

Evolutionary Spiritualism

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A sincere keenness to understand the meaning of life, an earnest desire to make the best of it, and a sympathetic awareness of life around indicate that one is ready for the path of conscious self-endeavour in Evolution.

The following is addressed to those who are so.

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OUR STAND-POINT

I

We do not disdain reason. We cannot disdain it, for it has a great value. Through reason we pass beyond reason. Reason makes man what he is, and we must be men before we can attain to God-hood. We must give reason its due, but we cannot accord to it the highest place in our endeavour. We have to scale the skies to secure a grip of the higher facts of evolution. Poor reason does not have the wings to soar through the airless skies.

Reason is variously limited. We reason from our past experience. It may be ours directly or indirectly, *i. e.* by transmission from others. But, experience is growing every moment. The growth of science in our century has opened up vast vistas of undreamt of knowledge. And, there is no end to its future widening. We have been changing our views about thoughts and things in the past; there is every likelihood that we shall do so in the future. So, there can be no finality in reason.

The personal co-efficient of the thinker is another serious limitation. Scientific experimentation tries to

eliminate it by the use of accurate instruments which record readings mechanically. But, as we enter the domain of philosophy, this personal factor becomes absolutely unavoidable. We have no instruments which can reason mechanically, and record the conclusions in the same way. Nor does such an instrument seem to be possible. For, philosophy is life; it grows out of life and moulds it. Life at the human level is inseparably wedded to personality. The so called Pure Reason alienates one from factual life.

This personal co-efficient comes into play in various ways. The thinker, his environment and his life-experiences all bear influence. A sensitively organised person tends to be an idealist, and a thick-skinned one, a realist. A nervous wreck is prone to have a negative outlook on life. A person unconsciously breathes in the atmosphere in which he lives. It affects his outlook. An age of depression influences a philosopher as also a poet. Renaissance in a country tends to produce a renaissance in philosophy and *vice versa*.

The experiences of a man's life colour his reason. A life full of disappointments tends to make him a determinist. A life of successful endeavour, on the other hand, makes him an indeterminist. If we know a man, the conditions of his birth, growth and education, and the important events of his life, we can understand why he reasons as he does.

Reason is fluctuating. We are changing our opinions about thoughts, things and persons. A single event may

cause us to change our great appreciation for a person into an intense detestation. An incident, *e. g.*, the death of a beloved one, may change our outlook on life and we may begin to reason differently. Our reason is very unreasonable in its vagaries.

The reasoning mind is closely linked with '*prāṇa*'* and emotional mind. They both are reasonless and unsteady. As long as they have their grip on the reasoning mind, it is natural that it should be unsteady. It can be steady only when it is freed from their influence. Then, we can talk of Pure Reason; not till then.

So far we have considered the limitations of reason. We shall now consider a grievous limitation of the human mind.

We take the world as an objective reality. 'It is there outside us exactly as we experience and deal with it; neither more nor less than that'. But, that is not true. Modern science has widened the range of our vision; and we know that it is much more than what we know it to be ordinarily.

Our eyes can catch only a limited range of light vibrations. We are blind to vibrations beyond that range, both above and below. The ultra-violet and infra-red lights we cannot see. Similar is the case with our ears. They can catch only a limited range of sound vibrations. Higher and lower notes they cannot. Our other sense-organs also suffer from similar handicaps. Hence, what

*'*prāṇa*' is the vital aspect of our being.

we sense with our organs is not all that exists. There is much besides, and who can say how much.

To a man born blind this world is different. It is much less than what it is to us, being without colour and light to him. He can have no conception of light and colour at all. To a person born deaf, it is devoid of sounds. To a man who can catch more of light and sound vibrations than we can, it would be much more than it is to us.

If there were a being who could catch vibrations different from those which we can, his world would be entirely different from ours, though factually the same. He could not know us, nor we him. No mutual communication could be possible. If it were possible, there would be no agreement between us regarding the nature of the world in which we both live. How strange, though scientifically true!

Our mind thus knows but one aspect of the reality. The picture that we see is partial, and so our reasonings and conclusions are inherently imperfect. We cannot rely on them fully.

We are in a strange predicament. Mind is the only instrument we have for knowledge, and that has such a serious shortcoming. How can we understand the whence and whither of life!

There is a way out. We have not ceased to evolve. Mind is not the final stage in evolution. We are capable, in the course of evolution, of a much higher and wider consciousness than that of the reasoning mind. We have

yet to evolve the Wisdom-consciousness which is as a mother to the reasoning mind. It can know what the mind cannot. It reaches where reason fails. It knows by identity and is thus, independent of analogies, deductions and inductions. On the other hand, in the course of evolution we become capable of catching finer and still finer vibrations of light, sound, etc. Therefore, subtler aspects of existence open up before us. Thus a two-fold heightening of our capacity of knowledge is possible.

Not only this much. We are capable of a still higher consciousness, viz., God-consciousness, which makes us one with all, within and without. We are one with the Lord at the same time.

It is a grand possibility, no doubt ! And, it is fully realisable, though not so easily. Reason does testify to it. So does experience, not only of one but of numerous persons who have endeavoured to move faster in the course of evolution than their fellow-beings.

II

We have seen that the world in which we live appears to us as it does because of the limitations of our senses. It is also due to the limitations of our mind.

The same sense-stimuli do not lead to the same perceptions. Two persons see the same situation and hear the same words, but put different meanings upon them. Through the senses we receive only the stimuli from without; it is the mind which organises them into objects and situations. The same stump of a tree appears to be

a policeman to a thief and the beloved to a lover. The same situation may be heartening for one and diheartening for another. It is the mind which makes all the difference. We see the world through the spectacles of our mind.

This mental activity is very important and makes for us our life as we take it. Emotions and intellections are the products of our mind. In both of them, every one is unique; and hence, the world is to one as it is exactly to none else. That is why we have various philosophies of life.

From the top of a hill we see one view, and from its bottom another. Yet, the region of land that we see is the same. Similarly, we see one aspect of house from the front, another from the back and still another from above, though the house is the same. Every philosophy looks at the world from a particular standpoint. It looks out, and on account of the limitation of vision, sees one aspect of the reality only. Thus, the physicist examines the world and discovers physical properties of matter. He knows about motion of bodies in space, about heat, light, and electricity, and the interplay of physical forces. He does not observe the chemical changes which are going on in matter and the perpetual transformation that this physical world is going through. The biologist studies the phenomena of life and knows of a new world of immense interest, unobserved both by the physicist and the chemist. What we shall perceive in a given situation depends upon where we stand and whic

way we look. The inner organising capacity of the reasoning mind is very important.

What is philosophy after all ? It is a view of life. It is a mental organisation of the facts of life as one perceives them. Its correctness depends upon the degree to which it conforms to the facts of life. Every philosophy conforms to some aspects at least and to that degree it is correct. A philosophy which would conform to all the aspects of life, and hence, will be able to explain them all reasonably will be perfectly correct. Our mind is limited. It cannot know all facts, and it cannot view all possible aspects. Hence, a perfectly correct or rather a complete philosophy of life is an unrealisable ideal.

