and actual essence of the cosmos
 Whose potentialities one is unable to tell
 In a volume of thousand pages.
 To worship it only for material needs
 Would have been an unworthy thing
 But that the pursuit of the spirit with a free mind
 Is possible when the minimum material needs are met.
 Yes, 'minimum' is the key-word in the path of spirit
 For as we increase our needs, we only harden our bondage. 678

The humbler trades

In this our examples are the men in humbler trades
 Who retain their humanity till death,
 And some of them are men of the highest excellence.
 A cobbler humbly repairs your shoes,
 And charges a moderate fee according to his scale,
 He never knows how to ask for more,
 His mind is untouched by the dazzle of wealth around,
 He never wonders why a part of it should not be his.
 A handcart-puller charges according to his rate,
 Eats the grossest of food and sings for the rest of the day.
 He is mortally unhappy when the dealer under whom he works
 Forces him to supply goods of inferior variety,
 Or instructs him to take a little less in amount
 The thing not contracted for by the buyer.
 An unskilled labourer or a landless farmhand
 Does not swing on the pendulum of hope and despair;
 He thanks God for each morsel he eats or distributes,
 As a result, his happiness is unpolluted
 Like the happiness of those around him.
 Suppose you break his 'delusion' and inspire him to revolt,
 You only spoil his happiness for good.
 Should exploitation go unchallenged, you would ask,
 No, exploitation is rooted in Ignorance,

Specially, ignorance of the power of spirit,
 We must attack the monster there
 With the power of spirit and prayer;
 We must remember—human action is based on 'dharma'
 (That is, an intuitive sense of right and wrong
 Only rarely eclipsed in a man not mad,)
 And as we plan an action, must ask if it's 'dharmic'.
 Trying to do supposed good through evil means
 Is a silly mistake that bring the evil in other forms
 Often we pretend such 'benevolence' to fill our own pocket. 711

In case we had too many thus contented with a little,
 Thus benumbed by the opium of religion, as it were, ..
 Would it increase the social divide more,
 Making the total picture absolutely unseemly?
 Suppose it is so, give rest to your queasy conscience,
 If you have made nobody poorer by your conduct
 Rather have tried to relieve it as far as possible
 You need have no nightmare about poverty—
 Poverty will take care of itself.
 Only you must shed the misconception
 That the poorer men belong to a lesser degree.
 Poverty or wealth, absence or plenitude of scholarship,
 Being within the nimbus of power,
 Or being in its centre or totally outside it—
 Being a paragon of beauty or a Caliban in ugliness
 In the eye of God and His judgement
 Are factors utterly nugatory
 Utterly without relevance
 As to the personal excellence of the man. 730

Love how it works

These earthly considerations may assume such importance
 As they can blind us to unspoilt humanity.
 To the fact that love is the sole consideration
 On which God built His universe.
 Thus, the degree of personal excellence

Always is the degree of love inherent in the soul.
 The animals and birds have it naturally,
 They're one-pointed in their devotion to love,
 So there's hardly any psychic problem with them.
 In man, factors extraneous to love are superimposed
 So that his actions are often indefensible,
 And sometimes noble and exemplary.
 Suppose, a father runs his small family with love,
 But he creeps into a desire of social excellence,
 Which makes a better standard of living most needful.
 Being a good man, he works harder and harder
 Till, his work engrosses him so totally
 That his family disappears from his view,
 Here love is negated by an emotion originating in love.
 Suppose, the same man is tempted to take bribes,
 He silently puts loads on his conscience
 Which slowly transforms his psyche
 Into that of a monster that he never was,
 His family is struck dead when the 'wreckage'
 Comes home after a long, long time.

755

Society

The society of man is vast compared with that of animals,
 Hence the problems for him are so complicating.
 In India, there are the Hindus, the Muslims and the others
 Separated from each other by personal ritualistic traditions,
 Then, across the ritualistic barrier there are
 The Hindusthani, the Bengali, the Telegu, and so on
 Separated by their mother-tongue unintelligible to each other,
 Thousand different faiths and philosophies,
 Thousand different dialects—
 Commingle in one geographical unit
 Partitioned politically in nineteen forty-seven.
 The humblest here look after themselves and their families.
 And do not feel any call for patriotism,
 Even a foreign invasion fails to stir them into action.

769

Politics in India

So people who have their own axes to grind,
 Who have the inordinate ambition to seize power
 Preach political philosophies alien to Indianness
 Which always was and is, toleration.
 With money provided by unscrupulous businessmen,
 They seek to 'rouse' the dormant populace
 And 'educate' them—
 To love their community and hate the others,
 To love their class and hate and rob the others,
 To love their linguistic group and ignore the others.
 In all these what they demand is extension of love
 Although it results in expansion of hatred.
 So we have political clashes, communal riots, linguistic divides
 In this old land of peace and wisdom.
 Do Nature want to eliminate excess population
 Through sowing the seed of dissension and hatred?
 If man failed to beat Nature in her game,
 He were hardly fit to be called 'man'.
 The evil legacies of partition are hard to overcome,
 They spoil any good move to correct the imbalance.
 But both at the state and national levels
 'Love' has to be siphoned to correct channels
 Or we destroy ourselves trying to do us good.
 With technology holding out the boon of prosperity,
 The Indians may forget their tradition of peace and contentment,
 And try to settle old scores wherever they can.
 And plunge deeper and deeper into the darkness of non-love. 796

Purity of Love

Hence 'Love' must shine in its purity always, everywhere
 Irrespective of caste, creed, language, class or sex,
 Irrespective of any political following whatsoever.
 The extension of this pure love is all the solution we need,
 And the extension does damage to no one.
 'Those who are not with us are against us'
 —Say the militant political parties out to catch power.

Those who will not love for the sake of love alone,
 Those in whom love is dictated to by selfish motives
 Are with the Devil already, say we.
 Hence such political game is mostly Devil's game
 To take man bound to his damnation,
 Still the game is played with such enthusiasm everywhere. 809

Nature procreates with love and damns with love also—
 It is man's duty to build a heaven thereof,
 And for the purpose we need a few pure men
 Who may blaze the path in the universal darkness of sin.
 Love is the torch used by these pure men
 In smaller or greater areas to which they belong.
 Love for all around is their motto, they desire men
 To be placed above suffering, humiliation, disease or starvation.
 Love helps them to see the truth behind doubts and dilemmas
 And achieve perfection by slow degrees. 819

An ideal man & the rule of chastity

Such a man is a strict fighter all along
 He has to fight forces within and without,
 A relentless, unceasing battle.
 The desires of the flesh are ready to take him prisoner,
 And lead him down a flue, so that,
 The hope of coming out is soon given up as impossible.
 This is man's chiefest enemy, being a tool used by nature
 For her own ulterior purposes.
 Nature blindly ascribes this desire in excess,
 So that failure is put out of the question.
 Here man must behave as lord of nature
 If he desires to avoid the fate of a slave.
 Sages have discovered a sacred rule—the rule of chastity
 Strict fidelity to the marriage bond—
 An institution unknown to the birds and beasts.
 But given to man for his liberation.
 There are glaring instances of breaches of this rule
 Holidays enjoyed, sanctioned or unsanctioned.

Of torture mostly by men on women,
By women on men with artful means
On the strength of this hoary custom.
So laws have been framed to loosen the bond as far as possible,
And they now want to convert it
To a mere certificate of co-habitation.
The extension of liberty in the personal life
Without upsetting the apple cart of social peace
Is welcome provided we don't give the Demon a new scope,
The Demon of sex is at the door demanding entry continually,
He knocks, knocks and knocks
Till we're o'erpowered by our sense of hospitality.
Our role is to be uncivil to such knocks,
And keep our head high in air
Admitting him only on the basis of mutual choice,
Rarely, rarely and even more rarely
Within, of course, the salutary marriage bond.
Sowing the wild oats has been recommended
As part of experience to be gathered by youth,
It only hardens, debases and spoils his purity
Making him unfit for the romance of life.
It is best to remain clear and die clear,
Of a Demon who must be given some scope in life.
Total continence on a vow as in hermits,
Or out of shame as in bachelors and widowers,
Often leads to depravity and sin
Worse than any degree of libertinism—
The rules are useless if the mind does not cooperate. 865

The Chariot of Life

'Watch your mind' is a useful warning.
For it navigates the ship of the body
In the most haphazard and disorderly manner.
It sours the day or sweetens it as it pleases.
The mind again is drawn by ten unruly horses—
Five organs of perception and five of action.
The eye delights naturally in certain scenes

And shrinks from certain others.

Hence it has the tendency to take the mind

To those places where the lovely scenes are present,

It o'erpowers the mind to bow to its will often.

Suppose, it is a scene of gambling where money is in the air.

Mind consents to stay as long as the eye pleases to watch

Till the enemy Greed takes over Intelligence

And involves the man in the game that spells ruin.

Thus, the eye needs a training to be given by Intelligence

To shun such scenes of temptation.

882

The Tongue

The same applies, mutatis mutandis,

To the other senses of touch, smell, hearing and taste.

The tongue is at once an organ of perception and of action,

It is the in-built enemy man lives with all his life.

As an organ of taste it craves the sweetest delicacies

As soon as it has the slightest knowledge of any.

The Mind and Intelligence cut out for far nobler tasks

Have to remain busy supplyng the orders placed by the tongue.

They're even persuaded to deceive, steal and lie.

As an organ of action, it dances a macabre dance

From morning till bedtime uttering a basket of nonsense *merely*.

The nonsense kills the little sense of reality

The mind can collect after much hardship,

And hence life floats on a sea of nonsense and trivialities

Misdirected by the words the tongue need not have aired.

Still, there are greater dangers than this.

The tongue can inflict such a deep wound on a friend,

That a life-time may be wasted seeking reconciliation,

On an enemy, it rankles and produces bad blood.

Very strangely, the same tongue using honeyed words

May act as the man's best friend in a world of neutrals,

But better still, with the name of Lord dancing on it

And dancing continually,

It carries him safe through this and the other world.

906

The Mind

The mind's real task is to harness the horses
And keep them under continuous control
Ignoring the impulsiveness of the senses
To go as they please.

The horses bring in the wild thoughts—
The images of the milieu they want to breathe in,
Forcing the chariot to be in a perpetual fox-trot.
The wise mind, however, knows
That it is merely a controlling agent,
To be dictated to by Intelligence
That takes his cue from the soul,
The Master that sits regal in the chariot.
The Master has all the past and future in His bosom
In an incipient divine form,
Allowing their slow, inexorable manifestation
Through a confused Intelligence and a deluded mind.
This mind-control through an awareness of this
Is an art we must learn to live
A noble, trouble-free life.
For mind binds us hand and foot
To give us over to *Maya*.

