

GEMS

from

THE TEACHINGS

of

MEHER BABA

*The Publication Committee,
Meher Baba Universal Spiritual Centre,
King's Road, Ahmednagar (India).*

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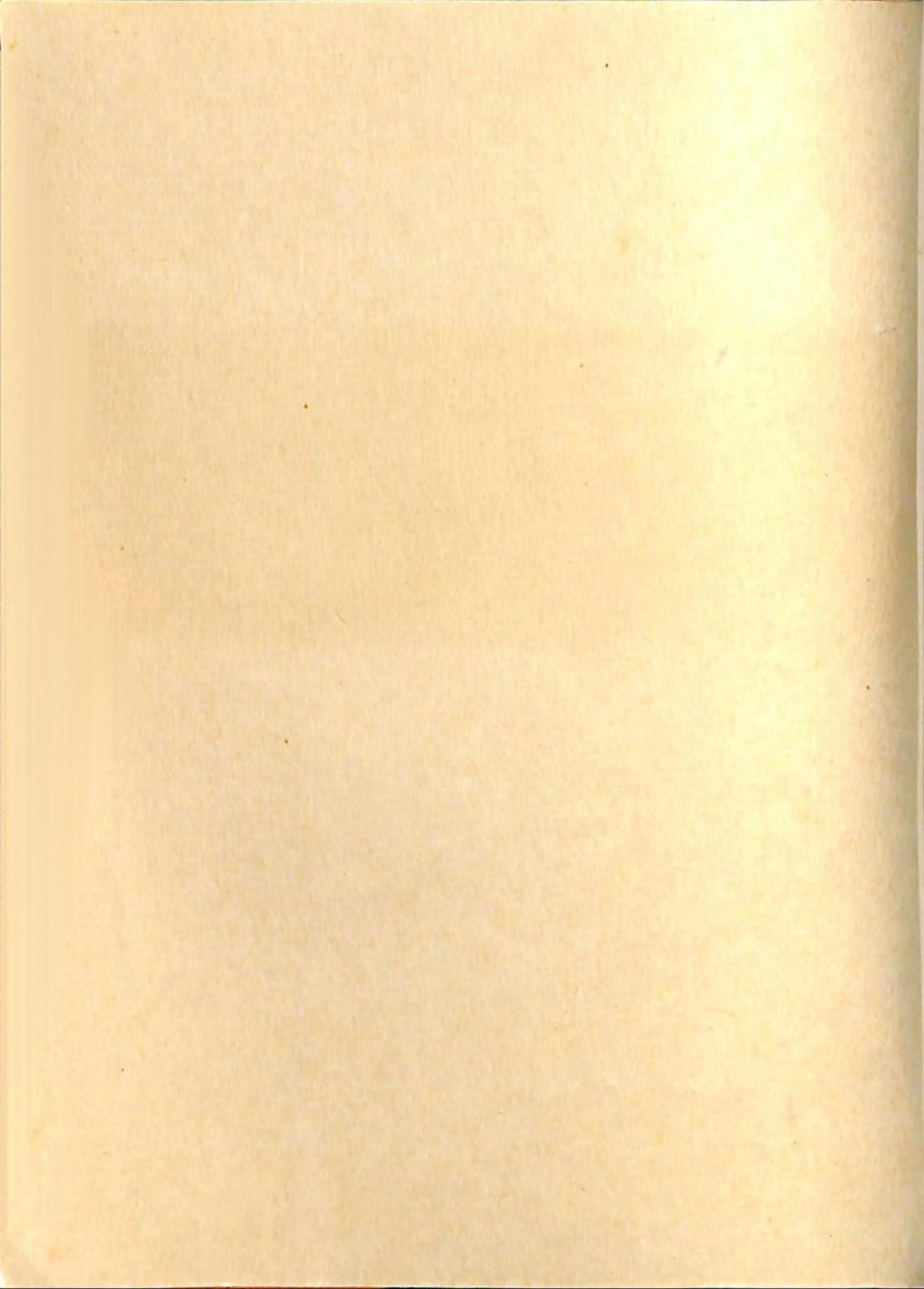
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"I have come not to teach but to awaken."

—MEHER BABA.



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2nd Edition

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THIS book "GEMS FROM THE TEACHINGS OF MEHER BABA", is a bouquet of sweet selected passages from the "Discourses" by the Master already published in the issues of the *Meher Baba Journal*, Vols. I, II, III and IV.

STOR-SPHINXES

— — — — —

NO SPHINXES BUT FROM EGYPT HAVE BEEN
BOUNDED DOWN IN THE MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD; AND
THOSE WHICH ARE KNOWN ARE NOT OF THE
CLASSIFIED SPHINXES, BUT OF THE SPHINXES
WHICH ARE KNOWN WITH THE HISTORICAL
NAME OF SPHINX.

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СТИХИЯ

Стихией земли волнистый ветер

Стихией неба ветер синий

Стихией океана волны

Стихией горы ветер гористый

Стихией реки ветер рекистый

Стихией леса ветер лесистый

Стихией горы ветер гористый

Стихией реки ветер рекистый

Стихией леса ветер лесистый

Стихией горы ветер гористый

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Стихией леса ветер лесистый

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THE NEW WORLD ORDER

THE time is now ripe when men will ardently seek to contact the embodiment of the Truth in the form of a God-man, through whom they can be inspired and lifted into spiritual understanding. They will accept the guidance which comes from Divine Authority. Only the outpouring of Divine Love can bring about spiritual awakening. In this critical time of universal suffering, men are becoming ready to turn towards their Higher Self and to fulfil the will of God. Divine Love will perform the supreme miracle of bringing God into the hearts of men and of getting them established in lasting and true happiness; it will satisfy the greatest need and longing of mankind. Divine Love will make men selfless and helpful in their mutual relations; and it will bring about the final solution of all problems. *The new brotherhood on earth shall be a fulfilled fact and nations will be united in the fraternity of Love and Truth.*

My existence is for this Love and this Truth ; and to suffering humanity I say :—

"Have hope. I have come to help you in surrendering yourselves to the cause of God and in accepting His Grace of Love and Truth. I have come to help you in winning the one Victory of all victories—to win yourself."

The individual soul has to realize its identity with the Supreme Universal Soul with full consciousness. Men shall have re-orientation of life in the light of this Ancient Truth ; and they will readjust their attitude towards their neighbours in everyday life. To perceive the spiritual value of oneness is to promote real unity and co-operation ; brotherhood then becomes a spontaneous outcome of true perception. *The new life which is based upon spiritual understanding is an affirmation of the Truth* ; it is not something which belongs to utopia, but is completely practical. Now that humanity is thrown into the fire of bloody conflicts, it is, through immense anguish, experiencing the utter instability and futility of the life, which is based upon purely material conceptions. The hour is near when men, in their eager longing for real happiness, will seek the true source of happiness.

WARS

WAR can at best be only a means to an End ; it can never be an End, in itself. It is, therefore, imperatively necessary for the War Lords to search their own hearts and to make sure that the Ends, for which they are fighting,

are a reflection of the Divine Plan which is to lead humanity to a *Spiritual Brotherhood, cemented by an inviolable sense of the Unity of all human beings, irrespective of the distinctions based on class, colour, nationality, race, religion or creed.*

Even in itself, war is not an un-mixed evil, since it calls forth and releases, under the stress of imminent danger, much action which is regardless of the limited self and which is inspired by the impersonal spirit of welcoming sacrifice and suffering for the safety and prosperity of fellow-beings. It is better that such unselfish action be released under the stimulus of danger than that it should not be released at all; *it is better that men should forget their petty selves under the pressure of a collective calamity than that they should be permanently encased in the ignoble pursuit of personal safety and in the ruthless attempt to perpetuate separative existence and interests.* War-effort generates and fosters many qualities of spiritual importance; it is, therefore, not altogether without spiritual significance, even when it is considered in itself. And when war-effort is forced upon a nation or a people for the sake of higher values and impersonal considerations of general well-being, it becomes not only spiritually defensible but inevitable.