There is another limitation of the mind. It is capable of knowing a thing only by analysis, and not as a whole. All mental investigation is analysis and synthesis. That is not understanding life as it is. It is understanding it bit by bit and later joining up the bits to form an idea of the whole. We miss the study of the united life, *i. e.* of life as it is. Our mind is capable of merely one view at a time. Of the multi-dimensional reality we miss more than we get, when we study it through the mind.

The picture of philosophy is a relative picture, and necessarily an incomplete one, to be sure. 'The burden of philosophy is to define the indefinable.' If we keep this fact in view, we can properly appreciate the various philosophies of life.

We are growing and so are our philosophies. More and more facts come to light and modify our vision.

There is no absoluteness about philosophies; nor can there be any.

III

Consciousness is awareness. It can be of any order, Unconscious, sub-conscious and conscious mind are some of the orders of consciousness. Of these, awareness is the intensest in the case of the conscious mind. Consciousness manifests itself in three different modes: cognition or knowing ; conation or willing ; and affection or feeling. We are conscious in the degree we 'know', 'will' and 'feel'. Total absence of these denotes absolute unconsciousness.

In the biological order of evolution, plant life is followed by animal life, and animal by human life. Throughout the course of evolution behaviour goes on becoming more and more complex. Plants are surpassed by animals and animals by men in the complexity of behaviour. Consciousness *viz.*, 'knowing,' 'willing' and 'feeling,' is nominal in the case of plants. There is a greater degree of it in animals, and still more so in men. Man knows immensely more than the animals. His will is far more developed as also his capacity of feeling as compared to that of animals.

Thus, we see that alongside with the biological evolution there is growth in consciousness.

'Knowing,' 'willing' and 'feeling' depend upon the nervous system. It grows and develops as evolution proceeds apace. It is in the human beings that the central nervous system becomes dominant over the sympathetic and we find

that 'will' begins to dominate in them. A man with a weak central organization of the nervous system has almost no will. As one grows from childhood, the sympathetic nervous system yields place to the central one and the child grows to be an individual with a distinct and affective personality. These biological facts also demonstrate that there is a growth of consciousness with the advancement of biological evolution.

A biologist studies the evolution of form. His research centres round how it comes about. He tries to determine through what stages a particular form has passed. He studies the natural data available, arranges them to give them a rational meaning and tries to complete the picture from imagination. Similarly, he studies the evolution of physiological functions of the evolving forms. The two lines of investigation converge, corroborating each other. The why of evolution does not fall within the scope of biological investigation.

There is unfoldment of consciousness stage by stage. It is unconscious in the plant and sub-plant life, sub-conscious in the animals and conscious in human beings. There is a parallelism between the two evolutions, *i. e.* the evolution of consciousness and of form. This the first noteworthy fact.

Human mentality demands a specific growth of mind and central nervous system to express itself. The complex mental actions and reactions, which a human being is capable of, can only be expressed through a finely organised body like the one he possesses, and not through the

less developed body of a monkey or a rose-plant. Amongst human beings, too, there are various grades of intelligence and emotional susceptibility. But, everywhere the consciousness which is expressed conforms to the growth of the nervous make-up of the individual concerned. Hence, we may conclude that the parallelism between the evolution of consciousness and of form is not merely accidental. It has a deeper basis.

The materialist explains the evolution of consciousness as a bye-product of the evolution of form. The spiritualist view is just the opposite. The spiritualist holds that it is the evolution of consciousness which necessitates the evolution of form. It is the pressure of the conscious entity trying to manifest itself, which is the urge for the biological evolution.

There is a fundamental difference between the two views and we shall have to choose.

We choose the spiritual view of evolution. Why? As evolution proceeds, we find the mind gradually emerging from almost non-existence to an ever increasing dominance, till in man, today, it has become the most dominant factor of his life. Consciousness outgrows matter, and begins to dominate the latter. The vegetable kingdom is totally at the mercy of the environment. It cannot actively modify its surroundings. The animal can to some extent, but man can do so to a very great extent. This is due to the emergence of the active will and the growth of his far reaching understanding. Gradually, the power to think emerges in man and he tries to become the master of his destiny. With the growth of civilization,

the conscious factors and, hence, conscious values, have begun to dominate life.

We choose this view of evolution, because, it explains many facts far better than the other one. In accordance with it the biological evolution also comes to have a meaning. We can understand why there is evolution of form. Evolution no longer remains a blind movement of an unknown force called nature, but becomes a purposeful activity for the unfoldment of consciousness.

We choose this alternative because it bestows a meaning upon life and gives a value to existence. It shows us the way ahead, the possibility of our further evolution. From the unconscious, we have grown to the conscious (through the subconscious) and now we can grow into the super-conscious. The evolutionary process according to this view does not stop short with man. It proceeds on to the consciousness of gods, and beyond to the consciousness of the supreme God-hood. Conscious mind is but a rung in this ladder.

We choose this because the possibility of further evolution is not an idle conjecture. It is a realisable fact. "The proof" ? the materialist may demand. That it is so is evidenced by the lives of numerous saints.

It is evidenced to some extent in the life of every aspirant who endeavours patiently to link himself with the Divine. The spiritual annals of all ages and climes declare that we can outgrow human consciousness.

There is a standing challenge to one and all : You can

also outgrow your mental consciousness as others have done. Everyone will some day outgrow it and enter the Wisdom-consciousness¹, and even pass beyond it into the consciousness which is Love Divine in the natural course of evolution. By self-endeavour you can accelerate the pace of your evolution.

It is no conjecture, no imagination, no self-delusion. Age after age have the aspirants made sincerest efforts in the line, and have grown in their consciousness head and shoulders above the common humanity. They have a philosophy and a science. We can profit from their experience. We can see the road ahead and take to it well prepared.

IV

We must outgrow our mental consciousness, if we want to understand the reality.² There can be no definite answers to the questions, 'Whence, and whither' ? as long as we are engaged in our present reasoning mind. Sense-perceptions are the basis of our mental processes, and they are so limited. Science widens our perceptions, but to a very limited extent. How, then, can we know the answers to the great problems ?

As we grow beyond, we have an ever-widening range of perceptions. Our reason will be freed from the grip of fickle 'prāna' and fluctuating emotion. We shall

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1. See the relative chapters.
 2. For practical problems see 'Evolutionary Sadhana' by the author.

have penetration and comprehension of vision. Intuition will come as also a synthetic awareness.

We are launched on a strange ground. We are required to outgrow our present consciousness, if we want to have the proper view of life. Can we outgrow without having the higher view of life? No, we cannot. For a higher view of life, we shall have to depend upon the understanding of those who have already outgrown. We have to take light from their candles and light our own.