Maya or Ignorance develops first round our body
As we watch it grow from so little to so big.
Fire burns it, water or moisture makes it damp,
A gust of cold wind gives it the freeze,
A gentle wind or shower refreshes it like anything,
And a plate of good food goes a long way
To put vigour and fresh energy into it.
So our thoughts cling to it
When not diverted by elements outside us
And so we use the elements to further its growth.
We do it as a matter of duty
Till we are blinded to the real aim of our body or the mind.
This is the delusion we must avoid at all costs.
To control the mind we must see what it is.

It is best described as a stream of consciousness,
 Conscious thoughts and desires woven into a bizarre design
 Floating in a current which appears as Time,
 Although Time is non-functioning and hence non-existent.
 Fulfilled or unfulfilled, the thoughts and desires die out
 To be replaced by fresh thoughts and fresh desires,
 And it is miraculous how we discard the old.
 If such is the nature at least of the conscious mind
 By giving all-out importance to it
 Are't we hugging a corpse with a blind rage?
 Fortunately the mind has the power to say 'no'
 To the thoughts and desires,
 No, no, no, no, again and again
 And the result is a lightning expansion
 Of the heart's sky within,
 Because the thoughts and desires are clouds
 That cover that resplendent sun, the soul.

、 958

The idea may seem preposterous, because normally,
 The mind makes all the plans and takes all the decisions
 Which would seem impossible with the mind blanketed out.
 It is not really so, but we think that way
 Because of a confusion between the manager and his agent.
 The Intelligence is the charioteer of the human chariot,
 The mind's function is to whip the senses
 To keep them under control,
 And in the path dictated to by the manager.
 The trouble begins when the manager
 Relies too solely on his agent
 And accepts his promptings as his own wish--
 So the chariot is driven helter-skelter through mud and mire.
 The right course is to drive the chariot through God
 God as manifested in every article, man, beast and bird.
 The mind then has no function but to concentrate
 On whatever loving adoration the heart is engaged in.
 So the mind attains a desireless state
 And all thoughts extraneous to the worship are barred.

This one-pointedness to God in action
 Is the function the mind was made for.
 In meditation, the mind with his ten servants
 Must lie dormant letting Intelligence look inside on God,
 For *Amrita* or deathlessness is inside not outside. 982

The Ego

In this path of turning animality and humanity into divinity
 A naughty ghost creates endless obstacles
 And bars all the doors as soon as they are opened.
 His name is Ego or I-sense, its role laid bare already.
 Ego is in the centre of *Maya* or Ignorance
 Which is responsible for making this non-existent existence
 Appear so true and so vital.
 Ego divides the world of mere feelings or mere names
 Into two apparently water-tight compartments
 The world of sensations and the 'I' who is there to feel them.
 Factually, the 'I' is a mere assumption
 To allow the dreamer to continue the dream.
 The baby is free from this false I-sense
 And hence it is the happiest and loveliest of all creatures—
 The baby is naturally divine, he does not know
 That he has a body to look after,
 That he has a mind to catch desires with,
 That he has a locus standi, an establishment, a hell.
 The ego-less baby floats along the path of joy
 While the adult with load of Ego sinks and suffocates.
 It is pathetic to see, as Wordsworth said,
 How the child accepts the bane as his bliss
 Under the pressure of a foolish world that knows no other.
 The youth in the explosion of his pure passions
 Defies the ego, but breaks down—
 Because the world does not know what he means. 1008

Being equivalent to Ignorance Ego is endless.
 It is his shadow that doggedly follows man everywhere.
 He puts on a new shirt that dazzles and I-sense gets a fillip.

He has a promotion in his office with an increase in pay,
And the same catastrophe occurs.
His business successes make him blind
Because the Ego has the poker in his hand.
His wife, his home, his children, ancestry, scholarship or culture
Will whisper to him about his distinctiveness.
So hapless man sinks into falsehood,
He accepts tamely the blows of life on account of the Ego
Till the miserable dreamer sheds tears of anguish,
But does not see his own shadow
That causes each one of the unaccountable sufferings.
Being exhausted he turns to religion or spirituality for solace,
But soon his heart distends with pride
Because he takes the name of God more loudly or more often
Than many of his brethren who've come that way.
He pains his body more cruelly than the rest
And follows his new path with clever exhibitionism
And deludes himself to think that he is more successful.
Alas! he does not know the ghost of Ego makes him think so.
It is difficult, nearly impossible, to uproot this Ego
As it is the card that starts the game of existence.
The withdrawal of the card puts the dream to an end
And we wake up to see reality.
Since we must wake up sooner or later
There is no harm, rather greater joy
In trying it right now, this very moment.
The innocence of the baby indicates the method.
We are mere babies in the hands of God
And must consciously put ourselves there.
Everything we say or do, every credit we earn,
Or every discredit or humiliation we must undergo
Are all attributed to God
Who knows and does what is good for us.
Our function is to dissolve our I-sense
In the universal God-sense enclaspings us with joy and love
Our duty is only to enjoy the miracle and be silent. 1048

CHAPTER III

FROM NATURE TO TRUTH

The Non-Absolute is non-existent, the Absolute alone exists,
Therefore, it is our duty to be in the Absolute continually
—A task. not absolutely, but nearly impossible.

A blanket ban on the Non-Absolute jams nature's ways,
Lifting it may mean lifting the flood-gates to Untruth.

And it is possible to pass numerous lives away

Dreaming of this dilemma threatening to confront us.

Hence the call—Arise, awake and learn of the best of men,

For a thousand lamps may be lighted with one lamp alone,

But not with a piece of sod.

Fortunately, man is not utterly alone, utterly naked,

Aimlessly, helplessly, floating on this sea of Ignorance.

He has the word of God to live by—

A thing more precious

Than all the wealth ever accumulated.

Strangely, the word of God is the simplest

Of all the words ever spoken,

And has been uttered, again, and again and again.

It says—you are God. You are All, You are Love,

You are the manifestation of the Absolute

In all your thinkings, feelings and doings.

In some remotest way you're expressing His love

Even when you hate, kill or destroy.

You are never outside His love,

Love is your true being, and in love you must melt ultimately. 25

The Six Inner Enemies

In this journey from distinction to indistinctness.

From ego-centric scorn to egoless love.

In this transformation of the human to divine.

The powerful internal enemies come in a big way

They bind their master hand and foot

And deliver him up to the Devil.
 They bind both body and mind in devious ways
 But leave the soul untouched, covered up in clouds.
 They are six in number and only by overpowering them
 May we hope to build up that touchstone called character.
 The first is 'kama' or desire inhering in the breath itself
 Living with us and goading us to action
 Till we are to be goaded no more. 38

The desire is for a stable enjoyment of flesh
 And all palatable things through position, wealth and authority.
 The desire to perpetuate oneself is the subterranean force
 Which works mysteriously behind the surface desires.
 Although the stage of *Maya* is seemingly full
 It needs constant replenishment in the form of men,
 And we are called upon to play the vassal.
 All we need to do is to wake up to this servitude
 And say a firm 'no' to it.
 Naturally, it means that in the midst of entrances,
 We talk of exit, yes, exit if we can,
 For thanks to *Maya*, the stage shall never be left bare.
 It is a false and seeming exit,
 Ending a false but seemingly true entrance,
 For we are the One, the immutable, immaculate Self. 53

Service to Man

With the disappearance of desires, our action is not dead.
 It is liberated from the painful burden
 Of seeking a materially better, and yet better goal,
 Only this free action is worthy of man.
 This action is by and large for our fellows
 Save the efforts to protect our limbs from untimely decay.
 In extreme cases of total success in the path of spirit
 They do decay putting an end to the cycle of illusion. 61

Anger

Anger begins where patience ends, patience is not endless,
 And wisdom lies in finding out the limits of patience,
 And refusing, if possible, to approach those limits.
 Endurance is limited, and varies from man to man.
 It is dangerous to exceed the limits of mental endurance,
 As it is to exceed the physical.
 Pressure on mental endurance is constant and accumulating.
 Someone meets with two traffic jams one morning,
 Each time spoiling his work and putting him
 To humiliation in a delicate situation
 And only in the second the poor man's endurance is exceeded,
 He is angry, and instantly, unknown to himself
 A demon overtakes him from head to foot,
 He is henceforth another man, his throne's lost to the demon.
 Moreover, it being a part of his day's work,
 He cannot afford to escape the situation.
 In some cases the personal emotions are not involvd,
 Only our sense of justice is revolted
 At the flagrant breaches of Dharma or right conduct.
 The abdication nevertheless follows
 With consequent miseries for all concerned. 82

If any magic could save mankind from this demon of anger,
 It would multiply wealth through conservation alone,
 For it is out of anger that we burn, kill or destroy,
 And engage armies to fight our wars,
 Yet we accept the demon as a respectable acquaintance,
 And try to remain on speaking terms with him,
 There is absolutely no need to be so. 89

Frustration of a hidden or express desire,
 Is the fountain from which our anger flows.
 It is a good exercise to draw a map of our desires
 And locate the main cities and indicate the main rivers;
 There are uncharted hills and valleys

And dark forests to be indicated by dots,—
 It is our duty to try to draw the map
 Even if it tends to be as wide as the sky.
 The map of desire is a useful guide showing the arena
 From where frustration springs and holds us in its grip,
 And always from frustration comes anger,
 Oh! anger, anger, the tiger that devours man.
 A child's desire is for play, says the sage,
 And young men are on the look-out for young women only.
 The old men are great seekers of property and wealth
 And continually meditate on that subject—
 They forget they seek young women still
 With their hard-earned power and pelf.
 Even when renown is sought for its own sake,
 It is for that libidinous contact for which
 They have been hungering all the time.

110

Here is a great dilemma in sketching the map of desire—
 Hunger for sex has limitless potentialities in man
 Always providing the motivating force behind his actions
 Always embittering him with a series of frustrations.
 Sex is nature's mother, she shucks her continually;
 Even art is a sublimation of this desire for mating
 Where the search is on for a sexually perfect Woman or Man.
 The search is endless because there no such thing at all.

118

Sanyasins have tried to bridle the sex in various ways
 And each path has a special efficacy of its own,
 Suitable for a special type of men.
 One such way is to utter continually the name of Rama
 (Or any deity you reverently adore)
 For 'Rama' (one that gives pleasure) and 'kama'
 (One that gives pain through work) cannot co-exist.
 It is on record that a sage once converted a fallen woman
 Afflicted with a keen desire for mating with him,
 By making her wait and chanting the name of 'Hari' throughout
 the night.