Right understanding of the status of violence and non-violence in the scheme of spiritual values, requires a true perception of the meaning of the purpose of existence. Action, therefore, should not be governed by means of any slogans (howsoever high sounding) based upon incomplete and insufficient ideas of mere violence or mere non-violence; it should be a spontaneous outcome of Divine

Love, which is above duality and of Spiritual understanding, which is above rules.

The spiritual unity of all souls remains inviolable in spite of all wars ; and from the point of view of ultimate reality, it remains true that no soul is really at war with any other soul. *There is a war in different ideologies ; and this war of ideologies extends to and involves not only the minds but also the bodies of the people ; but the undivided and indivisible soul remains one in its unimpeachable and integral unity.*

Wars and the suffering, which they bring, cannot be completely avoided by a mere propaganda against wars ; if they are to disappear from human history, it is necessary to tackle their root-cause. The root-cause of the chaos, which precipitates itself in wars, is, that most persons are in the grip of egoism and selfish considerations ; and they express their *egoism and self interest* individually as well as collectively *This is the life of illusory values in which men are caught.*

Even wars require and call upon the existence and exercise of co-operative functioning ; but the scope of this co-operative functioning is artificially restricted by identification with a limited group or ideal. *Wars are often carried on by a form of love ; but it is a love which has not been understood properly. In order that love should come to its own it must be free from all its trammels and become unlimited.* Love does exist in all the phases of human life ; but it is latent or is limited and poisoned by personal ambition, racial pride, narrow loyalties and rivalries, and attachment to sex, nationality, sect, caste or religion. If

there is to be the resurrection of humanity, the heart of man will have to be unlocked so that a new love is born into it—a love which shall know no corruption and which shall be entirely free from individual or collective greed.

Though it seems difficult, humanity has to emerge out of this dreadful war with unimpaired spiritual integrity, with hearts free from the poison of malice or revenge, with minds disburdened of the blows given or received, with souls unscathed by suffering and filled with the spirit of unconditional surrender to the Divine Will which shall ensoul and inspire post-war humanity. *In spite of its attendant evils, this war shall play its part in my Mission of helping humanity to fulfil the Divine Plan on Earth and to inherit the coming Era of Truth and Love, of Peace and Universal Brotherhood, of Spiritual Understanding and Unbounded Creativity.*

This war is a necessary evil ; it is in God's plan, which is to awaken humanity to higher values. If humanity fails to profit by the lessons of war, it will have suffered in vain. This war is teaching that even the man in the street can rise to the greatest heights of sacrifice for the sake of a selfless cause ; and it is also teaching that all the mundane things of the world—wealth, possessions, power, fame, family and even the very tenor of life on earth,—are transitory and devoid of lasting values. *The incidents of war, shall, through the lessons, which they bring, win over man for God, who is the Truth ;* and they will initiate him into a new life, which is inspired by true and lasting values. People are making unlimited sacrifices and enduring untold sufferings for the sake of their country or political ideology; they are, therefore, capable of the same sacrifice and endur-

ance for the sake of God or the Truth. All religions have unequivocally claimed man for the life in the Truth ; and it is sheer folly to fight in the name of religions. It is time that men had a fresh vision of the truth that all life is one, and that *God is the only thing which is real and the only thing that matters*. God is worth living for ; and He is also worth dying for : all else is a vain and empty pursuit of illusory values.

NEW HUMANITY

*N*IN the hour of trial, let the thought of everyone be not for the limited self, but for others—not for the claims of the ego-life, but for the claims of the *Divine Self which is equally in all*. It is a mistake to ignore human suffering as merely a part of the illusory universe. *Not by ignoring human suffering, but by handling it with Creative Love, is the Gateway opened for Life Eternal; and not through callous indifference, but through active and selfless service, is secured the attainment of that transcendental and illimitable Truth, which is at the heart of the illusory universe.*

Material adjustment is only a part of the wider problem of establishing spiritual adjustment : but spiritual adjustment requires the elimination of the self not only from the material aspects of life but also from those spheres which affect the intellectual, emotional and cultural life of man.

To understand the problem of humanity as merely the problem of bread is to reduce humanity to the level of animality. But, even when man sets himself to the limited task of securing purely material adjustment, he can only succeed in this attempt if he has spiritual understanding

What we get in identification with a narrow group or section or with some limited ideal, is not a real merging of the separative self but only an appearance of such merging. A real merging of the limited self in the ocean of universal life involves complete surrender of separative existence in all its forms.

The New Humanity will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance ; and this release of love itself can come through the spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. *Love cannot be born of mere determination : through the exercise of will, one can at best be dutiful.* One may, through struggle and effort, succeed in securing that his external action is in conformity with his conception of what is right : but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love has to spring spontaneously from within : and it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together ; but, though love cannot be forced upon any one, it can be awakened in him through love itself. *Love is essentially self-communicative : those who do not have it, catch it from those who have it.* True love is unconquerable and irresistible ; and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself, until eventually it transforms everyone, whom it touches. *Humanity will attain to a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.*

When it is recognised that there are no claims greater than the claims of the Universal Divine Life which without exception includes everyone and everything, love shall not only establish peace, harmony and happiness in social, national and

international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty. Divine Love is unassailable by the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of divinity itself ; and it is through Divine Love, that the New Humanity will come in tune with the Divine Plan. Divine Love will not only introduce imperishable sweetness and infinite bliss in personal life, but it will also make possible an era of New Humanity. *Through Divine Love, the New Humanity will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life ; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms and release the creative life of spiritual wisdom ; it will shed all illusions and get established in the Truth ; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness ; it will be initiated in the life of Eternity.*

A hotch-potch of collected ideas can never be a substitute for a direct and fresh perception of the Goal. The new world-culture will have to emerge from an integral vision of the Truth independently of existing traditions and not from the laborious process of selection and compilation of conserved values.

The vast vision of the Truth cannot be limited by any creed, dogma or sect : however, it helps men to transcend these limitations, not by blind and total denial of any value to the existing creeds, dogmas and sects, but by discovering, accentuating, unfolding and developing such facets of the Truth as might have been hidden in them.

All narrowness limits love. In every part of the world, humanity is breaking itself into narrow groups based upon the superficial and ultimately false differences of caste, creed, race, nationality, religion or culture : and

since these groups have been long accustomed to separative distrust and fear, they have indifference, contempt or hostility towards each other. All this is due to ignorance, prejudice and selfishness: and it can only be mended by fostering the spirit of *mutuality* which breaks through artificial isolationism, and which derives its strength from the sense of the inviolable unity of life as a whole. *Creative leadership will have to recognise and emphasise the fact that all men are already united with each other not only by their co-partnership in the Great Divine Plan for Earth, but also by virtue of their all being equally the expression of One Life.* No line of action can be really helpful or fruitful, unless it is in entire harmony with this deep Truth. 'The Future of Humanity is in the hands of those, who have vision.'

ACTION AND INACTION

INACTION is, in many ways, preferable to unintelligent action, for it has at least the merit of not creating further *sanskaras* and complication. Even good and righteous action creates *sanskaras* and means one more addition to the complications created by past action and experiences. *All life is an effort to attain freedom from self-created entanglement; it is a desperate struggle to undo what has been done under ignorance, to throw away the accumulated burden of the past, to find rescue from the debris left by a series of temporary achievements and failures. Life seeks to unwind the limiting sanskaras of the past and to obtain release from the mazes of its own making, so that its further creations might spring directly from the heart of eternity, and bear the stamp of un-*

hampered freedom and intrinsic richness of being, which knows no limitation.

The movement from unintelligent action to intelligent action (*i.e.*, from binding *karma* to unbinding *karma*) is often through inaction, which is characteristic of the stage where unintelligent action has stopped because of critical doubt, but intelligent action has not yet begun because there has not arisen any adequate momentum. But this special type of inaction, which plays its part in the progress on the Path should in no way be mixed up with ordinary inaction, which springs from inertia or fear of life.