All that they tell cannot be readily grasped, for they see from the heights, and have a vision far superior to ours. But, you must listen patiently, try to understand as much as you can, and follow on in their footsteps with faith and determination. You have the right to use reason, but not to misuse it. All that they tell will begin to look reasonable as your mind gets clear of the dross of your vital and emotional nature. Patience you must have, for it is a Herculean task which you are setting yourself to, and it may take ages.

This understanding about life we shall try to impart in the following pages. The evolutionary view of life is based upon this.*

*See *Evolutionary Outlook on Life* by the author.

THE ULTIMATE REALITY

I

The materialist is not ready to admit any existence other than material. 'All that talk of spirit,' he says, 'is imagination. Why assume things which we cannot handle scientifically?'

We have already seen that what we perceive through the senses is not all that exists. They, *i. e.*, the senses, are capable of responding only to a limited set of vibrations, whereas we know definitely that vibrations extend far beyond that. What we receive through the senses are the stimuli. The mind is the object-mark. It makes for us the world in which we live. What object it will fashion out of the given stimuli depends upon its nature.

Do we receive the stimuli? Will it be correct to say so? We know merely the reactions of our sense-organs to the stimuli. Except for these we do not know the stimuli. A different type of sense organ may react quite differently to the very stimuli and produce quite different reactions.

Hence, there is a two-fold limitation to our knowledge of the world. It depends upon the nature of the senses and that of the mind. What we can safely assume is that there are stimuli from without of the nature of vibrations. We live in a vast sea of vibrations of various orders.

The senses themselves must have something in common with the vibrations which they receive, or else they would not be able to respond to them at all. Our knowledge to the sense-organs themselves depends upon the stimuli as does that of the outside world. As without, so within. We have to conclude that this mechanism which receives the stimuli is also of the same nature as the so called outside world. It is vibrations. Thus, withdrawing from this level of sense perception, we find one uniform world of vibrations and vibrations without end. The receiver and the received are of the same nature.

And this mind ? Upon this depends the sense of solidity, of objectiveness, of distance, of time, etc. Upon this depends all that goes to make the world. Out of the stimuli it fashions the world with all its variousness, as out of simple points and lines, an artist makes a beautiful picture. Mind is the world maker. We are forced to this conclusion.

The idealist says, 'The world is ideal, not real'. It is a delusion,' says still another. 'It is all the creation of the mind. There is nothing outside. It is a mirage'

II

Is that conclusion safe ? No, it is not so. We know that there is something other than the mind which affects it. We know that reactions to the stimuli do exist out of which it fashions the world.

But, it may be thought, that mind is capable of imagining. During the dream-state there are no stimuli and yet there springs up a world. 'May be, these stimuli that we receive in working state are actually non-existent. We may be having a dream in waking, as we have it during sleep.'

This line of argumentation betrays ignorance of the dream-state. During sleep stimuli there are. They are more usually internal than external. Behind and below the conscious mind lies a sea of the sub-conscious and, still deeper a vast ocean of the unconscious. There in lie the impressions not only of this life-time, ever since we left the mother's womb, but also of previous incarnations.¹ These impressions serve as stimuli. The inherent fear, hope, and other instincts of man come into play and out of those impressions is fashioned the world of dreams. The relationship of cause and effect is there, though we may not be able to trace it fully well in a dream.²

From this consideration, it is clear that mind is

1 See Chapter XIV

2 Some dreams are actual astral experiences, while others are due to the super-conscious attempting to inform the lower mind of coming events, etc. in symbolical language.

incapable of fashioning anything without some basic stuff. Secondly, it has inherent tendencies usually called instincts with which are linked our emotions which colour our visions. But, the question remains why the mind should fashion the world as it does? The dream analogy cannot explain it away. The existence of instincts colours the world and its relationships, but cannot be said to be the cause of the basic nature of our seeing the world as we do. We see a book as a book, not because of our fear or hope or any other emotions. All men see a book as a book. What is the explanation for this basically common perception? The idealist has no answer. This fact cannot be explained away.

The only reasonable answer is: it is because of the nature of the stimuli and the nature of the receiving and organising factor, *i.e.* the sense-organs and the mind. The mind fashions the world as it does, because it is what it is, and the stuff which is presented to it is what it is. I am afraid, we cannot escape this conclusion.

The sense of objectivity, distance, etc., springs up in the mind. It is not there at the sensorial level. Can we say that it is the mind which has caused it without any objective data, merely because the senses are not capable of catching that aspect of the vibrations. What the senses cannot catch, the mind may be capable of catching. From child psychology we learn how we pick up the sense of distance, etc. Its basis lies in the sensorial data, the interpreting is done by the mind on the basis of previous experience.

The mind, in fact, is a higher sense. It has the capacity to build up analytically, from sense-data, the objective world. It is not that it fashions it out of itself. It merely knows what is there already. A child can know merely letters in a book. As he grows up he can know the very letters as words. On further growth, he can know those very letters as sentences having meaning. Is it the child's imagination which has fashioned sentences with meanings where there are only letters, or are the sentences already there which he has now acquired the capacity to make out? The sentences are already there. The child has merely acquired the capacity to understand them. Similar is the case with the mind. It is a grown up child, a developed sense-organ which can organise sense-perceptions into objects.

The world is there. It is an objective fact. We know it through the mind. But what we experience is merely an aspect of what exists outside, because our sense-organs are capable of catching only a limited set of vibrations, and the mind is capable of organising that much only.

III

What exists? We do not know in toto. Through the sense-organs we can have merely one view of it. In fact, we cannot know more because of our limitations. We know that what we know is but an infinitesimal part of what exists in toto. That we shall call the Reality.

The same Reality will appear differently to those who view it through different type of sense-organs of a differ-

ent type of mind which can respond to a different set of vibrations.

Have these aspects any meaning ? They have as much meaning as the different aspects of a man or a building. To know a man or a building we have to know their various facets. So, in order to understand the Reality we have to understand its various aspects. If we could view it from all possible stand-points, catching all the vibrations it gives out in all the different possible combinations and permutations, then alone could we claim to know it wholly. But that is impossible for the mind ; the Reality is unfathomable. Its heights and depths, its variety and richness, all alike escape human reason and imagination. Endless it is above, endless below and endless whichever way we look. The human mind stands staggered when it thinks of its Infinity.

The mind itself constitutes a part of this. It is as much an object for other minds, as the rest of the world is an object for it. Whatever can be experienced must of necessity be an aspect of the Reality.

The aspect of Reality which we come in contact with is constantly changing. It is a perpetual transformation, a formation and reformation. Nought is steady. Where change is not discernable, it is either too slow or too fast, but it is there.

Motion seems to be fundamental to this universe. The very atoms which constitute this world of ours are merely bundles of rapidly vibrating electrical charges. Matter

melts away into electrical energy, as we view it closely. This changing aspect of Reality, therefore, we shall call Becoming.