128

An overwhelming onrush of the sex-impulse,
A thing recommended even for a healthy sex-life. 158

The spinal cord

The magic of the spinal cord in man is the secret
Behind these psycho-physical approaches to the problem.
In beast it is horizontal most of the times,
In man it is vertical when he stands or sits erect.
Somehow there is a duality of flow in the spinal cord
The flow upward raises man from his mere earhiness,
The flow downward binds him to nature's attractions
Turning him into a mere tool in the reproductive process.
The consciousness of this in the intermediate human stage
Is vital, or we can hardly call ourselves men. 168

The Yogis in India have observed through meditation
Six important 'circles' or centres of transcendental experience
All along this spinal cord from bottom upward
Through which the mind must hurtle heavenward.
Just below the genital and above the anus is the 'Mulādhāra'
A red lotus with four petals in which in a triangular seat
The creator resides embraced by his serpentine power
In a stalemate accumulating all the sex energy in man
Which makes this grand illusion of art, this world, possible. 177

Just behind the base of the genital is the second lotus—
Deep purple red with six petals, six lightning flashes—
With an inside—a pleasant stretch of water
In which the creator resides in a state of relaxation;
This 'Swādhīsthāna' is the controller of sense motions
And when meditated on affords peace and poetic power. 183

Behind the navel—inside the spinal cord still,
Is the ten-petalled blue lotus containing in a triangle
The great principle of fire in the bosom of the creator—
The Manipur or treasure-house, when meditated on.

Gives knowledge—the treasure of all treasures.

Thus, from stupor and relaxation we come to fire and activity. 189

Behind the heart in the centre of the spinal cord
There's a lovely twelve-petalled lotus called the Anāhata
The golden pink sanctum sanctorum;
In contains the principle of cosmic air
Urging the subject with lofty emotions all the time—
And within, like the steady flame of a small lamp,
The human soul.

It is also the seat of the Divine Creator
And as we meditate him, we attain
The highest bliss ever given to a sentient being. 199

Rising further up behind the throat,
We have a sixteen-petalled grey lotus called Visuddha,
Controlling man's speech and expression of self;
It guides the various movements of his mind
And blesses him with creativity or transcendental visions
As the subject meditating desires. 205

The forehead centre or 'Ājñācakra' is the Third eye in man
Gifted with the occult power of seeing the unseen.
It is a white lotus of two petals only
And as it opens, the Yogi comes of age.
The Creator in the form of the sacred syllable 'Om'
Resides in this lotus to help the meditator on his way.
To die with the mind in this circle of command
Is the surest way to reach the Oversoul
And secure release from the cycle of birth and death. 214

The seventh circle or non-circle
Is the thousand-petalled blue-gold Sahasrar,
Immediately above the centre of the scalp—
It is man's link with infinite consciousness
Which relays intuitions to the brain
For its proper functioning in a confused world.

It is the void which begets all that is begotten and born.
 The 'Sahasrār' is the giver of nectar
 Which immortalizes the mortal functioning
 Hence the 'flow' has a dual character.
 The human effort takes it from bottom upward,
 The divine grace descends from the top with ease.
 Meditation may continue both ways,
 But surely not at the same time—
 We must be methodical with full surrender of the ego
 To the Oversoul that is ready to overpower.

229

Greed

After desire and anger comes greed, the third enemy.
 It is developed through fulfilment of desires,
 So, both fulfilment and frustration are equally dangerous.
 Greed for food, flesh, wine and money
 Continually pull men downwards
 Turns even a sage into a liar and a thief,
 Greed has to be overcome through self-control.
 While lust and anger visit intermittently
 Greed has a continual grip over us
 And it drags us down to earth and mire.
 An elaborate mechanism of self-control,
 In respect of food, clothing and necessities,
 A practice of simple and natural austerity
 Such as what animals instinctively follow—
 Is the best way to ignore the monster;
 But a failing dogs the path of austerity—
 It is envy of the people given to luxury.
 The worship of Matter in food and clothing
 Is too universal to escape the eye of an idiot.
 To be able to overlook it and follow the creed of austerity—
 Austerity well within the bounds of nature
 is a difficult task to be followed whole-heartedly—
 But casual lapses are not fatal
 Provided greed does not eat into the bone-marrow.

253

The other three enemies

The other three enemies are fellow-travellers
 Who die a natural death
 Once the first three are overpowered effectively—
 They are pride, infatuation and envy.
 When keen longings and efforts are crowned with success,
 We become proud and oblivious of the world.
 Success has a trick of going into the head
 And spoiling it for good.
 We then think the world is made for us
 And for our friends, wards and in-laws.
 It's an illusion that we belong to a favoured class
 And our wives and children are made of gold.
 Anything jarring with this illusion produces envy
 Which with a bitter shock turns the subject green.
 Envy may follow direct from frustration of desire
 In which case it is easier to control.
 In any way when desire, anger and greed
 Are left behind as contemptible things,
 A product of the illusion of duality—
 The other three bid us farewell with grace
 Preparing the field for God's grace to work freely.

274

With character thus cleaned and purified
 It is time to set foot on the path of the spirit.
 Indians believe in combining three Yogic paths—
 Those of Knowledge, Devotion and Work.
 'Jñāna-Yoga' or the path of knowledge
 Requires that we look hard on the nature of Appearance
 And try to discover the Reality within.
 Bhakti-Yoga or the path of devotion
 Recommends full surrender to the Lotus feet of God.
 'Karma-Yoga' or the path of work
 Entails ceaseless dispassionate pursuit of work
 Without the least hankering for result.
 The warning 'easier said than done'

Applies to all the three paths equally.
 A fourth path called Kṛya Yoga recommending
 Physical and breathing exercises alone for Salvation
 May be followed, but only under expert guidance.
 The three main paths intertwine progressively
 And in the end become one path.
 But for the sake of discussion and analysis
 They should preferably be dealt with separately. 295

The path of knowledge

An intellectual should begin on the path of knowledge
 For he may feel an instinctive revulsion
 Against the other two paths enjoining as they do
 Either enslavement of the body or of the mind,
 He has a training that resents either.
 On the other hand, he is greedy for knowledge,
 He may therefore pursue it with necessary attention. 302

What is change?

We see that the world is changing constantly
 And we are changing ourselves.
 So we should first see what 'Change' means.
 Our friend 'X' has changed a good deal.
 We fondly think that there is a basic 'X'
 To which something has been added
 Or from which something has been subtracted,
 But we know clearly it's nothing of the sort.
 Some cells of 'X' are dead and new cells are born
 Resulting in a slightly different look.
 'Change' therefore is a dance of death and birth
 It is a whirl of matter merely, over no basic 'X', 314

The basic 'X' is a chimera, a figment of imagination.
 It is a non-existent entity born of the mind
 And there's nothing in the world which may change.
 According to one Buddhist school of thinkers

Things are dead as soon as they are born
And born again with a nearly similar appearance,
So as to produce the illusion of stability—
There is no other way of making the seeming change possible. 322

A child is conceived in the womb
And "change" overtakes him from the very hour,
It is continually dying and getting reborn.
Yet when it sees the light of day,
We conceive of it as a definite entity—
A concept as illusive as the other one of change.
Thus over and above the whirl of matter we see around,
There is no basic "I" or "you"
There is no poetry, no romance, no life,
Only matter's continual dance of death. 332

Matter or anything else in the world
Must follow certain fixed rules, or there's endless chaos.
If a thing has the property to exist,
It must exist for ever without a break.
We plainly see that the human body
Did not exist before conception, and,
After death it becomes traceless soon.
Yet we assume its intermediate existence
As a patent fact warranted by our senses.
We should see that the senses are deceiving us.
It's a false appearance masquerading as truth—
For had the human body the rare property to exist,
It would exist endlessly. 344

We may take the example of a seed—
It germinates with air, water and earth
And converts itself into a new plant
After that it no longer exists as seed.
Its 'seedness' is destroyed for ever—
The 'seedness' therefore was an illusion
Which covered the 'plantness' within itself.

The plant is also dead or destroyed
Having produced countless similar seeds
And resolves itself into the five elements
From which it derived strength and stature.
The dance of death is slower but fascinating
In the beautiful world of the plants.
The conclusion is inescapable that it's all simultaneous
Seed, plant, elements, or just nothing at all.

359

The five elements

Coming down to the five elements themselves
We fail to discover the basic 'X' there.
Earth when squeezed will yield some water at least.
In the seas water clashes with water to produce fire,
Similarly, within every object there is space,
And within space there is air,
The invisible ether is the foundation of air.
Thus, we cannot lay hold on matter as absolute
Which has been found to be a congealed form of energy.
Therefore, the apparent dance of matter
Is actually a dance of energy
One pervasive multi-expressive energy.

371

We aver that matter and energy are relative
But do we begin with matter or with energy?
Suppose we begin with energy—
We must think of all the stars in the sky
And all the energy that they must contain
The source of such huge quantum of energy
Still remain the mystery of all mysteries
If we proceed from the materialistic plane alone.

379

The mystery is easily solved
If we closely look into the term 'relative'.
Light and darkness are relative phenomena
One cannot be conceived of without the other.

The same applies to 'blue' and 'non-blue'
 'Red' and 'non-red', 'cow' and 'non-cow'
 'Tom' and 'non-Tom' and mutatis mutandis
 To all the men and all the things of the world.

387

Now, if nothing can exist
 Without being counterpoised by another,
 The existence of both is suspect,
 They exist illusively in the subject's mind only.
 Hence, the ultimate can easily multiply itself
 By posing and counterposing
 To create a vast, ever expanding teeming univense,
 Whose source cannot be explained in any other way.
 Therefore, the universe is both infinitely large
 And infinitely small existing solely in the subject's mind. 397

Seen in this way, space becomes non-existent
 Born of a game of division the mind plays.
 The same applies exactly to Time also
 It is not, as supposed, a huge receptacle
 To hold things in the endless past and the endless future.
 It has no material existence whatever,
 And its mental existence's an illusion.
 It is the mind that does the work of division and multiplication.
 The universe is an imaginative one
 Based on a flash point of Reality.
 The flash point is a stirring desire
 Which provokes the mind to build castles on.
 As the micro mind surveys the macro's manifold works,
 It generates the illusion of time and space. 411

The question of number

The question of number may puzzle once again.
 For how can so many minds work without Space and Time?
 Fortunately, there is only one Macro-mind
 The Agent of the Creator creating the universe.