UNIVERSAL SELFHOOD

SELFISHNESS must be transmuted into selflessness before the domain of duality is completely transcended. Persistent and continuous performance of good deeds wears out selfishness. Selfishness extended and expressed in the form of good deeds becomes the instrument of its own destruction. *The good is the main link between selfishness thriving and selfishness dying.*

From the good the soul passes on to God. Selflessness is merged into *Universal Selfhood*, which is beyond good and bad, virtue and vice, and all the other dual aspects of *Maya*. The height of selflessness is the beginning of the feeling of oneness with all. In the state of liberation there is neither selfishness nor selflessness in the ordinary sense; but both of these are taken up and merged into the feeling of *selfness for all*. *Selfness for all brings*

about undisturbed harmony without loss of discrimination, and unshakable peace without indifference to the surroundings.

Open your heart by weeding out all desires and by harbouring only one longing—the longing for union with the Ultimate Reality. That Ultimate Reality is not to be sought in the changing things of external environment, but in one's own being.

THE ONE AND THE MANY

THE One Supreme Being descends in the domain of *Maya* and assumes a multiplicity which does not in fact exist. The separateness of individuals does not exist in *reality* but only in *imagination*. The one universal soul imagines separateness in itself. And out of this division there arises the thought of 'I' and 'mine' as opposed to 'you' and 'yours'. Although the soul is in reality an undivided and absolute unity, it appears as being manifold and divided owing to the working of its own imagination. Imagination is not a reality.

In the state of final understanding a person realizes that the Infinite, which is one without a second, is the only reality. The Infinite pervades and includes all existence leaving nothing as its rival. A person who has such realization has attained the highest state of consciousness. In this state the full consciousness which is the fruit of evolution is retained, but the limitations of *sanskaras* and desires are completely transcended. The limited individuality, which is the creation of ignorance, is transformed into the Divine individuality which is unlimited. The

illimitable consciousness of the Universal Soul becomes individualised in this focus without giving rise to any form of illusion.

EVOLUTION THROUGH THE OPPOSITES

THE *Sanskaras* deposited by specific actions and experiences render the mind susceptible to similar actions and experiences; but after a certain point is reached, this tendency is checked and counteracted by a natural *reaction* consisting in a complete change over to its direct opposite, making room for the operation of opposite *Sanskaras*.

A person soon realizes the incompleteness of the experience of one opposite, and he unconsciously seeks to restore the lost balance by going over to the other opposite. Thus the person who has had the experience of killing will develop the psychological need and the susceptibility for getting killed. In killing another person he has appreciated only one portion of the total situation in which he is a party, namely, the part of killing. The other complementary half of the total situation, namely, the role of being killed, remains for him an understood and foreign datum, which, nevertheless, has introduced itself in his experience. There thus arises the *need to complete experience* by attracting on oneself the opposite of that through which one has personally gone, and consciousness has a tendency to fulfil this new and pressing need. In the above example of a person who has had the experience of killing, he will soon develop a tendency to get himself killed in order to cover the entire situation by personal experience.

Like the shuttle of the weaver's loom, the human mind moves within two extremes developing the warp and the woof of the cloth of life. To use a geometrical metaphor, *the development of the psychic life is best represented not as a straight line but as a zig-zag course.* The amount of oscillation becomes less and less as the individual approaches the goal, and it completely subsides when he realizes it.

SANSKARAS

THE acquisition of the *Sanskaras* may be likened to the winding up of a piece of string round a stick, the string representing the *Sanskaras* and the stick representing the mind of the individual soul. The winding up starts from the beginning of the creation and persists through all the evolutionary stages and human form, and the wound string represents all the positive *Sanskaras*—natural as well as non-natural.

It is only when consciousness is unobscured and unconditioned by any *Sanskaras* that the initial will-to-be-conscious arrives at its final and real fruition, and the infinity and the indivisible unity of the absolute is consciously realised.

Human beings do not have self-illumination, because their consciousness is shrouded in *Sanskaras* or the accumulated imprints of past experience. In them the will-to-be-conscious with which evolution started has succeeded in creating consciousness. But it does not arrive at the knowledge of the Oversoul, because the individual soul is impelled to use consciousness for experiencing *Sanskaras*.

instead of utilising it for experiencing its own true nature as the Oversoul.

The release from *Sanskaras* takes place in the following five ways:—

(1) **The cessation of new Sanskaras.**

This consists in putting an end to the ever-renewing activity of creating fresh *Sanskaras*. If the formation of *Sanskaras* is compared to the winding of a string round a stick, this step amounts to the stopping of the further winding of the string.

(2) **The wearing out of old Sanskaras.**

If *Sanskaras* are withheld from expressing themselves in action and experience, they are gradually worn out. In the analogy of the string, this process is comparable to the wearing out of the string at the place where it is.

(3) **The unwinding of past Sanskaras.**

This process consists in annulling past *Sanskaras* by mentally reversing the process which leads to their formation. To develop the analogy of the string, it is like the unwinding of the string.

(4) **The dispersion and exhaustion of some Sanskaras.**

If the psychic energy which is locked up in *Sanskaras* is sublimated and diverted to other channels, they get dispersed and heaved and have a tendency to disappear.

(5) **The wiping out of Sanskaras.**

This consists in completely annihilating *Sanskaras*. In the analogy of the string, this is comparable to the cutting

of the string by means of a pair of scissors. The final wiping out of *Sanskaras* can be effected only by the grace of a Perfect Master.

PERFECTION

THE spiritually perfect souls can exhibit supreme excellence in any mode of life which they may be required to adopt for the spiritual upliftment of other souls.

Perfection does not belong to God as God, nor does it belong to man as man; but we get perfection when man becomes God, or when God becomes man. *Thus we have perfection when the finite transcends its limits and realizes its infinity, or when the Infinite gives up its supposed aloofness and becomes man:* in both cases, the finite and the Infinite do not stand outside each other. When there is a happy and a conscious blending of the finite and the Infinite, we have perfection. Then we have the Infinite revealing itself through the finite without getting limited thereby; and we have the finite transcending its sense of limitation in the full knowledge of its really being the revelation of the Infinite.

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The spirit must and ever will have an inviolable primacy over matter, but the primacy is expressed, not by avoiding or rejecting matter, but by using it as an adequate vehicle for the expressions of the spirit.

The life of the spirit does not consist in turning away from the worldly spheres of existence, but it consists in re-

claiming them for the Divine purpose, which is to bring love, peace, happiness, beauty and spiritual perfection within the reach of everyone. The life of the spirit is to be found in comprehensiveness which is free from clinging, and appreciation which is free from entanglement.

If there is lack of happiness or beauty or goodness in those by whom the Master is surrounded, these very things become for him the opportunity to shower his Divine Love on them, and to redeem them from the state of material or spiritual poverty. So his everyday responses to his worldly environment become expressions of dynamic and creative divinity which spreads itself and spiritualises everything in which he puts his mind.

The ways of the world are almost always a collective effect of the actions of materially inclined people. Worldly people consider something to be right and make it right for persons of similar inclination. Therefore the blind following of convention does not necessarily secure wise action. The life of the spirit cannot be a life of uncritical imitation; it must have its basis in the true understanding of values.

SELFLESS SERVICE

IT is very important that service, even when it is utterly selfless, must be guided by spiritual understanding: for *selfless service when unintelligently handled often creates chaos and complications*. So, if action is to be a pure blessing for the universe, it must be born of consummate understanding of life.

The Master serves the whole universe out of the finality of his infinite consciousness, and those who serve the Master and obey him also have their share in his universal work. Their service has the advantage of his wisdom and insight. Willing participation in the work of the Master not only raises the value of service, but creates best opportunities for spiritual enlightenment. In importance, service originating in the instructions of the Master is second only to the service rendered by the Master himself.

The service which comes after the realization of the Truth is a spontaneous expression of the spiritual understanding of the true nature of the Self: and though it also brings about important results in the objective world, it is in no way complicated by any longing for them. As the sun shines because it is his nature to do so and not because he wants to achieve something through it, the God-realized person also lives a life of self-offering because of the basic structure of the Divine Life which is at the heart of Reality and not because he longs to achieve anything. He does not seek enrichment through attainments, but is already established in the fullness of the realization of the Infinite.