IV

How do we know change ? We know of change only in comparison to something fixed. While moving in a train at the speed of the train, we are not conscious of its motion, *i. e.* its change of position. We become conscious of it when we look out of the train and see the ground and the trees moving in the opposite direction ?

We, on the earth, do not feel that it is spinning round its own axle and is also at the same time moving round the sun, and the sun with the entire solar system is again moving in space. It is impossible to grasp what absolute motion can be. It is only relative motion that the human mind can understand.

But, after all, there must be an absolute motionlessness, an absolute changelessness, a state of total non-becoming. Yes, but the human mind cannot conceive of it. Following up the tracks of reasoning it reaches a void, a state where existence is not. That again is relative, for the basis of it is the negation of those existences which we normally experience.

Is there any other way of knowing ? Yes, we have already hinted. The bounds of our consciousness are capable of vast expansion. From conscious mind we can grow into the superconscious; and as we grow the other higher aspects of Reality open up to us. We come to

know Becoming more and more fully. And, in the course of this growth of consciousness we can reach the consciousness where Becoming is not, where there is no longer any change. That is a state of motionlessness. It is a state of pure being. There remains no within or without, no near or far, no present, past or future. It is a negation of what we have experienced in the mind and its superstates and yet it is not a mere negation. It is a positive state of existence, though different from phenomenal existence. This experience is the result of withdrawal of consciousness from the spheres of Becoming. This absolutely changeless aspect of the Reality we shall call Being. We can experience it, when we grow into a higher state of consciousness.

Thus, there are two aspects of the Reality : Becoming or the changing aspect; and Being or the changeless one.*

There have been† thinkers who have accepted being as the Reality and denied any real existence to Becoming. 'The two are contrary to each other and both of them cannot be real', they thought, and explained away becoming as unreal on the analogy of the dream world. They have the support of the spiritual experience of being in the super-conscious state. It is called the Nirvikalpa Samādhi by the Yoga Darshan Patanjali. They felt themselves justified in their philosophical stand.

* In the Bhagavadgita the former is called Kṣhara Puruṣha and the latter Akṣhara Puruṣha. See chapter VIII, 3 and 4; XV, 16 of the Bhagavadgītā.

† Shri Shankaracharya Mayavadna.

They defined the Real as that which is changeless. That gave them logical cogency.

Those who have no experience of Being and are too much hide-bound by their ordinary mental consciousness, deny any existence to Being. They cannot see any necessity for such a postulate. 'We can pull on without that all right,' they think.

The experience of the State of Being is indeed so grand that everything pales into insignificance before the peace and fullness of it. No wonder that those who have had it, deny any reality to this changeful world of phenomena, the Becoming. In comparison with that experience, it looks like a shadow.

But, we have to steer clear of onesided conclusions. What we know is that Being is but an aspect of the Reality. On the same ladder of consciousness we have the experience of both aspects.

The contradiction between the two aspects is a mere appearance. As two aspects of one and the same reality they cannot be really opposed. Being is the necessary basis of Becoming. Becoming is impossible without the support of Being. The phenomenal world could not be without a changeless stay. Being is like the invisible point which is woven into the form of this mighty universe. It is like the invisible atom which has become this big big universe of ours.

Could we not, then, say that it is Being which becomes the Becoming? No. Being is merely the support

or the stuff. The atom could not by itself build the universe, nor the point could make the various forms. The point remains the point, and atom the atom even when the universe comes into being. Being is motionless, timeless, spaceless. It is pure Being without the least tinge of becoming. We cannot think of its becoming the phenomenal world. The Being remains Being, even when this world of Becoming comes into manifestation.

We have to take a step higher still.

V

The *ultimate Reality must be transcendental, with Being and Becoming as its two aspects. It must be capable of making the two manifest as a unity as the phenomenal world. It must be something beyond and above the two aspects and supporting both of them equally.

We have seen that Being cannot be taken to be the ultimate Reality, or else we shall have to deny reality to Becoming. Becoming cannot as well be the Ultimate Reality, for we shall in that case have to explain away the experience of Being. Hence the necessity of looking up to transcendental Reality.

* Ultimate Reality : Being and Becoming are abstractions as far as the phenomenal world goes. There is no unmixed Being, nor is there unalloyed Becoming. The two exist in a unity always. The conceptions are intellectual abstractions. The experience of pure Being, the Nirvikalpa, is an artificial state attained and retained under a strain. It depends upon a total withdrawal of consciousness from the world of Becoming.

The unfoldment of consciousness does not stop with the experience of Being. Beyond the consciousness of Wisdom lies the consciousness of the Divine. Those who consider Being to be the Ultimate Reality try to perpetuate that experience of Being. We can pass beyond that 'Quiet' into an all inclusive consciousness which, at once and in one movement, includes Becoming and Being. It is not like the inclusion of the ingredients in a physical mixture, but as in a chemical compound. It transcends them both at the same time. It is the state of God-consciousness. It is a state of all-inclusion and all-mastery, of a total illumination, of a supreme unity which has to deny no diversity, of a poise which does not exclude disturbance.

The personal experience of saints is proof of this Transcendental Reality. We ourselves can realize that consciousness which transcends and at once includes Being and Becoming. It is a consciousness which permeates the waking and † Samādhi consciousness alike. It is the consciousness of oneness with the supreme Being, of a perfect fulfilment which does not pass away. It is the crowning glory of the evolutionary process. It is the consciousness of Love Divine.

† The word *Samādhi* denotes a great range of experiences beginning with a state of consciousness wrapped up in an object and ending with the perfect self-introversion of the *Nirvikalpa* experience.

THE SUPREME*

This Transcendental ultimate Reality is the Supreme. It is infinite-immeasurable in time, space and potentiality, for all measures are born of it. This world of ours and the numerous universes, the subtle and the gross, the mind with all its states, and energy in all its manifestations are all but a play of its two aspects of Becoming and Being. They have sprung up from It.

They have their being in It. Nought can pass beyond It, for all existence is possible in It and It alone. There is nought to equal It and nought to challenge It, for nought exists besides It.

This Supreme manifests Itself as this world of becoming on all its planes. There is constant change in this world, yet the Supreme remains untouched by it as It transcends all becomings. There is good and evil, pleasure and pain, beauty and ugliness, knowledge and ignorance, and life and death. All is from It, but It is above these dualities. They emerge from It, but cannot delimit it. It is like the immutable point, which remains even when all goes down before the axe of time.

**Parshottama* in terms of the *Bhagvadgītā*.

Like the colourless light it gives birth to all colours but remains colourless all the same. Light on passing through a prism generates the seven rainbow colours, but in spite of it, it is without any colour. It is due to its colourlessness that it can generate the various colours. If it had a colour of its own, it could not give out any colours. Its colour would have become a limitation. Similarly, the Supreme in Itself is without any attributes (*i. e.* qualities); therefore It can generate various attributes, even those which are mutually contradictory. But, whence come those attributes which it generates? They must somehow be in it, or else they could not emerge from it. To follow the analogy, the seven colours must exist in the colourless light or how else could they be manifested? Thus, the Supreme is at once without attributes and with attributes. All at once it includes and transcends Becoming with all its modes of manifestation. That is the secret of its eternal virginity, of its infinite eternal purity, and of its inexhaustible potentiality.