The Scriptures call it the gold-wombed or Hiranya-garbha,
For all the beautiful creation emanates from Him.

The billion micro-minds are inexact replicas
Of one Macro-mind, the Poet and the Builder,
They simultaneously exist with the Macro-mind,
Their notion of distinctness from Macro-mind
Breeds the illusion of Time and space
Basically, existence is simultaneous in a still-point. 423

Do we come then to an Absolute zero?
Yes, it is an Absolute zero with the capacity,
In an instant to become Absolute All—
Creation is merely an expanding I-sense.
The path of knowledge recommends
Ceaseless development of this I-sense
Through all things, animate or inanimate,
Sense of division or analysis
Are barred out with dedication,
And the meditator identifies himself with all.
To do this, the external form or fabric
Is totally ignored, the I-sense play within the form—
The process continues day and night
Till the habit becomes second nature. 437

If intellect may be divided as lower and higher,
It is only the higher intellect that can grasp the truth.
Men with lower intellect revels in distinction.
Distinction is the joy of their life.
They continually distinguish themselves from others
To receive foolish pleasure from the exercise.
The real pleasure is in destroying the distinction.
Is in melting yourself in all,
Is in retaining the I-sense alone—
The purest of all pure truths. 447

But judge the implications—they're preposterous.

A thief and a murderer acts heinously,
 And you're the thief and the murderer.
 Your sense of right and wrong is revolted,
 You shrink from the identification,
 And your ego puts paid to the revolt.
 You again become prisoner of Appearance
 You float on again in the sea of falsehood.
 Similarly, the distinction of wisdom and unwisdom,
 Of pleasure and pain, of wealth and poverty,
 Of religion and irreligion,
 Of spirituality and unspirituality,
 Of Temperance and Intemperance,
 Of Knowledge and of lack of Knowledge
 Of Renouncement and Worldmindedness,
 Of Patriotism and absence of that fine quality,
 Keenly awakens in you that limited I-sense,
 Called Ego, the enemy that binds you hand and foot. 465

Fortunately, there is a safe way out of the triangle.
 Imagine the thief and the murderer your son,
 It is not impossible for you to love him still,
 For you know the circumstances well
 Which led him to the horrible act,
 You know he was another man during it,
 Blind, ignorant and despotic,
 But he is not always so.
 So turn the same attitude of sincere love to all,
 Love is the acid can melt the iron-rod of Ego. 475

Most difficult is the case of personal enmity,
 Of unprovoked insult or intimidation,
 Of misappropriation of your goods or property—
 In each case, a challenge to your manhood.
 It is a dilemma that touches you deep.
 If you forego your right, even the right to protest
 You're accounted a worthless coward.
 If you start in a battle, you become engrossed in it.

The attitude of love is replaced by that of hatred.
 Your progress in the path of knowledge is halted,
 You are hurled back floating on the sea of Ignorance. 486

Still, it's beautiful to face problems in the spiritual path,
 For it reveals the mystery and the vastness of the world.
 A Jnana-Yogin or the follower of the path of knowledge,
 May ignore the insult, the intimidation or the loss
 As a concomitant disease of the illusive world.
 He pities the man that beats him hard
 For he knows he is to receive an equal beating,
 And plunge himself in deeper darkness.
 A black curtain is drawn upon it
 And the matter is laid to rest for good. 496

But no one is entitled to this noble path of forgiveness,
 Unless he can do it with a free mind.
 If the mind is uneasy or the wound festers deep,
 Forgiveness is replaced by mental revenge.
 Physical revenge or an open attempt towards it
 Is far better, for it clears the mind well. 502

The follower of the path of devotion solves it more easy,
 He surrenders all to God, both profit and loss,
 The balance-sheet is God's, not his.
 Here also the need of a free mind is over-important.
 The devotion must be unmixed and total.
 It should never be an excuse for incompetence,
 Or a lack-lustre attitude resulting in patent failure.
 Moreover, there cannot be a partial surrender to God
 Providing the Ego with a side-line of activity,
 It is neither a state of inactivity nor of passivity,
 It is a ceaseless urge to give Him our all. .13

The karma Yogin

The karma-yogin or the follower of the path of work.

Does not pretend to either of the two lofty stances.
 He strongly believes in re-birth, his misery
 Resulting from the misdeeds of previous births,
 He knows he cannot free himself
 So long his desires infect his activity.
 So he sets about doing desireless work
 Dedicating the result of his work to God.
 Soon he feels free about his personal involvement,
 The personal has become impersonal
 Under the intensive management of God.
 When a Karma-Yogin faces insult or intimidation
 He takes the name of God and confronts it with boldness.
 He takes life as a field of battle,
 And himself a perpetual fighter.
 A fighter cannot glory in victory all the time,
 He has to face defeat occasionally;
 Victory or defeat is a result that is God's not his.
 The follower of work has more of physical hardship
 Than of mental anguish in comparison with the other two.
 His battle is a solace in his loss and defeat. 534

Naturally, the follower of knowledge often leaves the world
 And all its contradictions, till meditation settles his mind,
 And the I-sense is firmly rooted within.
 He then attains peace and true happiness,
 The contraries cannot touch him any more.
 Even the distinction of right and wrong melts away
 And he is so steady in his godliness,
 He won't distinguish between knowledge and ignorance,
 He is the very picture of silent bliss. 544

The path of devotion

In the path of devotion there is full surrender
 Attained through slow erosion of intellectual pride.
 It is easy for those who never presumed to be wits.
 For they are more ready to accept God's dispensation.

Contrary to popular belief, devotion is neither
 Total passivity nor intellectual hara-kiri,
 It is training of the intellectual gun to God.
 If the path of knowledge is based on presumption.
 The path of devotion is based on humility.
 In the one, only One exists to the exclusion of all,
 In the other, the devotee exists at the feet of the One
 To be able to taste the nectar of devotion.
 In the path of knowledge, the pitfall is the growth of vanity
 Instead of a super-kindness expected of a teacher.
 In the path of devotion, it is spiritual pride
 Over the degree of devotedness in fellows.

560

Every path has its trials and tribulations
 So singlemindedness of aim is essential.
 Although knowledge burns up pre-destined suffering,
 Or robs it of its virulence,
 And although God can acquit a devotee
 Anytime from the burden of such a suffering,
 Often it is God's pleasure to allow the trial to continue—
 Trial is the best method of purification.
 A devotee is often misled into resentment against his Lord
 When the Lord refuses to waive his penalty,
 He does not see the Lord's ulterior purpose in this.
 His spiritual pride misleads him
 And traps him into a fresh web of sorrow.
 He is inconsolable for men with 'lesser' devotion
 Seem to be happier and more comfortably established.
 Yet to laugh at a devotee for such a failing
 Is height of silliness, for even resentment
 Is a way to the Lord, it is the bridge
 The devotee crosses to reach a higher plane.

579

To sceptics, devotion is a mystery.
 For how can one be devoted to an unseen thing?
 Devotion is achieved in successive steps, through love.
 We are devoted to mother from our birth

Naturally, existentially, mysteriously.

The mother points out the father we must love and adore.
By a long tradition, father points to the Guru or Preceptor
Who removes the darkness of ignorance with light.

It is the Guru who draws our attention to God
And teaches us how to love and adore Him.

He carries with him a tradition of Godliness,
Of intimate acquaintance or the history of such acquaintance
With God-men who have descended on earth. 592

For sceptics, the existence of God-men is a stumbling block.
To him, all men are born equal

Differing only in native acumen or parental status,
No man has superhuman powers

Except what is achieved through training or exercise.

The rationalist in this way shakes the basis of reverence
And cuts away the moorings of devotion.

By denying the phenomenon of avatarhood

He blocks the path of devotion to God

And turns man into conscious animality. 602

Fortunately, in this, history, authentic history,
Is an ally of the intelligent devotee.

Jesus Christ called Lazarus from death

And performed uncountable miracles in his brief life.

To his disciples, devotion was natural,

Faith was automatic and instantaneous.

Even then such is human frailty, folly and fear,

Faith is not inviolable, devotion is seldom total,

Or there would not have been a Judas to blacken history. 611

In India, the phenomena of saints doing miracles
Are legion, there are God-men galore in this holy land,
And the very multiplicity breeds scepticism.

Europe and rest of the world toeing her

Have been following the Gospel brought by Christ.

The Son of God sent to redeem mankind from sin.

In India we have Avatars and saints
 Each leaving behind a gospel for suffering men
 Essentially similar to what Christ has said.
 Or to judge by the miracles performed by them
 There is no saint or Avatar,
 Who has not revealed strange, supra-natural powers,
 When occasion has forced them to do so,
 And every revelation, every miracle
 Is a firm foundation stone for faith and devotion. 626

God in His infinite mercy descends
 To this world as Avatar or Incarnation
 And reverses the tendency to evil among men—
 A phenomenon that best proves the existence of God.
 The mystery of Incarnation is the mystery of all mysteries
 This humbling of Godhead into apparent humanhood.
 He comes along with his chosen devotees
 And re-vitalizes the spirit of Dharma or good action.
 His life, his character, his miracles
 Stun disbelievers into belief
 And for a long long period, the spirit is maintained
 In the form of a noble, religious tradition
 And a whole complex of culture and art.
 The strangest truth about India is the fact
 That only this country has been chosen by God
 To make his repeated, unfathomable Incarnations. 642

The four Eras

The march of the world, it is believed, has four ages,
 The Satya, the Tretā, the Dwāpara and the Kali.
 They form a cycle and repeat themselves.
 The Kali (now running) consists of four lakh thirty two thousand
 Human years, equivalent to twelve hundred divine years.
 We have two K, three K and four K for Dwāpara, Tretā and Satya,
 There is progressive diminution in every field.
 It is a periodic arrangement based on one main factor,

The disintegration of truth and its re-integration,
 Each stage being superintended by the Avatar.
 In the Satya Yuga or the Age of Truth of the present cycle,
 Nara-Nārāyana came as Avatar with Lakshmi as consort,
 Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity.
 Badrinath was the holy place of this incarnation.
 Even today people give awed worship to both of them.
 Nārāyana appeared in other lesser incarnations also,
 Even in the shape of animals
 Each time to fulfil a noble purpose. 660

In the Tretā age, the resplendent glory of Truth
 Was covered a little and a few were given to trickery.
 God then appeared as Rama, the son of the king of Ayodhya
 And he went to the forest for fourteen years,
 Immediately after a dazzling coronation, so that,
 His father would not have to break a word.
 Thus, Rama retrieved the honour of the 'word'—
 The basic honour that constitutes man's life.
 His divine Consort was Sita, incarnation of Lakshmi,
 Who followed her husband into exile most cheerfully
 And demonstrated both the exactitude and the limitations
 Of the bond of marriage for all time to come.
 Indians take the name of Sita-Rama untiringly
 To blunt the edge of worldly suffering
 Born of the loss of truth in this age of kali. 675

In the next age called Dwāpara.
 There was further distintegration of truth.
 Values tumbled down in a mad race
 And brother was bent on deceiving brother.
 In this age, the Lord appeared as Krishna
 To attract people to God and good through love.
 From his childhood Krishna performed countless miracles
 And inspired his mates, both male and female
 With such divine rapture of love

As has never been seen before and after.
 The Avatar loved each around him so supremely.
 Socially, spiritually and individually
 As to turn his place, Brindābanam, into very heaven.
 He was the magnet that drew the right metal most
 And Radha was made of that right metal.
 She is supposed to be Incarnation of Lakshmi still,
 This time boldly showing the transcendent quality of love,
 Its divinely spiritual aspect
 That succeeded in totally overcoming the marital tie.
 Later, as king of Dwārakā and Statesman,
 Krishna personally guided the righteous into victory
 In the great field of Kurukshetra which is also within.
 Krishna brought the age of Dwāpara to its close.
 And left his spiritual advice in the form of the Gita
 For the guidance of the suffering men of Kali.