MIND AND HEART

IN the life of most persons the mind and the heart are at loggerheads, and the conflict between the two creates confusion. The mind, in its objective handling of the material world, is saturated with the experiences of multiplicity and separateness, and it, therefore, feeds the ego-

centric tendencies which divide man from man and make him selfish and possessive. But the heart, which in its inner experiences feels the glow of love, gets the glimpses of the unity of the spirit ; and it, therefore seeks expression through the self-giving tendencies which unite man with man and make him selfless and generous.

When the mind encroaches upon the province of the heart, it does so by requiring assurance or conviction as a condition precedent which must be fulfilled before there is a release of love. But love is nothing if it is not spontaneous. It cannot be a conclusion of reasoning. It is not a fruit of the spirit of bargain. *If you want to be certain about the object of love before giving your love, it is only a form of calculating selfishness.*

The mind is the treasure-house of learning : but the heart is the treasure-house of spiritual wisdom. Mind cannot tell you which things are worth having ; it can only tell you how to achieve the ends accepted from non-intellectual sources. In most persons the mind accepts ends from the promptings of wants, but this means the denial of the life of the spirit. It is only when the mind accepts its ends and values from the deepest promptings of the heart, that it contributes to the life of the spirit.

Spiritual understanding is born of the harmony between the mind and the heart. This harmony of the mind and the heart does not require the mixing up of their functions. *It does not imply cross-functioning but co-operative functioning.* Their functions are neither identical nor co-ordinate. The mind and the heart must of course be “balanced”. But this balance cannot be secured by pitching the mind

against the heart or by pitching the heart against the mind. It can be attained *not through mechanical tension but through intelligent adjustment*. The mind and the heart might be said to be balanced when they serve their proper purpose and when they perform their respective functions without erring this way or that way : and it is only when they are so balanced that there can be true harmony between them. Such harmony of the mind and the heart is the most important condition of the integral undivided life of spiritual understanding.

SEX, MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY

MIND turns to mechanical repression of craving because of disappointment ; but it turns to internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving because of disillusionment or awakening.

The value of celibacy lies in the habit of restraint and the sense of detachment and independence which it gives. But as long as the mind is not altogether free from craving there is no true freedom. In the same way, the value of marriage lies in the lessons of mutual adjustment and the sense of unity with the other. But true union or dissolution of duality is possible only through Divine Love which can never dawn so long as there is in the mind the slightest shadow of lust or craving. Only by treading the path of inner and spontaneous renunciation of craving is it possible to attain true freedom and unity. The path of perfection is open to the aspirant whether in celibacy or in marriage ; and whether he begins from celibacy or from marriage will depend upon the sanskaras and the karmic ties of the aspirant.

Promiscuity in sex-gratification is bound to land the aspirant in the most pitiful and dangerous chaos of ungovernable lust.

In promiscuity, the suggestions of lust are necessarily the first to present themselves to the mind which is doomed to react to people with the limitation of this initial perversion and thus close the door to deeper experiences.

Sex in marriage is entirely different from sex outside marriage. In marriage, the *Sanskaras* of lust are much lighter and are capable of being removed more easily. When sex-companionship is accompanied by a sense of responsibility, love and spiritual idealism, conditions for the sublimation of sex are much more favourable than when it is cheap and promiscuous.

In married life, the range of experience in the company of the partner is so wide that the suggestions of lust are not necessarily the first to present themselves to the mind, and there is a real opportunity for the aspirant to recognise and annul the limiting factors in experience. By the gradual elimination of lust and a progression through a series of increasingly richer experiences of love and sacrifice, he can finally arrive at infinity.

The spiritual value of married life is directly relative to the nature of the prepondering factors which determine its daily happenings. If it is based upon shallow considerations it can deteriorate into a partnership in selfishness as against the rest of the world; but if it is inspired by lofty idealism, it can be raised to a fellowship which not only requires and calls forth increasingly greater sacri-

fices for each other but actually becomes a medium through which the two souls can offer their united love and service to the whole family of humanity. When married life is thus brought into direct line with the Divine Plan for the evolution of the individual, it becomes a pure blessing to the children which are the fruit of that marriage, for they get the advantage of imbibing spiritual atmosphere from the very beginning of their earthly career.

From the spiritual point of view, Birth Control must essentially be effected through mental control and nothing else. *Mental power is necessarily undermined by reliance on the physical means.* The use of physical means is detrimental to the development of self-control and is positively disastrous for spiritual advancement; it is therefore under no condition advisable even for the best of motives.

In the beginning of married life the partners are drawn to each other by lust as well as love. But they can with conscious and deliberate co-operation gradually lessen the element of lust and increase the element of love. Through this process of sublimation lust ultimately gives place to deep love. By the mutual sharing of joys and sorrows the partners march on from one spiritual triumph to another spiritual triumph, from deep love to ever deeper love, till the possessive and jealous love of the initial period is entirely replaced by a self-giving and expansive love.

SEARCH FOR GOD

GOD either exists or does not exist: if He exists, search for Him is amply justified; and even if He does not exist there

is nothing to lose by seeking Him. But man does not usually turn to a real search for God as a matter of voluntary and joyous enterprise; he has got to be driven to this search by a disillusionment about those worldly things which allure him and from which he cannot take away his mind.

When a man carries on an intelligent and purposive experimentation with his own life, he gets deeper and deeper comprehension of the true meaning of life, until finally he discovers that as he was undergoing a complete transformation of his psychic being he was arriving at the true perception of the real significance of life *as it is*. With the clear and tranquil vision of the real nature and worth of Life he realises that *God, whom he has been so desperately seeking is no stranger or a hidden and foreign entity.* He is the *Reality itself and not a hypothesis;* he is the Reality as seen with undimmed vision—that very Reality of which he is a part and in which he has had his entire being and with which he is in fact identical. So, *though he begins by seeking something utterly new he really arrives at a new understanding of the Ancient thing.* The spiritual journey does not consist in arriving at a new destination in the sense of having what a person did not have or, in the sense of his being, what he was not; but it consists in the dissipation of his ignorance concerning himself and life. *The finding of God is coming to one's own self.*

LOVE

THE functioning of love and reason is of three types. In the first type, the sphere of thought and the sphere of

love are kept as separate as possible, i.e., the sphere of love is practically inaccessible to the operation of reason; and love is allowed little or no access to the objects of thought. Complete separation between these two aspects of the spirit is of course never possible; but when there is an alternate functioning of love and reason (with both oscillating in their predominance) we have *a love which is unilluminated by reason or a reason which is unenlivened by love*. In the second type, love and reason are both simultaneously operative but they *do not work in harmony with each other*. But though this conflict creates confusion, it is a necessary phase in the evolution of the higher state where there is a real synthesis of love and reason. In the third type of love this synthesis between love and reason is an accomplished fact with the result that *both love as well as reason are so completely transformed that they precipitate the emergence of a new level of consciousness* which (in comparison with the normal human consciousness) is best described as *super-consciousness*.

Infatuation, lust and greed might be looked upon as perverted and lower forms of love. In infatuation a person gets *enamoured* of a sensual object; in lust he develops a *craving* for sensations in relation to it; and in greed he desires to possess it.

In infatuation, the person is a *passive victim* of the spell of conceived attraction of the object; but in love there is an *active appreciation* of the intrinsic worth of the object of love.

Love is also different from lust. In lust, there is a reliance upon the *object of sense* and consequent spiritual

subordination of the soul in relation to it; but love puts the soul into direct and *co-ordinate* relation with the *Reality* which is behind the form. Therefore, lust is experienced as being *heavy* and love is experienced as being *light*. In lust, there is a *narrowing down* of life and in love there is an *expansion* in being. *To have loved one soul is like adding its life to your own*, your life is, as it were, multiplied and you virtually live in two centres. If you love the whole world, you vicariously live in the whole world. But in lust there is the ebbing down of life and the general sense of hopeless dependence upon a form which is regarded as *another*. Thus, in lust there is the *accentuation of separateness and suffering*; but in love—there is the *feeling of unity and joy*. Lust is dissipation; love is recreation. Lust is a craving of the senses; love is the expression of the spirit. Lust *seeks* fulfilment but love *experiences* fulfilment. In lust, there is *excitement*; but in love there is *tranquility*.