The Supreme is the Supreme Being as also Supreme Becoming. As Supreme Being, it is without attributes, an absolute beyond the reach of mind even in its highest flights and lowest reaches, beyond the power of expression, unknowable, unreachable. As Supreme Becoming, it is the entire universe, all the beings from the inanimate to the highest gods, all the movements of dualities, all good and evil, the saint and the sinner, nectar and poison. It is experienceable even with our physical senses. In fact, it is this Supreme Becoming which we experience

and live every moment of our lives. It is the manifest Supreme. And, yet the Supreme is one and not two.

There is a natural tendency in the mind to separate the two apparently contradictory aspects of the Supreme. The mind cannot reconcile them. 'A thing can either be with attributes or without them. It cannot be both at once. It can be a being or a becoming. How can it be both? It is puzzling!' It is not strange, that our mind cannot conceive of the Supreme with its dual nature. For, we know that mental consciousness is but an intermediate rung in the vast ladder of consciousness and it is apt that our mind fails to comprehend the Supreme, which towers head and shoulders above all. The highest consciousness testifies to Its being at once both Supreme Being and Supreme Becoming in a transcendental unity.

The Supreme is beyond all forms. He has no form of His own.* All forms are His. Having no form of His own, He can manifest Himself in an infinite multiplicity of forms. He can also assume any form which may be necessary. He is beyond personality. He has no personality of His own. All personalities are His, and He can assume any personality for the sake of His devotee. He is actionless, yet all actions originate in Him. If He did any specific acts, He would be bound down by them. The Supreme is the Transcendental Reality in its supreme aspect. As the Transcendental, He is the Master of Evolution, the Lord, beyond both Becoming and Being.

*The supreme being a person, we can also use the personal pronoun.

The Supreme is the Architect and controller of all that is. He is Dynamic, the Divine Mother with all Her purity and power. He lays the foundations of the universe in time and space. Out of His own Being and Becoming, He fashions the material stuff of this universe. Like a master architect, He attends to every minute detail, from the building of an atom to that of the building of suns and stars. He brings forth out of Himself numerous agencies which work in Union with Him.

He maintains this great world play, balancing life and death, pleasure and pain, and good and evil. His supreme Will holds it in proper order and guides it through.

He is also the Great Rudra, the World Destroyer, the Spirit of Goodness perpetually dancing the Tāṇḍava* dance, bringing all that is born to nothingness. Death is the prior condition of life. It stalks all existences like a shadow. The Great Destroyer is the Greater Creator; He is the Great Master, who runs this show. The three are not three; they are one, the Supreme. They are one in three and the three in one.

*Tāṇḍava is the dance which Siva is said to dance at the time of the destruction of the universe.

THE DIVINE

The Supreme is the Divine Lord. He is the one who is worshipped variously by the devotees. He receives our loving offering and bestows His grace upon us. He is personal. He has a personality as distinctive and effective as any.

We know this from the spiritual experience of saints and devotees. They are personalities whose evidence we cannot dismiss lightly. 'But, they testify to different types of experiences,' it may be objected. No doubt. But, those differences: only prove that the Divine is infinite and is capable of manifesting itself variously. There is no inherent contradiction there. We need only understand the infiniteness of the Divine to appreciate the differences in their experiences. The Divine is personal as well impersonal.

He listens. When we call with loving sincerity from the inmost depth of our heart, and call intensely, He listens. He makes a response as well. His response comes sometimes in the form of a consciousness of His loving Presence, comforting and consoling in the thick of the storm, and sometimes as a light which shines

through the heart and enlightens our path. To some it comes as a luminous and living form, and to others as a loving touch, which thrills and uplifts. Numerous are His ways of making response to the devotee's call.

He accepts our offerings. We must have a deep spirit of self dedication and love to have it accepted. When He accepts, we know that He has done it. We know it definitely, without the least doubt.

He assumes forms for the sake of the devotee in the subtle, and if necessary even in the physical world. He can put on numerous forms all at once.

He is all love, Love Divine. We love Him and He loves us. He loves us, even though we do not love Him. His love is so wonderful! It is so rich, intense and transporting! It is Divine and divineness. He is a lover *par excellence* and a beloved *par excellence* too. His love is unspeakable. Those who are fortunate to have an experience, know, but cannot express it. Love is His Highest aspect indeed!

And, in His grace He is bountiful for one and all, devotee or no devotee. The devotee lays Himself down at His feet and He lifts him up and hugs him to His bosom. He gives beyond measure, so that one needs beg no longer.

He is so kind, so careful, and so watchful! He would hear the footfall of an ant. His consciousness envelops us all. We are, as it were, in His womb.

It is a strange world, this world of the devotee and

His Lord. It is so different from the world of ordinary experience that it looks like mere imagination. But, it is not that. It has a solid reality, a reality evidenced by the experience of numerous devotees of various countries, climes and faiths. We can experience it today, as they have done in the past. But, it requires well guided effort, patience and much besides.

The Divine is visible to the eyes of one-pointed devotion. Till we have them, we cannot know Him, nor can we see Him. It is not purely a subjective experience. It is exclusive to the devotee, because of the exclusiveness of his capability to see. Exclusiveness does not prove its subjectiveness. Till the heart is clear, and a perfection of balance attained, our eyes will not be opened. Through the gates of death (of the ego) we must pass, shedding off 'I' and 'Mine' to enter the sanctum sanctorum, and have a look at the beloved Lord and be lost in Him. To look at Him is to be lost in Him verily ! What wonder, if the sceptic spurns it as rank imagination.

The Divine is a person. Approach Him as a child, and He will receive you with open arms like a mother, more motherly than an earthly one. But, in order to become a child of the Divine Mother, you will have to aspire. He is a father to one who would have Him as a father. For a friend, He is the sincerest friend. He is a friend of all, even otherwise. He is a beloved, the most beloved one, to one who would love Him. He is an arch-lover for one who would yearn for His love. He is human, all too human !

Here the reasoning mind fails. It cannot grasp the personal aspect of the Supreme. 'Personality and impersonality cannot mutually co-exist in one and the same being. How can the Supreme be personal and impersonal at once? How can the Supreme, who is beyond time and space, beyond action and forms, come down to these human levels? How can He become a mother, a father a playmate etc? It is impossible.' So the reasoning mind doubts. All the same it is a fact. One who is beyond all emotions can manifest any emotion. One who is beyond personalities can project any number of personalities. The reasoning mind is not the highest means of knowing the truth. We have a higher means and we know that it is so.