700

Kaliyuga started around four thousand years ago—
 An age in which truth remains three-fourth covered.
 As a result men have become slavishly dependent
 On food and sex, which they pursue with a mad zeal.
 With sex worshipped with such single-mindedness
 The world has become overpopulated
 Leading to cruel wars, and loss of life.
 With so much rivalry and cut-throat competition.
 The age has naturally too many cut-throats around
 Whose tortures arouse the compassion of God.

The conditions in 'Kali' have weakened decisively,
 The rules have therefore been relaxed
 For the examinees appearing for a spiritual test,
 And pass-marks downed for obtaining
 The divine grace in an otherwise trying time.
 In 'Kali' a simple and sincere devotion
 With the sacred name of Rama or Krishna or such on the lips
 Blended with some selfless service to humanity

Is enough to earn a partial realisation of Self,
 For Heaven knows against what odds
 He has to maintain that little devotion.

In 'Kali', as the same sign of divine grace
 Saints and God-men have descended in numbers
 To show the path of liberation through devotion.
 It is difficult to classify all these spiritual leaders
 By any precise definitions of their powers and functions.
 It is generally agreed that of these only a few
 Have been Incarnations of God or the Absolute,
 The rest being realized souls and teachers.
 A realized soul is but God Himself
 And all spiritual leaders are liberators of men
 To be worshipped by all who struggle in darkness.
 Nevertheless, a fundamental difference persists
 Between an Avatar and a non-Avatar,
 One appears with all the occult powers at birth
 And the other struggles to attain some of them.
 The best course certainly is not to blow up controversy
 But try to learn and correct ourselves on our way
 With the example and precept set by them.
 In case of a difference of opinion, one should follow
 One's own Guru only, because the Guru
 Is our guide, guardian and pleader at the court of God. 742

The origin of image-worship

There is another recurring phenomenon also
 That strengthens devotion in the right type of men.
 Seekers of truth praying for the favour of the Absolute
 Sit long in meditation with a humble loving heart
 Till with love and single-minded devotion
 He wins the merciful grant of a vision.
 Often a mental image of a God accompanies the prayer,
 The Absolute, to favour him, appears in that shape alone
 Which the sage transmits to his friends and disciples

Either through description or a transferred vision.
These Gods and Goddesses are real enough
Because the Absolute has deigned to appear so.
Their accumulated number is podigious,
But each is capable of showering grace on devotees
Because each is but a facet of the Supreme Godhead.
Hence it is that the Hindus have many Gods and Goddesses
Three hundred thirty million, the commonly asserted figure.
Indeed, it is the plainest truth but has the character of a miracle
That any person, dog, tree or stone
When worshipped with deepest veneration,
Can endow the worshipper with favour God only grants.
The Scriptures enjoin upon men to offer such worship
To father, mother, teacher or guest,
(An advice to work on social and spiritual planes together)
And it's wonderful what transformation it brings in them. 766

With the basis of devotion chalked out in this manner
It needs to be said something about its categories.
Devotion which means sincerest love for God
May be of three types, according to the Scriptures—
It is general, individualized, and universal.
There are nine approaches in genral devotion
Of which a devotee may choose one or more
Hearing the holy word with deep veneration is the first.
King Pariksheet availed of it when he knew
He had only one more week to live,
To be effective such closeness of attention's essential.
The second is the chanting of the name of Lord
In plain form of song, either alone or in group;
It drives the evil away from the mind,
And even from the atmosphere around,
And prepares the ground for the descent of Godhead.
Keeping His name and glory constantly in mind
And letting His name dance silently on the tongue
Is the third way which is a fit instrument

To correct the common misdirection of the mind.
 Worshipping the Lotus feet of God psychically or symbolically
 Is a form of devotion which makes God your devotee.
 Reciting verses in praise of God or worshipping Him
 In accordance with some time-honoured ritual
 Are the fifth and sixth forms of devotion—
 They are very commonly availed of.
 Seventh is a feeling that you're the boughten slave of the Lord
 And are constantly bound to act according to His wish.
 The Master and His slave is not the only relation
 A devotee is permitted to build up with his Lord.
 God is your friend, father, mother or preceptor—
 He will become as such according to your prayer.
 Friendship is easily and quickly built up with Him,
 For there is no better friend on earth than God.
 Lastly, an attitude of unreserved self-surrender to God
 Is the last and ninth stage of geneal devotion.

802

Individualized devotion is a source of sweet sensation
 In which the devotee constantly keeps himself aware
 Of the fact that God is within him seated in his heart.
 He knows that God is everywhere and everything,
 But for full concentration, he abstracts the immanent Lord
 To place Him in his bosom as his very own
 And as no one else's.
 He thus ensures the personal love and attention of God
 And in His infinite mercy He bends to the devotee's humour.

811

The highest devotion

The highest category of devotion is universalised love for God
 Based on the conviction that nothing exists except God,
 That God pervades the universe so totally
 That even the minutest cannot escape being He
 And evolving every moment according to His wish.
 The idea rules out envy, hatred, greed, lust or intolerance.
 It deadens the spirit of revenge in humiliation or defeat.

And totally slakes all thirst for fame and power,
 And even for knowledge of this infinite universe.
 He is so full of his beloved God immanet everywhere,
 So full of the blissful thought of God alone
 That his heart becomes soft like alluvial soil.
 He masters all the contraries of the world
 Through love, gentle, sincere love for all—
 Uncalculating, spontaneous, selfless love.
 Gradually, the devotee attains union with God
 Through his occult surrender to His immanence.
 God's infinite mercy descends on him
 And he is freed from the bondage of 'karma',
 And permitted to merge with his beloved Lord.
 Mirabayee who left her home and hearth for God
 Singing hymns in His praise set by her own hand
 Was allowed to merge herself in the image of the Lord
 To the amazement of the host of devotees present there. 835

Devotion reaching such a pinnacle however is rare.
 In most cases the devotee feels an impetus from within
 To pour out himself in the service of humanity
 With the burning truth in his heart
 That service to man is service to God.
 In this way as the physical encasement is dropped
 The devotee is released from the cycle of birth and death
 And attains one of the four blissful states
 According to his own sweet will and desire.
 One is living in the same plane of reality with God,
 Another is obtaining the form exactly as God has
 The third is simultaneous existence and movement with God
 And the fourth is the blissful, total union with God. 848

A devotee of God prefers any of these
 To a mere liberation from the chain of birth and death.
 To him, such salvation is not worth attaining.
 As an existence minus the awareness of his God.
 Even in that world of bliss

Is an unbearable, unthinkable horror to him.
 His pride is he does'nt care to be sugar itself,
 He wants to be raptured in its taste for ever.

856

Nishkama Karma or desireless work

Both the paths of knowledge and of devotion
 Are somewhat difficult for different reasons,
 And often remain above the reach of common men,
 If not always, at least in the initial stages.
 The third path—the path of 'Nishkāma Karma'
 That is, doing ceaseless work with no care for the result,
 Is the path to liberation available to one and all.
 The cycle of birth and death follows an accounting principle
 In which the deeds consciously done by man
 Are taken on both debit and credit sides
 After assessment according to their quality.
 Good deeds produce good results immediately or over a period
 Which may encompass several births to come.
 Bad deeds similarly bring in harm and punishment
 For ultimate re-awakening of the self itself;
 The two are inter-independent and produce a finely woven cloth,
 The immediate results are there for all to see.
 But often the seed of 'Karma' takes time to grow and bear fruit.
 Hence life appears as a page of mystery
 Both to the honest and dishonest alike,
 It is a curious mixture of good and bad fruits
 Which we are obliged to taste with joy or woe.

878

Although it may appear easy, it's really very hard
 To determine if a deed is sinful or not,
 As a result, we are continually being trapped by our 'Karma'.
 The cardinal principle is—do good to others
 And avoid giving pain at any cost.
 In application, it gives rise to complexities
 Which even the veteran moralists cannot solve.
 Moreover, idleness is a kind of 'Karma' itself
 As breathing and blood circulation continue as usual.

If a moment is spent idly beyond the rest period
 So much of life is lost and counted bad debt in the books.
 On the other hand, if there comes a trace of pride
 Even after completion of a selfless deed,
 Its beneficial effect is negated by the Ego-principle.
 So the Gita says we must see karma as no karma at all
 And the absence of 'karma' as 'karma' itself. 894

At birth we have two deposits at our credit.
 The 'Sanchita Karma' or 'the accumulated fruits to be tasted'
 Is with us from previous births as a kind of fixed deposit.
 'Prārabdha' is a looser part of the deposit
 Earmarked to be effective in the current life.
 With 'Prārabdha' we join the work of our own will
 And so produce the complex web of fate, that is,
 The fruits of our own deed we're bound to taste.
 Still all this is pre-determined and pre-completed
 Including the consoling and apparent play of free-will. 904

What is fortune?