Love is equally different from greed. Greed is possessiveness in all its gross and subtle forms. It seeks to appropriate gross things and persons as well as the abstract and intangible things like fame and power. In love, the annexation of the other person to your individual life is out of question and there is a free and creative outpouring that enlivens and replenishes the psychic being of the beloved independently of any expectations for the self. And we have the paradox, that *greed which seeks for the self the appropriation of another object does in fact lead to the opposite result of bringing the self under the tutelage of the object; and love which aims at giving away the self to the object does in fact lead to a spiritual incorporation of the beloved in the very being of the lover.* *In greed the self tries to possess the object, but is itself spiritually possessed by the*

object; and in love the self offers itself to the beloved without any reservations, but in that very act it finds that it has included the beloved in its own being.

Pure love which is awakened through the Grace of the Master is more valuable than any other method which may be adopted by the aspirant. Such love not only combines in itself the merits of all the disciplines but excels them all in its efficacy to lead the aspirant to his Goal. When this love is born the aspirant has only one desire; and that one desire is to be united with the Divine Beloved. Such withdrawal of consciousness from all other desires leads to infinite purity; nothing purifies the aspirant more completely than this love. The aspirant is ever willing to offer everything for the Divine Beloved; and no sacrifice is too difficult for him. All his thoughts are turned away from the self and come to be exclusively centred on the Divine Beloved. And *through the intensity of this ever-growing love he eventually breaks through the shackles of the self and becomes united with the Beloved.* This is the consummation of love. When love has thus found its fruition it has become *Divine.*

Divine Love is qualitatively different from human love. Human love is for the *many in the One* and Divine Love is for the *One in the many*. Human Love leads to innumerable complications and tangles; but Divine Love leads to integration and freedom. In human love the duality of the lover and the Beloved persists; but in Divine Love *the lover and the Beloved become one.* At this stage, the aspirant has stepped out of the domain of duality and become one with God; for Divine Love is God. *When the lover and the Beloved are one, that is the end and the beginning.*

It is because of love that the contacts and relations between individual souls become significant; and it is love which gives meaning and value to all the happenings in the world of duality. But, *while love gives meaning to the world of duality, it is at the same time, a standing challenge to duality.* As love gathers strength, it generates creative restlessness and becomes the main driving power of that spiritual dynamics which ultimately succeeds in *restoring to consciousness the original Unity of Being.*

THE PATH AND THE PLANES

THE traversing of the spiritual Path consists in the undoing of the results of the false working of imagination, or the dropping of the several folds of the veil which has created the sense of unassailable separateness and unredeemable isolation.

Each definite stage of advancement represents a state of consciousness; and the advancement from one state of consciousness to another proceeds side by side with the crossing of the inner planes. Thus there are six intermediate planes and states of consciousness which have to be experienced before getting established in the seventh plane which is the end of the journey and where there is a final realisation of the God-state. The plane is comparable with a railway station where the train halts for some time; and the state of consciousness is comparable to the movement of the passenger after getting down at the station.

When the aspirant enters a new plane he gets merged into it and along with the lowering down of mental activity he experiences a substantial diminution in the ego-life. This

curtailment of the ego-life is different from the final annihilation of the Ego, which takes place at the seventh plane.

GOD-REALIZATION

To arrive at true self-knowledge is to arrive at God-realization. God-realization is an unique state of consciousness. It is different from all the other states of consciousness because all the other states of consciousness are experienced through the medium of the individual mind whereas the state of God-consciousness is in no way dependent upon the individual mind or any other medium. *A medium is necessary for knowing something other than one's own self: for knowing one's own self no medium is necessary.*

In God-realization, the soul drops its separate consciousness and transcends duality in the abiding knowledge of its identity with the Infinite Reality; *the shackles of limited individuality are broken; the world of shadows is at an end: the curtain of illusion is for ever drawn: the feverishness and the agonising distress of the pursuits of limited consciousness are replaced by the tranquility and bliss of Truth-consciousness: and the restlessness and fury of temporal existence are swallowed up in the peace and stillness of Eternity.*

MASTERS AND DISCIPLESHP

THOSE who are unconscious of their divinity can have no idea of the God-state; they are only conscious of the

body-state. In order that they should inherit the God-state they have to love, worship and be guided by the Master who is constantly dwelling in the God-state.

The Master is supremely impersonal and all the time his only concern is to remove the veils between the consciousness of the disciple and his Higher Self. So there can never be any real conflict between the allegiance of the disciple to his Master and his allegiance to his own Higher Self. Indeed, at the end of his search, *the disciple discovers that the Master is none other than his own Higher Self in another form*. The Master in his utter impersonality and unhampered divinity is so complete that he has nothing to desire for himself; and in relation to the disciple all that he requires is that the disciple should reconstitute himself in the light of the Highest Truth. To become a disciple is to begin to tread the Path leading towards the spiritual goal. This is the meaning of true discipleship.

The aspirant has to walk his own way: but the contribution of the Master consists in confirming and consolidating the previously acquired intuitions and perceptions of the aspirant and in precipitating his consciousness into the next stage which, though unavoidable, is by its nature, incapable of being anticipated by him.

Since the Master is, for the aspirant, a symbol of the Supreme Self in all, the problem of true adjustment with the Master comes to him as being the same as the problem of realising his own inner divinity and arriving at true adjustment with all other forms of the Supreme Self. Through his allegiance to the Master, the aspirant gives

effect to his conscious appreciation of the fundamental unity of all these problems; and from the point of view of psychological strategy, he is in a position to tackle them not as separate problems but as aspects of one problem, so that he can arrive at true integration which is different from a temporary compromise between conflicting claims. In order to be able to help the disciple to achieve this difficult task the Master has to become the nucleus of all the spiritual idealism of the aspirant, because intensive concentration of psychic energy is necessary if the aspirant is to break through the many barriers which lie between him and his goal.

Obedience to the Master as implied in full self-surrender is of two kinds : (1) intellectual and (2) literal. Of these two types of obedience *intellectual obedience comes first, and is a preliminary to literal obedience* which is more fruitful.

Literal obedience is not even bound by the requirement that the real significance of the orders should be within the intellectual comprehension of the pupil and it is the best type of obedience which you can aspire for. *Through such implicit and unquestioning obedience all the crooked knots of your desires and sanskaras are set straight ; and it is through such obedience that a deep link is created between the Master and the pupil, with the result that there is an unhindered and perennial flow of spiritual wisdom and power into the pupil.*

THE EGO AND ITS TERMINATION

THE formation of the Ego serves the purpose of giving a certain amount of stability to conscious processes and also

secures a working equilibrium which makes for a planned and organised life. It would therefore, be a mistake to imagine that the arising of the Ego is without any purpose. Though it arises only to vanish in the end, it does temporarily fulfil a need which could not have been ignored in the long-drawn journey of the soul.