Yet, we must not forget that all this experience is but due to a temporary self-limitation of the Divine, who remains standing above in all His grandeur and Divinity all the time. All manifestation is but a limitation. These are the various gates as it were, which open upon the Infinite Divine. To assume that they are the Divine is to belittle the Divine by the smallness of our vision.

The Divine because of its infiniteness, in fact, cannot be the subject of any experience. Experiences must necessarily be of His aspects and must go as they come. They are states of consciousness whereas the Divine is a status which always is and permeates all the states which come and go. He is there in the experience of Absolute Being as well. We can experience His various aspects, but cannot exhaust them by our experience,

because He is infinite. We can merge our consciousness into His and can thus become God-conscious. 'We can enter the light but cannot touch the flame.'

The Divine comes down in one who attains to God-consciousness. He becomes a centre from which the higher light spreads. The divine fire burns in him. People can light their candles from it. Such a one, verily, becomes the Divine on earth, the transmitter of His grace!

THE PROBLEM OF EVOLUTION

There is the Supreme, manifesting as the world of becoming, as well as transcending it. This manifestation is not a chaotic existence. There is an orderly process of evolution going on here, and consciousness is pressing forward to unfold itself, as we saw above. This raises a host of problems : Why this evolution at all ? What is it that evolves ? Whither is it leading, *etc., etc.* ? We shall consider some of these in the following pages.

The Supreme is ultimately responsible for this manifestation as it is. He is, therefore, responsible for the process of spiritual evolution, as it goes on here. "Has He any purpose to fulfil by this process ? Why, after all, this big world of awful diversities and crushing realities ? Could He not live on quietly without creating this world ?" Human mind naturally puts forth such queries. Such queries are generally met by saying that this manifestation is His *lilā*, *i. e.* Divine play. But, that cannot put an end to our curiosity. Why need He play ? Why shouldn't He lie down quietly, rather than play this dreadful play where death, disease and old age stalk round all like shadows ?

In fact, human reason has no final reply to this question. Nor can it have any. When we ask questions such as these, we are dealing with a consciousness which far transcends our intellectual consciousness. Reason, therefore, cannot catch even a glimpse of the truth.

A child of four daily sees that his father goes away every morning after meals, and comes back in the evening, and brings him something to eat. Sometimes he brings fruits and sometimes sweets. The child wants to know: "Where do you go every day in the morning? What do you do there, Daddy?" The father cannot make this young child understand where he goes and what he does there. Why so? It is because the child's mind is so undeveloped that he cannot understand those things. But, when this very child will grow up, he will be able to understand. Then, he will know that Daddy did not go out to bring him fruits, sweets, etc. He had a job to do in an office and thereby earned his living.

We are in the position of that four-year child with respect to our Great Father, the Supreme. We do want to know His mind, but how can we? We must grow and attain to God-consciousness, before we can fully appreciate the purpose of this manifestation. Reason cannot penetrate that region of higher truth.

Rather than waste energy and time in brooding over this insoluble problem—insoluble in the present state of our evolution,—it would be much better to press forward and upward with all the strength that we have. By so doing, we bring nearer the day when we shall

know the truth and the query will no longer remain. Those who stubbornly refuse to budge an inch unless fully satisfied on this point are pitiable indeed ! They must stand and wait.

We must try to know the facts and learn the lesson which they teach. If we do that, the 'why' of the whole process of evolution will be revealed to us in course of time. If we refuse to do so, ponder over these problems for centuries, but to no useful purpose; we will not be able to understand how the One Supreme becomes many without splitting up and losing its identity. How is it that the Supreme does not lose its unity and yet becomes many ? Gross things split up, losing their identity, in order to become many, but it is not so with consciousness. It transcends space and time. The sense of unity and duality are born of it. It is everywhere. In the matter of consciousness, the point lives in the whole lives in the point. The circle is but an extension of the point; its centre and numerous other points are contained in a circle. This example from geometry may help to visualise the truth about consciousness. There is another classical example to illustrate the point; the single sun becomes many by being reflected in various vessels filled with water. The sun remains one and yet becomes many. But these are mere illustrations. We must not lose hold of facts.

We can recognize that it is the Supreme which is there at the various stages of evolution. But, we must have the eyes to see. Those who have the eyes can do

that. When we attain to the consciousness of the Supreme, we can recognise Him as the one unfolding itself at various stages in all beings around us and in us. That fact we cannot ignore.

The Supreme as the basic unit of evolution we shall call 'conscious energy.' It is a perfect epitome of the Transcendental Reality with its two aspects of Being and Becoming. In the term 'conscious energy,' the word 'conscious' represents the 'Being' aspect and 'energy' the 'Becoming' aspect. It transcends both these as does the Transcendental. Of its Divine Father, this is a worthy child, and the two (*i. e.* the father and child) are always one. From the long and arduous journey, it emerges as one with its Transcendental Father.

A factual study reveals that there is evolution. Higher considerations and the experience of those who have gone ahead, indicate that we can quicken our pace. That we should do, rather than waste time in unproductive ratiocination.

II

What is that which evolves? That is the next important question.

The process of evolution stretches even from beyond inanimate stage to the stage of Godhood. At every stage the basic unit of evolution presents a different aspect. At one stage, it is an inanimate metal, at another a plant, an animal, and so on. What is that which remains there

right from the beginning till the end ? What is it which assumes these various aspects ?

The evolutionary process is fulfilled by the manifestation of God-consciousness, *i. e.* the Supreme Divine. It must be there as a potentiality in the basic unit of evolution, or else how could it be manifested ? It must be there in an involved form. Hence, we conclude that it is the involved Supreme which is the basic unit in the evolutionary process.

But the Supreme is one, how does it becomes many ? It may be questioned. To understand it we should know the nature and meaning of 'conscious energy'. Consciousness is that which is there in every act of comprehension (*i. e.* of taking in) by the senses or mind. But that is just one aspect of it. In fact consciousness is that without which being in any form cannot be effective, without which being is no being. Energy is *Śakti*, Energy is that which produces a change anywhere. We can know of existence through *Śakti* (Energy).

Consciousness and energy are inseparable. They are two in one. There is nothing in the universe which is either pure energy, unalloyed with consciousness, or pure consciousness unmixed with energy. Existence as we know is impossible without the two coming together. 'Consciousness-energy' therefore is a single unit, the basic unit of evolution. It is variously called soul, *monad* or *jīva*. For brevity we have called it 'conscious-energy'. The abbreviated term also indicates that it is the conscious

energy of the Transcendental Supreme, which (*i. e.* Transcendental Supreme) in fact it is, though involved.

III

Mind and matter : this duality is strongly grounded in our consciousness. It takes up the form, 'within' and 'without,' *i. e.* subjectively and objectively. The evolving unit and its environment appear as distinct and different from each other. But, this is a delusion of our analytical consciousness. The distinction is a relative and functional one, which affords us a standpoint to look out and understand. By the force of habit we come to consider the two as quite distinct from each other.