Man is the architect of his own fortune
 In this transcendent and mysterious sense.
 His deeds come to visit him in a circular path,
 Each having its own orbit of revolution.
 The result is the mysterious maze of life
 Of which the poets write with wonder and joy.
 They enlist our tears writing of a noble prince
 Visiting slowly the very bottom of misfortune.
 Their object is to arouse our human sympathy,
 But they let us grope in the darkness
 Not showing the reason behind such fall.
 Common men in India are wiser
 Who term it 'Adrishta' or the unseen,
 And know that they suffer for misdeeds
 They had committed in thier previous births.
 This humility slowly draws them to the door of wisdom. 920

Rationalists will eagerly condemn such a belief
 As producer of apathy to the suffering of men and of ourselves.
 They're not far wrong, still we must face the truth.
 The law of work is like the law of gravitation,
 However ostrich-like, we may choose to deny it.
 Recognizing the law we begin our process of awakening,
 Ignoring it, we plunge deeper in the mesh of 'karma'.

The Gita cuts the Gordian knot at one stroke
 By prescribing desireless work, or better still,
 Desireless work done as worship of God.
 This is the commonest path to liberation,
 For such work has no capacity to bind,
 Although they continue to produce results.
 The 'bank-account' of karma is slowly exhausted,
 And, after, may be, a hundred thousand births
 The imaginary shackles of millennia are off. 936

In practice however the worker takes the name of his lord
 While performing his deed-rituals,
 Devotedly, sincerely and without passion.
 He is more perfect than the lustful worker
 Because his own hopes and fears are not involved.
 The 'Karmayogin' is the final answer to those
 Who preach that disinterested deed makes us apathetic.
 They should see the perfection in his passionless work
 The infinite fund of his energy
 And realize their gross mistake;
 For when work is separated from desire
 [A difficult, but attainable task
 Applicable even to the marital sphere]
 The energy lost through hopes, fears and worries,
 Are conserved and faith in God redoubles it
 And we become 'karmabira's or heroes of work. 952

The synthesis of the three paths

Sages agree, the three paths of work, devotion and knowledge
 Are really inseparable—to be pursued simultaneously.
 It's a three-wheeled cycle—the front-wheel is knowledge—
 It's the steering wheel we cannot ignore.
 No one should cower at the thought of knowledge,
 It's far easier than a quadratic equation,
 Easier than the formula of $(a+b)^2$.
 It can be put in one succinct sentence—
 The world is full of God and God only
 And God is attained through unreserved love. 963

Of the two back-wheels to be force-pedalled
 The left is karma and the right is devotion.
 They are kept operative all the time
 Or there is no movement at all.
 This sense of movement is essential
 In a sincere seeker of spiritual truth
 Or there is the chance of stagnation;
 Desireless work, reserveless love for God and His children
 And a ceaseless query—"who am I?—
 Who am I really? Who? Who?"
 Must proceed simultaneously for quickest of results. 974

In this, a very dangerous enemy is apathy.
 Our ego plays its tricks cleverly here.
 Some think that as we are born in nature's course,
 So in nature's course, we will be liberated once,
 So effort is unnecessary and uncalled for.
 Still others think that since ripeness is all,
 Salvation will come at a pre-fixed hour.
 Some are so much fascinated by their religious garb,
 They think, that alone will see them through.
 The fourth class is over-dependent on fate,
 And think that only the fortunate will be delivered.
 As they have no such fortune, they must sit tight—
 These fallacies are to be avoided at all costs. 987

There is even a greater danger here.
 With spiritual advancement, certain strange powers,
 Inexplicable and often miraculous
 Accrue to the sincere seeker of Truth.
 He is sometimes tempted to reveal them—
 May be in a flash of anger in answer to insult,
 And henceforth he becomes a noted man.
 People surround him, flatter him, tempt him.
 And very soon he is back in the pool of Ignorance
 Forgetting that spiritual pride is the worst of all prides. 997

Character of the seeker of truth

Hence it follows that a seeker of truth
 Must first build up his character,
 His purity, patience and perseverance,
 His humility, vast and endless,
 His capacity to love in the most trying situation,
 And start from there on to rise
 Steadily, higher and higher to the top
 With egolessness as the staff to walk with.
 Strict control over the senses—inward or outward,
 Refusal to enjoy the fruits of meditation
 Either in this world or in the world to come
 And a keen desire for salvation,
 Will surely lead to success, sooner or later.
 When he seeks only Turth, and Truth and Truth alone
 He has started trekking on the right path. 1012



THE SYNTHESIS OF NATURE AND TRUTH

The wished for synthesis of the Absolute and the Non-Absolute
Is an impossibility
For if an infinitesimal part of Falsehood
Is blended with Truth
Truth is dissolved and Falsehood asserts itself.
By definition, Truth is the pure essence,
Transparent to its absolute degree,
Anything else is Untruth. 8

The strangest miracle is that this burden of Truth
Is for ever borne by this Body of Falsehood,
And no intermixture ever results. 11

Truth is hidden in the depth of the human breast,
Impenetrable except to Divine grace
Got by disciplined good living, prayer and meditation.
The stages or the hurdles in the path of Truth
Cannot be foreseen or foremapped,
They're seen clearly only on looking back. 17

The reason why this is so is very clear.
Truth is never obtained along the mental path—
It is a substance beyond mind.
The mind can only guess how mind
Should try to overpower itself.
For this, a study of its dimensions is essential. 23

The five senses

Our sense of sight views the solid universe,
But it may see a figment also like Macbeth.

The sense of touch alone can determine
Which is which.

So it may be that the two are in league
To befool us with this sense of solidity. 29

The sense of hearing is their colleague too,
For to blind man the character of the sound
Determines the character of the space around him.
So hearing is at the root of it all. 33

So it may be said roughly that these three senses
Providing the sense of space and solidity
Constitute the first dimension o' the mind. 36

To this coffin of Truth
The nails are driven by the other two senses—
The signal senses of smell and taste.
They corroborate what the other three have stated already
By developing an inordinate hunger for things.
Hence these two form the second dimension of the mind. 42

Fully dedicated to the sense-pleasures
The animals are happier than men
Because they lack the third dimension—the Reason.
Reason is an equivocal functionary,
It both binds and releases the being it occupies.
At a lower level, it forges the fetters,
At a higher one, it cuts them into two. 49

The lower reason

The lower Reason follows the sense-perceptions
Hardening slowly as the child grows older
Perceiving, analysing, rejecting and accepting.
Born a philosopher and a seer as Wordsworth says,
He is guided to this path of reasoning
By the hand of his parents
Over-eager to call themselves off from the game. 56

Lower reason springs from the abiding instinct
Of following pleasure and shunning pain—
An instinct so firmly deep-rooted
As to end at death only.
It binds man basically
But to the stage of an animal merely.

62

The Do's and Don'ts are then enforced on the child
Always with indifferent success.
'Cause always they militate against
The basic sense of pain and pleasure.
At this stage, the race divides itself
Between those who follow lower reason
And those who consent to be guided
By those who know.
The Scriptures of a race record its higher Reason
And no race can ever be higher than that.
Hence education not based on the Scriptures
Is destined to end in material progress and war;
And the onslaught of Darkness is imaginable
When education is wilfully divorced from the Scriptures. 76

The objection to the Scriptures is a patent one
They depict creatures and events rationally ungraspable.
We fail to see what might have been a different set up
At a period far distant from ours.
Unthinkable is a stronger term than ungraspable
And this may find other applications in the search for truth.
The limitlessness of space is unthinkable
And so its material existence must be in doubt.
Similarly the totality of time is unthinkable
Therefore that dimension must be illusory.
The total destruction of what I call "I" is unthinkable
Therefore the "I" must survive the physical death.
Again the eternal stay of "I" in any one form is unthinkable,
Therefore, it must shift and shift its form.

An eternal process of shifting is also unthinkable,
Therefore, the "I" has a fixed and formless resting place. 92

Put philosophically, the proposition comes to this—
An endless linear motion is unthinkable,
Therefore all motion must be either circular or elliptical
And this again has application everywhere in life—
To birth, growth, death or decay,
To anger, dissipation or love.
Indeed, to all our actions, good or bad
Which must find their reactions sooner or later
Travelling in a circular or elliptical path. 101

In nature, the circular motion of a water-drop
Is taken as no distinct affair at all, and
All nature must behave in a similar fashion.
The food we take is a glaring example.
It first turns to manure and then to fresh food again.
If we could see this food, or this body, the food of the gods
In this patently circular form
We would leave easily the hankering for either.

Again we cannot think of the circular motion
To cover an endlessly vast field.
We cannot, therefore, imagine it to be moderately vast,
As to say 'moderate' is to beg the question.
The inescapable conclusion, therefore, is
That all this motion takes place
In a spaceless point only, spaceless and timeless too. 116

Changes and revolutions seen in the sun and the moon
Mainly help us count the time.
Our own changes confirm those in the sky.
But does change mean some addition or subtraction
Or replacement of old bodies by some new?
Patently, it is the last, because again,

Any subtraction from or addition to an organic form
Is clearly inconsistent with the nature of the form itself. 124

Change, therefore, is a vague and untenable concept.
By it we mean some motion in cyclic form.
But such motion, as seen before,
Can occupy a spaceless point only, and therefore
A point instant rather than any fraction of time.
This confirms the concept that the effect hides in the cause,
And the entire chain is as long as zero.
Hence time disappears like space
As simply a needless entity. 133

The higher reason

The value of this higher Reason's seen through introspection.
For example, the search for durable and permanent things
Is on from the very beginning of civilization.
So the sky-scraper has replaced the cottage
And the weapons of steel, the club.
This uneasiness we feel about things transient
Reveal that instinctively we all believe
That only the ever-unchanged thing is Truth
Anything else is Untruth.
Keats considered the Beauty of Art to be Truth
Not seeing that though long, it is limited still.
Perhaps he meant the beauty of the engraving
Taken not as engraving but as a living idea.
In that case, we come to the Platonic Idea itself. 147

The greatest poets all over the world
Look for lasting, eternal fame.
They're not satisfied with anything less than the undying.
Higher reason should tell us why they behave so,
And why for such behaviour get the praise of all.
This is because their souls are great, too great,
To hug the finite and be at peace.