The Ego thus marks and fulfils a certain necessity in the further progress of consciousness. But since *the Ego takes its shelter in the false idea of being the body*, it is a source of much illusion which vitiates experience. *It is of the essence of the Ego that it should feel separate from the rest of life by contrasting itself against the other forms of life.*

In the ripeness of evolution, comes the momentous discovery that *life cannot be understood and lived fully as long as it is made to move round the pivot of the Ego:* and man is, therefore, driven by the logic of his own experience *to find the true centre of experience and reorganise his life in the Truth.* This entails the wearing out of the Ego and its replacement by Truth-consciousness. The disintegration of the Ego is a condition of realising the Truth. *The false nucleus of the consolidated sanskaras must disappear if there is to be a true integration and fulfilment of life.*

While provisionally serving a useful purpose in the development and progress of consciousness, *the Ego, as an affirmation of separateness, constitutes the chief hindrance to the spiritual emancipation and enlightenment of consciousness.*

Every thought, feeling or action which springs from the idea of exclusive or separate existence binds; all experiences—small or great—and all aspirations—good or bad—create a load of impressions and nourish the sense of the 'I'. *The only experience which makes for the slimming down of the Ego is the experience of love and the only aspiration which makes for relieving the sense of separateness is the longing for becoming one with the Beloved.* Craving, hatred, anger, fear and jealousy are all exclusive attitudes which create a gulf between oneself and the rest of life; *love alone is an inclusive attitude which helps towards the bridging over of this artificial and self-created gulf and which tends to break through the separative barrier of false imagination.* The lover too longs; but he longs for union with the Beloved; and in seeking or experiencing union with the Beloved the sense of the 'I' becomes feeble. In love, the 'I' does not think of self-preservation, just as the moth is not at all afraid of getting burnt in the fire. *The Ego is the affirmation of being separate from the other: and love is the affirmation of being one with the other: so the Ego can be dissolved only through real love.*

The Ego is implemented by desires of varied types. The failure in the fulfilment of desires is a failure of the Ego; and success in the attainment of desired objects is a success of the Ego. *Through the fulfilled desires as well as through the unfulfilled ones the Ego gets accentuated.* The Ego can even feed upon the comparative lull in the surging desires and asserts its separative tendency through feeling that it is desireless. *But when there is a real cessation of all desires, there is a cessation of the desire to assert separateness in any form: therefore, a real freedom from all desires brings about the end of the existence of the*

Ego. The bundle of the Ego is made of the faggots of multi-coloured desires; and the breaking of these faggots amounts to the destruction of the Ego.

The limited Ego of explicit consciousness is only a small fragment of the real being of the Ego. The Ego is like the ice-berg floating in the sea. About one-eighth of the ice-berg remains above the surface of the water and is visible to the onlooker; and about seven-eighth portion of the ice-berg remains submerged below the level of the water and remains invisible to the onlooker. In the same way, *only a small portion of the real Ego becomes manifest in consciousness in the form of an explicit 'I'; and the major portion of the real Ego remains submerged in the dark and inarticulate sanctuaries of the sub-conscious mind.*

If the Ego is submitted to curtailment in one direction it seeks compensating expansion in another direction: and, if is overpowered by a flood of spiritual notions, and actions, it even tends to fasten upon this very force which is originally brought into play for the ousting of the Ego.

When through the grace of the Master, the ignorance which constitutes the Ego is dispelled, there is the dawn of Truth, which is the goal of all creation.

The superiority complex and the inferiority complex have to be brought into intelligent relation with each other if they are to counteract each other; and this requires a psychic situation, in which they will both, for the time being, be allowed to have their play at one and the same time, without requiring the repression of the one in order to secure the expression of the other. When the soul

enters into a dynamic and vital relation with the Master, the complexes concerned with the sense of inferiority and the sense of superiority are both brought into play and they are so intelligently accommodated with each other that they counteract each other. In himself, the disciple feels that he is *nothing*; but in and through the Master, he is enlivened by the prospect of being *everything*. *Thus, at one stroke, the two complexes are brought into mutual tension and tend to annihilate each other, through the attempt which the person makes for adjusting himself to the Master.* With the dissolution of these opposite complexes there comes the breaking down of the separative barriers of the Ego in all its forms; with the breaking down of the barriers of separation there arises divine love; and with the arising of divine love, the separate feeling of the 'I', as distinguished from 'you', is swallowed up in the sense of their unity.

The Master, when truly understood, is a standing affirmation of the unity of all life; allegiance to the Master, therefore brings about a gradual dissociation with the Ego-nucleus which affirms separateness. When the Ego-nucleus is completely bankrupt and devoid of any power or being, the Master as Truth is firmly established in consciousness as its guiding genius and animating principle. This is at once the attainment of union with the Master and the realisation of the Infinite Truth.

The long journey of the soul consists in developing from animal consciousness the explicit self-consciousness as a limited 'I' and then to transcending the state of the limited 'I' through the medium of the Master, in order to get initiated into the consciousness of the Supreme and Real Self, as an everlasting and Infinite 'I Am', in which there is no separateness and which includes all existence.

OCCULTISM AND SPIRITUALITY

VERY often, when the aspirant is having psychic unfoldment, he has occasional experience of the subtle world in the form of significant visions, lights, colours, sounds, smells or contacts. To start with, these experiences are fitful and the aspirant is likely to treat them as hallucinations. But, even when he treats them as hallucinations, he finds it impossible to resist their directive influence because of their intrinsic potency.

Occult experiences are vouchsafed to the aspirant if and when they are absolutely necessary for spiritual purposes and not when he wants or asks for them. Occult experiences often bear unmistakable credentials of their own claim to validity: and even when any such credentials are not patent on their very face, they compel due respect and attention because of the unusual significance, bliss, peace and directive value with which they are surcharged. The bliss and peace which are attendant upon real occult experiences is a fairly reliable criterion to distinguish them from hallucinations and delusions.

The astral journeys which are undertaken unconsciously are much less important than those which are undertaken with full consciousness and as a result of deliberate volition.

When the occult experiences are gifts from the Masters or spiritually advanced souls, they serve the purpose of unveiling much of the hitherto obscured intuition, removing some of the difficulties on the Path and filling the aspirant with the great confidence and enthusiasm which are necessary to cope

with the new requirements of each stage of the Path. But, the aspirant makes real progress by putting into practice the best intuitions of his heart and not merely by being the passive recipient of occult experiences.

When people come to a Perfect Master and touch his feet with their hands, they lay the burden of their sanskaras on him. He collects the sanskaras from all over the universe, just as an ordinary person, in walking, collects dust on his feet.

When the internal eye is opened, God who is the object of search and longing is actually sighted. As the gaze of the soul is turned inward and fixed upon the supreme reality, the desire for establishing union with it becomes much more ardent than when the soul is groping for God through mere speculation or imagination. When the time is ripe, the Master can open this internal eye in less than a second.

Ultimately, the aspirant has to realize that God is the only reality and that he is really one with God. This implies that he should not be overpowered by the spectacle of the multiform universe. In fact, *the whole universe is in the self and springs into existence from a tiny point in the self which is referred to as 'Om'.*

The Siddhis have their field in the nothingness which is the universe ; and the person who realizes God is permanently and immovably established in the supreme reality. But, although the whole universe is like a zero to the God-realized person, he may voluntarily assume responsibility towards those souls, who are enmeshed in the tangles of

the universe ; and, in that case, he can freely and legitimately make use of his occult powers for the spiritual good of others.

There is a very clear and definite distinction between occultism and mysticism, spiritualism and spirituality ; and any failure to grasp the full import of this difference can but lead to confusion. The occult phenomena are as much within the domain of false imagination as ordinary phenomena of the gross world ; and, from the spiritual point of view, the only important thing is to realize the Divine Life and help others to realize it, by manifesting it in the every-day happenings. To penetrate into the essence of all being and significance and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing, in the world of forms, truth, love, purity, and beauty,—this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents and attainments can, in themselves, have no lasting importance.

MEDITATION

MEDITATION may be described as *the path which the individual cuts for himself, while trying to get beyond the limitations of the mind.* Intelligence plays an important part in the course of meditation : and, *it is this intelligence, which is kindled by the Master by giving to the aspirant a few simple suggestions about what kinds of things he has to do or expect in his meditations.* Any purely mechanical handling of the mind *is not only irksome but is ultimately bound to be unsuccessful.*

By recognising the irrelevance and worthlessness of the disturbing thoughts and the relative value and importance of the object of meditation, it becomes possible to leave the disturbing thoughts to themselves to die their natural death, through sheer neglect, and to make the mind steady in the object of meditation.