To understand the process of evolution properly we must realise that the two are not different. The consciousness aspect is mind and the energy aspect is matter. They are the two aspects of the same reality and as such cannot be separated. It is so in the macrocosm as well as in the microcosm, the evolving unit, 'conscious energy'.

Our body is made up of cells. The body has a mentality, the cells have a mentality and there is 'conscious-energy' for which the body is a vehicle of expression and evolution. Cells are made up of molecules and molecules are made of atoms; and every atom has a mentality. Then, what should we call mind and what matter? In fact, to say that body, cell, atom, etc. have a mentality is a mis-statement. The fact is they are a mentality, whatever else besides they may be. They are all 'conscious-energy' of the Supreme, passing through the process of evolution at different stages.

Within and without is a single stretch of becoming. When we identify ourselves with the body, the house in which we live and its inhabitants become our environment. When we limit down our identification to the ego, this mind, emotional and intellectual, and also the *prāṇic* and the physical bodies become for us our environment. When we stand above the ego, beyond space and time, we become one with All and there remains no 'within and without'. The question of environment ceases altogether for there remains no duality.

It is the same process of evolution which is at work in all, irrespective of the fact that the object is animate or inanimate, that it is within or without, that it is mind or matter. Everywhere there is conscious-energy which is pressing forward to unfold its higher and higher aspects.

It is thus clear that every evolving unit has an environment and is in itself an environment for other units. That fact affords ground for an endless play of forces, for numerous actions and reactions. Thus all are knit together variously and this entire becoming forms a grand unity, the evolving self-expression of the Transcendental Supreme.

IV

That involution must be a fact, we can safely assume. Involution should ordinarily imply a negation of self-expression, a transformation of actualities into potentialities. But, it is not so. The Supreme does not cease to be the Supreme for one moment. To take an example,

the hen lays eggs and a tree bears fruit, but they remain the hen and the tree in spite of those facts. The Supreme remains the Infinite Supreme in spite of the involution.

‘Then, ‘conscious-energy’ must have a time of birth’, the question arises.

The involution like evolution is a perpetual process. In fact, it is the one time-space process with its two aspects of Being and Becoming, involution and evolution, through which the Supreme is manifesting.

‘Conscious-energy’ has a beginning, but the beginning is in the Infinite Supreme which is beyond time and space. So, that beginning is in reality no beginning. Like the Supreme it is beyond time and space, manifesting itself through them. In earlier stages there is no individuality. At the animal level it begins to emerge.

The urge to evolve is inherent in the ‘conscious-energy’ of the Supreme. Why and how it is inherent, we cannot say. The potentialities seem to be pressing forward to become actualities. The soul is aspiring, as it were, always to realise its Supreme Infinity. The environment in which it is placed, on examination, we discover is meant for the fulfilment of this aspiration. It is so disposed that its action upon the ‘conscious energy’ awakens and quickens it. Heat and cold, pleasure and pain, success and failure etc., tend to arouse the dormant potentialities of it.

THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION

Biological studies of evolution begin with amoeba, single cellular animal and end with the *homoe sapiens* the crown of evolutionary process. Our view of evolution covers the inanimate world as well, which also has consciousness. We cannot stop short even there. We shall have to trace the inanimate world back to the Supreme cause of existence.

The term evolution in common parlance refers to the unfoldment of the biological type only. There is also the implication of some sort of advancement in it. We use the term in a much broader sense. 'Evolve' means 'to come forth,' 'to unfold'. There is the idea that something hidden within is coming out, that nothing totally new is being created. Only potentialities are being actualised. That is why involution and evolution go together. We apply this term to the formation of atoms and molecules, as we do to the evolution of human faculties and physiological functions.

The evolving unit, *i. e.* 'conscious-energy' being the Supreme by involution is infinite. The consciousness of the Supreme must be infinite. We may readily conclude

that this process of evolution is infinite, *i. e.*, there is no end to the height to which the soul may grow. So, we cannot say that there will come a time in the case of a soul when this process will come to an end.

There is a definite implication that conscious energy is gradually mounting up as evolution proceeds. Thus it is nearing its goal which is the perfect unfoldment of the Supreme, the attainment of the Divine Consciousness.

Every moment we are being taken from much to more, from strength to greater strength, from lesser to greater knowledge, and from a lower and smaller to a higher and greater joy. We are moving upwards and onwards with every step we take in the process of evolution. Spiritual evolution has a definite direction and a definite goal. Its definiteness melts away, no doubt, as we pass beyond time and space. But, it is not like a blind man's search for what he does not know.

The environment and the evolving unit are a unity : that we have observed above. The supreme evolves into the form of this universe which becomes the field of evolution for His conscious-energy and Himself enters this environment as the involved Divine. The environment is also of the same nature and stuff as this conscious-energy, but has to be taken as distinct from the evolving conscious-energy, or else we shall not be able to understand the facts.

A wave of cosmic evolution projects forth the cosmic mind (*mahat*), the ego (the differentiating principle), the atoms of various orders and the senses and sense-organs.

This cosmos with its suns and stars, the earth and its counterparts, *i. e.*, the subtler worlds, come into existence. We have this grand show as we see it.

There is another wave. The involved Divine, 'conscious-energy' of the Supreme ensouls this cosmos, entering this environment for its upward and onward journey for perfect unfoldment of the Infinite potentialities hidden in it.*

These are dizzy heights. They shall puzzle the reader. We shall take for granted the environment and the ensouling conscious-energy. We have to trace the history of this conscious-energy as it evolves step by step. We shall begin where we can distinguish it clearly from its environment. But, before we set forth, we must know what we are to look for.

The Transcendental Supreme is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.† All existence is from Him; so also all knowledge and bliss. His conscious-energy must of necessity be of the same nature. The

* This, however, is a hypothetical statement. How could there be anything at all without the ensouling principle of the involved Divine? It is childish to think of the environment made ready before the dweller comes in. It can but be a single wave which fashions the environment and ensouls it. The two are inseparable.

† It may be questioned: why then death, ignorance and suffering in this world? It is the Transcendental Supreme which is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. When it gets involved, this nature of It is no longer manifest. Hence, death, ignorance and suffering.

seed has in it the tree in potentio. The mango seed can produce the mango tree and the apple one an apple tree. Similarly, this conscious-energy of the Supreme, which is a seed of the Supreme, as it were, can produce the Supreme. The involved Supreme is what comes forth gradually as the evolutionary process advances.

Sat means existence. It denotes the power to act, to transform and to resist. It is the *Shakti aspect of the Supreme. It is what supports the universe. As the soul evolves, it becomes more and more powerful. It develops greater and greater capacity to act, to transform and to resist. It grows in effectiveness, in short.