This should point to the way of Truth
Covered all the time by the golden disc of Untruth. 156

Memory

Another great dimension of the mind is Memory
Of which we are the proud possessors—
It makes us shed tears of joy or of sorrow,
It gives us the deep-seated passions—
The revenge-motive, the basic element of the human drama.
We never ponder why the beasts have been spared the gift
And what special good it should do to man. 163

With memory beasts begin to become human,
So nature said, "Thus far and no farther—"
So they were left to their life of instincts.
In men, memory binds and unbinds
In so far as it is kept pure,
Or tangled up with emotions.
When man mingles his memory with emotions
He creates his own hell
And invites others to dwell in it. 172

In one sense Memory is vaster than man
Running easily to pre-natal existences,
In emotional subjects under hypnosis.
Lord Buddha read five hundred of his past births
And the stories show his progress to Right Reason.
Dispassionate memory ushers in wonders of knowledge,
As in scientists—the right use of Memory,
But for the unfortunate fact that they look into
The finite, material world only. 181

Memory should be linked up constantly with miracles
Given to man as the kindest of gifts,
So that the shrine of clay may aspire heavenward.
All the practical functions of the Memory

Provide the base only to make
 The superstructure of Right Reason possible,
 Memory in man is not otherwise justified at all. 188

Miracles

To the rational mind, the miracles are non-existent
 Even when they take place before their very eyes.
 Most of the darkness enveloping the world
 Is due only to this,
 And the rationalists are often the best behaved of men.
 Their limitations are the limitations of knowledge.
 Most of the times this is mercifully so,
 Because the faithful tend to believe indiscriminately,
 So often hoaxes or phenomena pass as miracles. 199

The function of Higher Reason is relevant here,
 In sifting the true from the false miracle, and,
 Clutching at their irreducible minimum.
 Say, we call them sparks and contemplate them
 It's sufficient to put our spirit on fire.
 The disciples of Jesus wrote down this minimum,
 As Bhagabata does that of Lord Krishna. 206

Intelligence is supposed to be the highest faculty of the mind,
 But it is more a composite than a single thing.
 Reason, memory and imagination
 All play their roles to build up intelligence,—
 A defect in any makes intelligence diminutive.
 If Higher Reason is treated as a dimension apart,
 There's not much to speak of in intelligence.
 At best, it's a polished sword
 Which helps us cut our way through,
 And naturally it rusts in unuse soon enough. -

Imagination is a more potent faculty of the mind
 We may honour it by calling it another dimension

Of that non-existent miracle, the mind.
 It is a pivot on which the emotions revolve
 To give us the states of joy, sorrow or indifference.
 The revolution is faster with intangible objects
 Rather than with things tangible and immediate,
 Hence it is that a movie moves us most.

224

Fascination of day dreams

A day-dream is the lightest and most delectable of things,
 Provided we have both youth and imagination.
 All art is the product of day-dreaming, issuing when
 The world has shocked the imagination into activity.
 All these activities are wish-fulfilments
 Intensely pleasurable, though exercised in vacua.
 They are double-removed from reality, says Plato,
 Being shadow's shadow, the Idea alone being real.

232

Still, the love of the mind for such things
 Indicates a profound possibility to Higher Reason.
 The creation itself may be a kind of day-dreaming,
 As the parallelism is plain enough.
 For why should a man enter into day-dreaming
 Knowing it to be patently false?
 He does it for that fullness of pleasure
 Which can reside in the culture of unreality alone.

240

Similarly, the real 'Atma' or Soul or the First Essence
 Dons the mask of unreality
 And then plays, dances, combines or copulates
 Or, destroys the stage properties at one stroke,
 Travelling from the pole of reality, of light and bliss
 To the other pole of Unreality and Darkness.
 Because it knows that it does not have to travel at all.
 The creation of which the poet glories
 Is thus an outburst of the creator's mind
 In which there is no trace of Truth at all

Except this behind the stage presence of the creating Self. 250

How is our Higher Reason satisfied when asked to believe
In all the foregoing, strange propositions?

How do we see that there is no existence

Except in the very dream of our mind?

Well, apart from the truth logically arrived at,

We have experiments showing the same way.

When we accept the creation to be in the mind itself

We assume a Super-mind which keeps awake

When we go to sleep every night.

259

The powers of Yogis

The Yogis through meditation reach the Super-mind

And perform astonishing feats on the basis

Of the simplest truth that Mind is one.

They penetrate the thoughts of all around them

And read it just as an open book.

They exist by eating the unthinkable minimum

Drawing sustenance from the elements of nature.

By concentrating on his own flow of desires—

Some fully satisfied and other not yet so,

A yogi can foretell his hour of death

Correct to the minute-hand of the clock.

This concentratin has three stages, however,—

Perception of a thing to the exclusion of everything else,

The steady flow of such perception, and

Entering inside the thing perceived with great psychic force.

By concentrating on his own figure in the midst of a crowd

He can cut off the crowd's vision of him

And disappears magically, not really, for a while.

A Yogi can acquire the strength of an elephant

By deeply concentrating on it for a period

For all the power visible in the universe

Is but his power as he has reached the Supermind.

281

There is a noble flame in a lotus in our heart
 [The thing is psychic, not physical]
 Which, when deeply concentrated on,
 Gives the knowledge of distant objects, big or small,
 No matter, if a mountain comes in between.
 By concentrating on the throat point
 He can stay hunger and thirst for a long, long while.
 Concentration on the nerve-flow can produce miracles.
 The upward moving flow called 'Udān',
 When meditated on, makes the Yogi light,
 (He can achieve the same effect by thinking he is the sky)
 He can then walk on water and die at his wish.
 The other navel-centred nerve-flow called 'Samān'
 When meditated on engenders a glow
 In the body of the Yogi at all times at his wish.
 By meditating on the heart and its numerous outward flows
 A Yogi can enter into another's body, alive or dead
 But this is possible after he can separate the mind from Self. 299

It is not necessary to complete the list
 [Even if one could do so]
 Of the powers which the Yogis in the East possess.
 A typical list of eight powers are given often
 Showing the Yogi's enormous powers
 Of making himself too small or too big, too light or too heavy,
 Of controlling any one he desires to do so,
 Of obtaining distant things at an instant,
 Of a will that will bend to no one else's
 Or of letting things happen through a simple wish.
 Indeed, he can transcend in this body
 Disease, old age and even death at a stage
 When the fire of Yoga burns in him through and through. 312

The crux of all these is a sharpened Intelligence
 Which sees that our Intelligence is not ourselves.
 Behind the Intelligent mind and the Super-mind
 There is the 'I' or the Absolute

For ever disconnected with the non-Absolute.
 The Intelligent mind has the 'I' mirrored in it dimly
 And so feel sad, happy or victorious.
 When this error is removed, with Intelligent mind
 Turned towards the 'I' dispassionately,
 The Yogi views his Self as the one Knower.
 And being so, can never be the object of knowledge.
 Henceforth the Yogi tries to be the Self and nothing else
 And when he succeeds, he is liberated.
 Even then he has taste and sight of divine things,
 Achieves the most tempting omniscience and omnipresence,
 They come to take him away from the true path.
 It is the Yogi's last battle, the most crucial one,
 As he wins it, he reaches the One. 330

This digression of Yogic powers may appear irrelevant
 In a treatise on philosophical, not physical or mental search.
 It came as an additional supporting proof
 Of the basic premise that the creation is in the mind,
 Hence the way we see it is patently false.
 Patanjali, the great sage and philosopher,
 Who writes scientifically on Yogic methods
 And the ways and means of achieving them,
 Sounds a very useful warning about them—
 They're all false being being still in the realm of mind
 And our aim is to cross over the mind
 And reach the "I". 342

This accumulated wisdom of the East
 Briefly and sketchily collected here
 May still help a seeker of Truth immensely,
 But he is obliged to follow certain basic steps.
 The purification of body and mind is the first step—
 Purification in a practical, not an absolute sense.
 The seeker's body must be light and energetic
 Full of the flowing air in every cell

And cleansed thoroughly at least twice a day.
The air-flow is obstructed through over-eating
And lack of minimum physical exercise.
Both have to be looked into with care
With one watch-word called 'moderation'.

356

The purification of mind is a more complex affair.
First, it should be light and unburdened.
You may be a great poet with a burdened conscience—
You may be attractively romantic and mysterious,
But not a seeker of Truth.
Suppose you have crimes on your record,
Or negligence of duty, cruelty or apathy
You must wash that all out through tears of repentance.
You must be frank in you admission of crimes,
And not keep them as a secret, festering wound.
Your misdeeds have come on a wave of emotion,
They have a tendency to come again
Unless you counter them with a powerful anti-wave.
This wave is the wave of love for one and all,
The most natural wave in your heart.
When that wave has become so powerful
That nothing can swerve its course again
Your mind has become purified finally.
Watch your mind for another test though, see that
Your thinking, speaking and acting run strictly parallel.
Then freely forget your previous crimes,
And begin on the path of meditation—
There must be an element of humility, however,
Your crimes in this birth or in previous ones
Will still visit you with ugly faces
And you must have the strength to suffer them patiently. 382

The Worship of Om

After the first step is undertaken successfully.
Begin on the next three steps together.

With endurance, patience and perseverance.
The three steps are—keeping the advice in mind.
Turning it ceaselessly through all the occupations of the day
And concentrating deeply on it in loneliness
Sitting in an easy straight-backed posture.
If concentration fails to come easily
Go on chanting the sacred word ‘OUM’
Trying to feel that with the recitation of ‘O’
The wakeful world disappears from before your eyes—
Because it never was in reality;
With recitation of ‘U’, the mind also goes
And with ‘M’, your body, the imagined receptacle.
So all the consciousnesses you go through
Finally tend to vanish away.
‘OUM’ is justly given such importance
As all the names uttered in the universe
Have partly the OUM sound implanted in it,
And hence symbolically it represents the created universe,
And its Creator, God, or you yourself. 403

After you have half consumed your energy with ‘OUM’,
Slowly settle down to deep concentrated meditation
Of the pure Self or God in your heart.
Your own true identity.
Pursue this for years and years, thoughtless of success,
Undiverted by any worldly consideration,
And God giving you grace, you’ll succeed.
You will then realize a peace in your heart,
An endless spring of light joy
You never experienced before,
You then are at the doorstep of Self-realization.
Yes, what will you do after, that’s the question—
It should not bother you so much, Hamlet like.
For, by now, you’ve felt the value of self-surrender,
So be prepared for any eventuality. 418

The fulness of peace

As you proceed on the path of feeling yourself—
 The Fullness of Peace of which you're built—
 All worldly pleasures and all worldly knowledge
 Shrink before you as meaningless entities
 Less substantial than even the dreams.
 So why not wait for the quietus quietly,
 Not running for the bare bodkin of the world?
 Have no worry, it will come soon enough
 For the purpose why you were given this 'body,
 Has by now been fulfilled—
 So it's meaningless to continue it for long,
 And nature knows her course extremely well.