There are three types of meditation:—

In the first type of meditation, the intellect is predominantly brought into play and it might be called '*discriminative meditation*'. In the second type of meditation, the heart is predominantly brought into play and it might be called the '*meditation of the heart*'.' In the third type of meditation, the active nature of man is predominantly brought into play and it might be called '*the meditation of action*.' Discriminative meditation is represented by the intellectual assertion of a formula like 'I am not my body (gross, subtle or mental), but the Infinite'; the meditation of the heart is represented by a steady and unhampered flow of love from the aspirant to the Master as the Divine Beloved; and, the meditation of action is represented an unreserved dedication of one's life to the selfless service of the Master and humanity.

The Table of General Classification of the Types of
Meditation.

A		THE VARIED FORMS OF 'MEDITATION' BEFORE A PERSON BECOMES AN ASPIRANT (<i>Sadhaka</i>).		
		i	General medita-tion or the assimila-tion of the Divine Truths.	1 Philosophical think-ing. 2 Hearing a discourse from the Masters. 3 Reading the written expositions of the Masters.
B	FORMS OF THE MEDITA-TION OF THE AS-PIRANT.	ii	<i>Specialised meditation</i> which selects some definite items of experience.	1 Meditation con-cerned with the <i>ob-jects</i> of experience. 2 Meditation con-cerned with the <i>sub-ject</i> of experience. 3 Meditation con-cerned with <i>mental operations</i> .
C <i>SAHAJ SAMADHI</i> OR THE MEDITATION OF THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY PERFECT (<i>Siddha</i>).				1 <i>Nirvana</i> or Absorp-tion. 2 <i>Nirvikalpa Samadhi</i> or Divinity in ex-pression.

The Table of Enumerative Classification of the Forms of Specialised Meditation.

		1	Meditation on the Divine Qualities of the Master.	FORMS OF PERSONAL MEDITATION.
		2	Concentration on the <i>Form</i> of the Master.	
		3	The Meditation of the <i>Heart</i> .	
A	Meditation concerned with the <i>objects</i> of experience.	4	The Meditation of <i>Action</i> .	
		5	Meditation regarding the numerous forms of manifested life.	
		6	Meditation regarding one's own bodies.	
		7	Meditation on the <i>Formless and Infinite aspect of God</i> .	
B	Meditation concerned with the <i>subject</i> of experience.	8	Quest for the <i>Agent of Action</i> .	FORMS OF IMPERSONAL MEDITATION.
		9	Considering oneself as the <i>witness</i> .	
C	Meditation concerned with <i>mental operations</i> .	10	Writing down thoughts	
		11	Watching mental operations.	
		12	Making the mind blank.	

The sense of spontaneity, experienced in the pre-spiritual 'meditations' concerned with worldly objects and pursuits, is due to the interests created by *sanskaras*. *The pre-spiritual 'Meditations' are the working out of the momentum of accumulated sanskaras of the past ; and they are not only far from being the expression of true freedom, but are actually symptoms of spiritual bondage.* At the pre-spiritual level, man is engulfed in unrelieved ignorance concerning the goal of infinite freedom ; and, though he is far from being happy and contented, he gets so deeply identified with *sanskariic interests*, that he experiences gratification in their furtherance. But the pleasure of his pursuits is conditional and transitory, and the *spontaneity which he experiences in them is illusory*, because, through all his pursuits his mind is working under limitations.

The mind is capable of genuine freedom and spontaneity of action only when it is completely free from *sanskariic ties and interests*, and this is possible only when it is merged in the state of the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha*. It is, therefore, important to note that though there may seem to be a superficial resemblance between the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha* and the pre-spiritual 'meditations' of the worldly man, this resemblance really hides the important difference between illusory spontaneity and true spontaneity, bondage and freedom, fleeting pleasure and abiding happiness. *In the pre-spiritual meditations, the movement of the mind is under unconscious compulsion, and in Sahaj Samadhi, mental activity is released under conscious and unfettered initiative.*

All the different forms of Meditation in which the aspirant might be engaged, directly or indirectly, aim

at securing a complete merging of the mind in the Infinite Truth.

For the few, who are in advanced spiritual state, most of the ordinary forms of meditation are unnecessary. In the same way, for those who are in direct contact with a God-realized Master, many of the special forms of meditation are often not necessary. It is enough for them to be under the guidance of the Master, and to have love for him.

When the mind is rightly turned to the object of meditation, it merges in the Truth and experiences *Sahaj Samadhi* or a state of spontaneous enjoyment of uninterrupted self-knowledge, in which the aspirant loses his limited individuality, to discover that he is identical with God, who is in everything.

The State of God-consciousness is infinite in every respect ; and it is characterised by unlimited understanding, purity, love and happiness. *To be initiated in Sahaj Samadhi is to arrive at the endlessness of the life in Eternity.*

When the soul comes out of the ego-shell and enters into the infinite life of God, *its limited individuality is replaced by unlimited individuality.* The soul knows that it is God-conscious and thus *preserves its individuality.* The important point is that individuality is not entirely extinguished ; but it is retained in the spiritualised form. However, though the unlimited individuality of the soul is, in a way, retained in the Union with the Infinite, *it may remain eternally quiescent in the experience of self-contained divinity.* None comes back to the world consciousness from this state of *Nirvana* or absorption. In

very few cases, however, the soul, which has just entered the infinite life of God, establishes its unlimited individuality through the release of dynamic divinity. This is the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Nirvikalpa* state.

EVOLUTION THROUGH GROSS, SUBTLE AND MENTAL WORLDS

WHILE developing full consciousness of the gross world in the human form, the soul *simultaneously* develops the subtle and the mental bodies ; but, as long as its consciousness is confined to the gross world alone, it cannot use these bodies *consciously* in wakefulness. It becomes conscious of these bodies and the corresponding worlds only when its full consciousness turns *inwards*, i.e., towards itself. When the soul is conscious of the subtle world through the subtle body, it identifies itself with the subtle body, and when it is conscious of the mental world through the mental body, it identifies itself with the mental body, just as when it is conscious of the gross world through the gross body, it identifies itself with the gross body. The homeward journey of the soul consists in freeing itself from the illusion of being identical with its bodies—gross, subtle and mental.

In the beginning, the soul was unconscious of its identity with the Over-soul, and hence, though a part and parcel of the Over-soul, it could not realise its own identity with it or experience Infinite Peace, Bliss, Power and Knowledge, because it had not evolved consciousness. Even after the evolution of consciousness it cannot realise the state of the Over-soul (although it is all the time in and with the Over-soul) because its consciousness is confined

to the phenomenal world owing to the *sanskaras* connected with the evolution of consciousness. Even on the Path, the soul is not conscious of itself, but it is conscious only of the gross, subtle and mental worlds, which are its own illusory shadows. But at the end of the Path, *the soul frees itself from all sanskaras and desires connected with the gross, subtle and mental worlds; and it becomes possible for it to free itself from the illusion of being finite, which comes into existence owing to its identification with the gross, subtle and mental bodies.* At this stage, the soul completely transcends the phenomenal world and becomes *self-conscious and self-realised*. For attaining this goal, the soul must retain its full consciousness and at the same time know itself to be different from the *Sharira* (gross body) *Prana* (subtle body, which is the vehicle of desires and vital forces) and *Manas* (mental body, which is the seat of the mind), and also as being *beyond* the gross, subtle and mental worlds.

REINCARNATION AND KARMA

The overwhelming importance of death is derived from man's attachment to *particular* forms; but death loses much of its sting and importance, even for the worldly man, if he takes a broader view of the course of life. *In spite of the transitoriness of forms, and, in fact, even in and through these forms, there is an unbroken continuity of life, discarding old forms and forging new ones for its habitation and expression.* The recurring incident of death is matched by the recurring incident of birth; in spite of the unceasing activity of the hand of death, life continues to flourish; old generations are replaced by new ones; *life is reborn in new forms, incessantly renewing and*

refreshing itself: the streams of life, with their ancient origin, are ever advancing onwards through the forms, which come and go like the waves of the ocean.

Hell and heaven are states of the mind : they should not be looked upon as being places; and, though, from the subjective point of view, they mean a great deal for the individualised soul, they are both illusions within the greater illusion of the phenomenal world.