430

The point is explained with an example.
 A potter is making a pot on a revolving wheel.
 He gives it initially an estimated motion,
 And then goes on shaping his clay.
 When finished, he'll carefully take the raw pot away
 And carelessly allow the wheel to run its course.
 It stops automatically soon enough.
 You may try to fill the interregnum
 By doing deeds of charity to all,
 Specially by showing your unique way to God—
 You've lost all other motives to go on living.
 But often you fail to do so, because,
 Like worldly pleasure and worldly knowledge, action also
 Shrinks away from the divine light of knowledge,
 For is not worldly action also a part of darkness?

445

The case of Avatars is different,
 Their descent on earth is self-willed
 For distribution of divine grace only.
 They remain with God and in God and be God themselves
 All the time they are here,
 And so decide their own course
 For their own, inscrutable, cosmic reasons.

452

So dear readers, get up and start the search,
 The earnest search for the Enlightened One.
 Be satisfied that he is indeed Enlightened,
 Don't be frightened by his name, power or pelf,
 Just see if he is indeed the absolutely quietened one,
 Surrender to his lotus feet and let him
 Mould your lump of clay into a ball of gold.
 Om Shantih! Om Shantih! Om Shantih!

460



NO ALTERNATIVE

(1)

There is no alternative but to love God
 For he holds you in sweet embrace all the time,
 Whether you sleep or dream or keep awake,
 Whether you think of things earthly or ethereal,
 Whether you make money or make love or play
 Or make a nuisance of yourself to others
 Through lust, anger, greed, arrogance, fatuity or envy. 7

(2)

You're trapped, for God's love imprisons you
 Everytime, all around through love of others, such as
 Men, women, children, dogs, plants and earth.
 You may take these as your own, your birthright,
 But when God's love is done, they melt away
 And you stand a naked fool mid the wrecks of desires
 With your sense damaged until you see His trick,
 Until you see Him pulling hard for a total merger. 15

(3)

There's no alternative but to love God in men
 For your hatred is a negative form of love
 Bound to develop into a strong fascination
 When the fog is stripped away from before your eyes.
 Their hatred for you is a desire for love frustrated
 And you can see it plain gifted with better eyes.
 So long your ego asserts itself, loving, playing and hating
 You're unconscious of God's embrace and He waits. 23

(4)

He waits with a miraculous patience and love
 Till your I-sense starts melting through shock or sorrow
 In which God in men weeps and suffers with you
 For your full realization of His love for you.
 There's no alternative for the river but to merge in sea.
 There's no alternative for the ice but to melt into water.

There's no alternative for mortals but to be deathless
And merge in Him being conscious of this tight, eternal embrace.

35

THE TRICK OF EGO

As I lay weeping like an overpetted boy
Whining, and grieving sore,
The Lord came to me and said—rise and be happy,
I looked at Him in angry disbelief.

4

When as a lusty youth I wanted to bend
The world to my own way and cried failing,
He again came to me and said—dance and be happy,
I looked at him in blind incomprehension.

8

Then as a decrepit man caught in dotage
I considered the falsehood that fills world's ways,
He came with a sweet smile and said—die and be happy.
I bowed gently in agreement and lo!
All my life's problems were solved in a trice.

13

LOOK AFTER YOUR NERVES

Look after your nerves; steel them if you can,
For the world, as the poet says well,
'Is more full of sorrow than you can understand'.
It is more full of lies also than you can reckon.

4

Keep your aim clear, let it be money if it is,
But money belongs to those who really need it.
And money kept from them is money partly stolen,
So money or fame is burning sand you walk upon.

8

To some it is friendship, again as the poet well says.
"Much friendship is feigning, much loving mere folly."
It may chance, therefore, by sticking to friends.
You stick to folly, hypocrisy or immorality.
So ask yourself—what price is this friendship?

13

Some only love themselves and call it Love,
 Shun these base creatures as you would hell.
 So it is best you love only God in man,
 Or where else is God in this ever-shrinking world? 17

IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE, AND IT DOES

It makes no difference if you're lean or fat
 Provided you have the same zest for life;
 It makes no difference if you eat less or more
 Provided you digest it well, and,
 It gives you gainful activity.
 It makes no difference if you're tall or short,
 Rich or poor, fair or unfair, well or ill-dressed,
 Provided people who make your life do not dislike it. 8

It makes no difference if your lose or gain,
 Feel cold or hot, be ill-famed or well-famed,
 If people often praise you or insult you,
 If you must sometimes go hungry or be well-fed—
 Or if you miss a bus, a train or a masquerade.
 It does not even matter if you miss your prayer
 Or while praying your mind is pre-occupied
 As it happened with me this morning. 16

Indeed, it is tedious to make a list of things
 Whose absence or presence can't kill the spark of life.
 But there are things which do make a difference
 Being internals not externals to life,
 And it is vital you make a list of them. 21

You cannot ignore the call of Truth
 Because Truth is your substance, your self.
 Truth is God who is your essence,
 So if you deny Truth, you deny yourself,
 You don a disguise that dangerously degrades.
 It follows plainly that you must speak the truth
 About the world and about yourself. 28

Specially about yourself,
 For you hardly know any other truth.
 Hence your mind, speech and action
 Must run a parallel course, one mirroring the other.
 For example, giving a word is giving truth.
 And accepting duty is accepting truth—
 You're bound to do it whate'er the odds.

35

Indded, this giving and getting truth,
 Is the very core of our life, and,
 That education is best that teaches truthfulness.
 Often there's a see-saw battle in this field,
 Between the guardians of the country or of the homes,
 And their wards who must obey unquestioningly.
 Truth is the arbiter here also (for God is Truth)
 And the party with the greater sense of Truth wins,—
 The motto of the Indian Government declares as much.
 Truth is the scholar's watchword, the farmer's flail,
 They're continually garnering truth only,
 The universe has Truth as substance and Illusion as cover.

47

Secondly, and more importantly,
 You cannot ignore the call of Love,
 God is Love and you are made of God only.
 Normally, you think of your beloved with every breath,
 And how could it be so,
 Unless you were made of love altogether?
 With age, the name and nature of the beloved
 Imperceptively change,
 From mother or father to spouse, or to the Idea,
 And from spouse to drink, drug or fad.
 You're continually loving your Self in all these,
 Mistakenly externalising an internal thing.
 Precisely for this when you stop loving, you stop living.
 You were better dead.

61

On a closer look, your Self is the Self of all,

You may widen the circle to the universe,
 And then pull it back to your heart.
 Hence your paramount duty and fulfilment
 Is to love dispassionately all these creatures
 As you would love the very core of your heart,
 If you had it, beating, on your right plan.

68

Although Truth may not lead you to Love
 (Except in some extreme cases, it always does)
 Love will invariably lead you to Truth,
 (For how can one be false to one's beloved?)
 And when we have an actual glimpse of the two
 We shall have reached our journey's end.

74

DO NOT WAIT FOR RESULTS

Do not wait for results : abhor them, look forward—
 While you are waiting, you have time for sowing good seeds
 And as Christ sayeth : As you sow, so shall thou reap.
 Remember—Life's a mere wink and so it is done.
 Remember—man's fund of energy is almost exhaustless
 Provided you have the madness accompanying it.
 So laugh aloud as mad men would do and proceed,
 Concentrate on one only aim and so thoroughly,
 It becomes sharper than the point of a needle.

Hate diversions, for they divert you from your life
 And there is not one on earth can replace it.
 Make no compromise with evil, for, as your know,
 Evil once entertained never leaves you.

Thus, holding on to the path of virtue,
 Dying with the heat of industry,
 Hoisting the flag of selflessness,
 You may proceed along the dusty path of life.
 And die an unceremonious death.
 But you may be sure of the Grace of God
 —The wealth no man on earth can give you.

THE LOVING HUSBAND

A bridegroom was garlanded on his wedding day.
 It was a beautiful, heavy, fragrant wreath of flowers.
 He was shown his lovely bride and advised thus :
 Here is your partner in life, your inspirer,
 She's God's blessing, a veritable Goddess, Goddess of Wealth.
 You'll get boons in accordance as you receive her.

The bridegroom's eyes were coloured by romance.
 He looked upon his bride as loveliest of all,
 Never appreciating the deeper meaning of the advice.

He had one gnawing worry—
 His beloved mustn't slip out of his hand.
 So he placed her in a beautiful garden house,
 With springs, flowers, cooings of bird and all that.
 He hired men and himself worked hard
 To keep the garden ever as a spot of beauty.
 He fenced it off with barbed wires
 With the usual notice : "Beware of dogs."
 In point of fact his ego was that dog.
 The dog faced the road and barked all the time,
 Whether there was or wasn't an intruder.

In the meantime the Goddess languished
 For the total lack of the breath of freedom.
 And lo! the garden also got dry and drier,
 As if the two had somehow been interlinked.
 The bridegroom, with his old worry increasing,
 Gave a courageous continuing battle, but in vain,
 The bridal garland was dry and thorny already.

At last the overtired man told with regret and anger
 To his outwardly unconcerned bride—
 "I've totally failed to understand you, my beloved,
 You remain, after all this, but a chimera to me.
 So I want to die. but let me tell you this last—

I have been an innocent sinless greedless lover
And served you selflessly only to draw a blank."

As the man, after this, was ready to die
His beloved came and clasped his hands.
She said gently "Please do not misunderstand me.
I am always yours : your very self.
You created this beautiful earth and me too,
As its sweetest essence to be your playmate."

THE BRIDEGROOM

Then why didn't you become so?

THE BRIDE

Because you wanted to bind me hard.
Your mind cannot desert its own creation at ease,
You're infatuated by your own image,
So it gave you the slip.
So your garland of flowers is a wreath of thorn,
Your river of life is dead in a desert,
Your emotions are stunned against heavy odds.
What you can create at ease, you can't give that up,
This is the crux of your sorrow.

GROOM

Then please tell me the way to get you.

BRIDE

There's only one way to get me and all this—
It's to forget everything, everything, everything.
Whatever you turn into nothingness
Will come to your feet and say,
Please accept me and make me glorious.

GROOM

It's my duty to protect you,
How can I forget you then?

BRIDE

Keep me in your distant memory only
But desert me mentally—This is the way.

GROOM

It's a very hard way, my dear.

BRIDE

This is the path to life, the other's to death.
I came to be your consort, your friend,
Only to help you achieve deathlessness.
I garlanded you and loved your look
Only to make it free for ever
Not to bind it with infatuation.

GROOM

Let your wish be victorious.