The experiences of earthly life as well as the reflective and consolidatory processes to which they are subjected in life after death, are both merely instrumental in gradually releasing to the surface the intuitive wisdom, which is already latent in the soul from the very beginning of creation.

For most purposes, knowledge about past lives is not at all necessary for the guidance of the onward course of spiritual evolution. Spiritual evolution consists in guiding life in the light of the highest values, perceived through intuition and in allowing it to be determined by the past.

Though the facilities afforded by each sex are variable, according to the age and the place, in which the incarnation takes place, it still remains true that *each sex affords special facilities for the development of experience along specific lines*. The lessons which are readily learnt in male incarnations, may not be easily attainable through female incarnations; and the lessons which are readily learnt in female incarnations, may not be easily attainable in male incarnations. *Men, as a rule, excel in the qualities of the head and will;* they are capable of sound judgment and steadfast purpose. *Women, as a rule, excel in the qualities of the heart;* they are

capable of intense love, which makes them welcome any sacrifice for the loved one.

The soul must go through male incarnations as well as female incarnations, if it is to have that richness of experience, which is a condition of attaining the realisation that, the soul, in itself, is beyond all forms of duality, including the accentuated duality based on sex.

The problem of sex-duality is a part of the problem of duality as such; and, its complete solution comes, when the wider problem of all duality is solved through the Divine Love, in which there is neither 'I' nor 'You', neither man nor woman.

In the world of physical events, there is the law of *conservation of energy* according to which no energy is ever lost; and in the world of values there is the law that *once Karma comes into existence, it does not mysteriously flitter away, without leading to its natural result, but persists until it bears its own fruit or is undone through counter-Karma*. Good actions lead to good results; and bad actions lead to bad results.

If a person has done an evil turn to some one, he must receive the penalty for it and welcome the *evil rebounding upon himself*; and if he has done a good turn to some one, he must also receive the reward for it and enjoy the *good rebounding upon himself*. *What he does for another, he has also done for himself, although it may take time for him to realise that this is exactly so. The law of Karma might be said to be an expression of justice or a reflection of the unity of life, in the world of duality.*

The drama of the continued life of the individual soul has many acts. The actors are so engrossed in their respective roles, that they treat them as being the be-all and end-all of all existence; and for the major part of their continued life (running into innumerable incarnations) they are unconscious of the closely guarded truth that *the author of the drama, in his imaginative production, himself became all the actors and played the game of hide and seek, in order to come into full and conscious possession of his own creative infinity.* The infinity has to go through the illusion of finitehood to know itself as infinity; and, the author has to go through the phases of the actors, to know himself as the author of *the greatest detective story worked out through the cycles of creation.*

CONDITIONS OF REALIZING ME

Those who would realize Me, must have intense longing for Union with Me, unassailable peace of mind, unfailing humility, desperate search, unquestioning faith, unwavering fidelity, control, which is born of love, the spirit of selfless service, which is unfettered by attachment to results, thorough-going renunciation, spontaneous obedience, whole-hearted surrenderance and self-giving love.

THE SEVEN REALITIES

The only real Existence is that of the one and the only God, who is the Self in every one; the only real Love is the love for God; the only real Sacrifice is that, which knows no reservations; the only real Renunciation

is the giving up of all selfish thoughts and desires even in the midst of worldly duties; the only real Knowledge is the understanding that God is the inner dweller in all, irrespective of whether they are good or bad; the only real Control is the turning away of the senses from the objects of low desires; and the only real Surrender is that in which the individual accepts the will of God with complete resignation.

THE GOD-MAN

IT is only when the soul attains God-realization on the seventh plane, that the soul gets full control over its joy ; *the unlimited happiness, which is eternally his, does not, in any way, unbalance him because he is now permanently established in the poise of non-duality.* No longer for him is the extravagance of newly found love and joy ; the occasional unsettlement owing to the on-flow of increasing joy at the closer proximity of God is also over, because he is now inseparably united with Him. He is lost in the Divine Beloved and merged into Him, so that he becomes one with God ; he becomes the Infinite Ocean of unbounded happiness.

The happiness of the God-realized person is unconditional and self-sustained ; and it is therefore eternally the same, not admitting of ebb and flow ; he has arrived at unqualified finality and unassailable equanimity. *The happiness of the saints is born of increasing proximity and closer intimacy with the Divine Beloved, which, however, remains an externalised another ; but the happiness of the God-realised is an inalienable aspect of the God-state, in which there is no duality. The happiness of the saints is*

derivative ; but the happiness of the God-realised is self-grounded. The happiness of the saints comes into existence due to the increasing installations of the Divine Grace ; but the happiness of the God-realised merely IS.

In the ordinary man of the world, the limited individuality, which is identified with a finite name and form, predominates and creates a veil of ignorance on the God within ; and if this ignorance is to disappear, the limited individual has to surrender his own limited existence. When he goes from the scene without leaving a vestige of his limited life, what remains is God. *The surrenderance of limited existence is the surrenderance of a firmly rooted delusion of having a separate existence. It is not the surrenderance of anything real : it is the surrenderance of the false and the inheritance of the Truth.*

The soul in bondage, is tied to the world of forms by the chain of *sanskaras*, which create the illusion consisting in the identification of the soul with the bodies. *The disharmony within consciousness and the perversions in the expression of the will arise out of the sanskaric identification with the bodies and not merely due to the consciousness of the bodies.* Since the God-man is free from all *sanskaras*, he is constantly conscious of being different from bodies, and uses them harmoniously as mere instruments for the expression of the Divine Will, in its Purity.

The God-man realizes the Truth. He is conscious of the true nature of God, as well as the true nature of creation, and yet this does not involve for him any consciousness of duality, because for him, creation does not exist as anything but the changing shadow of God, Who is the only Eternal and Real Existence, and Who is at the heart of creation.

As God, the God-man sees all souls as his own; he sees himself in everything and his universal mind includes all the minds in its scope. The God-man knows himself to be one with all the other souls in bondage. *Although he knows himself to be identical with God and is thus eternally free, he also knows himself to be one with the other souls in bondage and is thus vicariously bound*: and though he constantly experiences the eternal Bliss of God-realization, he also vicariously experiences suffering owing to the bondage of other souls, whom he knows to be his own forms. This is the meaning of *Christ's Crucifixion*. The God-man is, as it were, continuously being crucified; and he is continuously taking birth. In the God-man, the purpose of creation has been completely realised; and he has nothing to obtain for himself by remaining in the world; yet he retains his bodies and continues to use them for emancipating other souls from bondage and helping them to attain God-consciousness.

The state of perfection, in which the God-man dwells is beyond all forms of duality and opposites; it is a state of unlimited freedom and unimpaired completeness, immortal sweetness, and undying happiness, untarnished divinity and unhampered creativity. The God-man is inseparably united with God for ever and dwells in a state of non-duality in the very midst of duality; and he not only knows himself to be one with all, but also knows himself to be the only one.

The God-man may be said to be the Lord and Servant of the Universe at one and the same time; as one, who showers his spiritual bounty on all, in measureless abundance, he is the Lord of the Universe; and as one, who continuously bears the burden of all and helps them through numberless spiritual difficulties, he is the Servant

of the Universe. And, just as he is Lord and Servant in one, he is also the supreme Lover and the matchless Beloved. The Love, which he gives or receives, goes to free the soul from ignorance. In giving Love, he gives it to himself in other forms; and in receiving Love, he receives what has been awakened through his own Grace, which is continuously showered on all without distinctions. The Grace of the God-man is like the rain, which equally falls on all lands, irrespective of whether they are barren or fertile; but it fructifies only in the lands, which have been rendered fertile, through arduous and patient toiling.

The Banyan Tree grows huge and mighty, giving shade and shelter to the travellers and protecting them from the sun, rain and storm; and in the fullness of its growth, its descending rooting branches strike deep into the fallow ground to create, in due time, another full-grown Banyan Tree, which also not only becomes equally huge and mighty, giving shade and shelter to the travellers and protecting them from the sun, rain and storm, but has the same potential power to create similar full-grown Banyan Tree. The same is true of the God-man, who arouses the God-man latent in others.



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