Chit means knowledge. *Chit* is a much wider term than knowledge, and refers to the fundamental distinctive faculty at work in all conscious, unconscious, subconscious and superconscious processes. The Supreme knows all perfectly, *i. e.* It is omniscient. The soul grows in its capacity to know as it advances in evolution.

Ananda is Bliss. It is unmixed joy without the possibility of a reaction. It is the natural outcome of the fulfilment of one's being. By far it transcends the pleasure of the senses or delights of the mind. *Ananda* lasts and fills to satiation, while these other neither last nor fill. They rather quicken desire. *Ananda* is born of a lasting peace, which naught can disturb. The soul grows in the capacity to enjoy bliss, as it evolves. The higher a soul in evolution, the higher the joy which it can experience.

* Śakti is power.

Consciousness, we know, has three aspects : Cognition (Knowing), conation (willing) and affection (feeling). Cognition is the *Chit*-aspect. Conation refers to the *Sat*-aspect, and affection to the *Ānaṅda* aspect. That which we call consciousness represents the Supreme in its three fundamental aspects, *Sat*, *Chit*, and *Ānaṅda*. The evolving 'conscious-energy,' *i. e.* the (Soul) unfolds more and more consciousness, as it proceeds in evolution.* We have to look for these in our study of the evolutionary process.

There are many levels of cognition. We are conversant with human cognition. Perception, conception and ideation are its three levels. In animals perception, and perhaps a little of conception are possible. In plants there is only perception and that also of a rudimentary type. The fundamental aspect of cognition is perception. Where we see that some stimulus from the environment is registered, in whatever a form it be, we know that there is cognition. Reaction is not possible, unless there be some perception of the action. We conclude that the existence of reaction is a proof of cognition, and hence of consciousness.

'Conscious-energy' in its cognitive aspect takes in or comprehends the environment. Conscious-energy is fundamentally at one with all. The environment is, in fact, no different from the environed conscious-energy. This

* Pure consciousness untouched by energy is a mental abstraction and not a factual reality. The world consciousness, as commonly understood and used here, is a manifestation of conscious-energy.

at one-ment is what makes it possible for the stimulus to act as also it makes possible its registration by the 'conscious-energy'. Cognition is just being conscious of the environment.

Conation is willing and acting. Fundamentally, change in environment evidences the existence of conation. Conscious-energy lets itself forth upon the environment in its conative aspect. The energy let forth may be in the form of a physical, emotional, mental or spiritual force. The more far reaching the change and the higher the order of force in action, and, resultantly, the greater and higher the change in the environment, the greater the conation.

Affection is feeling. Self-modification evidences the existence of affection. A force acting upon itself is let forth by the conscious-energy. It modifies the physical, astral, mental and spiritual aspects of the agent. This force may reach upto the spiritual or may stop short with the physical or astral. Affection is generally said to refer to the emotional aspect of human being.' But, as an aspect of consciousness, we have to understand it in its fundamental nature.

Conation is outgoing of the conscious-energy whereas affection is its action 'upon itself'. Without cognition, *i. e.* taking in of the environment neither is possible. Without knowing the environment, without registering the stimulus, there is no possibility of a reaction at all.

The three aspects of consciousness cannot be separated in actual practice. They are present in different degrees

in every action. Cognition normally leads to conation and affection. In the earlier stages it is a mechanical affair. Every stimulus leads to a cognition, and conation and affection follow according to the capacity of the subject, and this cycle goes on.

It is at a much higher stage of evolution that conscious-energy becomes self-conscious and self-motivated activity becomes possible. We merely know of one line of evolution. Here conscious-energy passes from the inanimate state to the vegetable state, thence to animal and human states in turn and attains to its consummation in God-consciousness. We know of this line of evolution from the facts we observe around us. In this line, as we shall see later, pain, disease and death are necessary, as also are pleasure, health and life. This comes is so vast, and it is a field for the play of the Infinite Divine Energy. Who knows what other lines of evolution exist? We shall restrict our studies to our line of evolution. That is our immediate concern.

The involved Supreme is a mystery for the human intellect. To attempt to trace It back to the stage where involution takes place is to be caught in the wild meshes of a baseless imagination. These are things beyond the reach of human mind and we shall let them alone. The lowest state where we can discover signs of the presence of the conscious-energy is the inanimate state, the state of elements, organic and inorganic.

The term inanimate is a misnomer, for, we know that elements breathe, though, of course, in their own way.

The atom is a universe in miniature, full of movement. To us matter appears without activity and consciousness, because in matter they are of too subtle an order to catch the human eye. The scientific eye *i. e.* the sensitive instruments, give us proof of their presence.

Activity there is in the atoms; we admit, but, how is there any consciousness? *Prima facie* we can say, where there is energy there must be consciousness, for they are inseparables, being but the two aspects of the Reality. Besides, we have scientific evidence for it.

Elements have definite properties. They have affinity with certain elements and disaffinity with certain others. To pressure, heat and electric influences they react in their own distinctive ways. It is on account of their physical and chemical properties that we can know one from the other. This capacity to react in a distinctive manner shows that there must be some registration of the stimulus, or else how could a definite pattern of behaviour be possible? This indicates the presence of consciousness in atoms.†

Self-motivated activity is impossible at this elemental level. It is, as it were, a mechanical registration of the environmental stimuli and a similar reaction. It seems that an invisible reaction-mechanism is hidden securely some where in the Elements. They cannot modify their behaviour of their own accord.

† We admit readily that we do not know the mode of this registration, but our ignorance of it cannot explain away this established fact.

In elements cognition, conation and affection, all the three aspects of conscious-energy are at a rudimentary stage. How little of the environment can an element take in? It can take in only that much to which it reacts; *viz.*, heat, cold, pressure, *etc.* To subtler vibrations, feelings and thoughts, it is insensible, as far as we know today from the study of physical science. There is conation of a very limited order. The action of an element can produce change in the environment, but to a limited extent as compared to the action of plants and animals.

In elements affection is also inconsiderable. In reacting the elements get modified, but inappreciably. It is more generally the action from without which produces the change than the repurcussion upon itself of its own action. We find such repurcussion in radioactive substances.†

Conscious-energy may be said to be at the elemental stage in elements. It is a stage lower than the vital one, which we find in plants and animals. Characteristic signs of life, *viz.*, birth, growth, decay, death, reproduction, struggle for existence, *etc.*, which we find in plants and animals, are missing in the case of elements. It is an elemental essence* which fills the elements and determines their characteristics. Vital energy is not evolved yet.

† Radium gradually radiates itself out and turns into lead.

* It is a rudimentary vehicle of conscious energy without any of the distinctive human capabilities.

In this study, again and again, a sense of duality will tend to force itself upon the mind. Thus we may feel induced to take consciousness as totally different from the vehicle of its manifestation, but that would be wrong. Elements are a vehicle for the manifestation of 'conscious-energy'. It is the necessity of evolution that has produced this vehicle. It is a unity which evolves and it evolves as a whole. The form and function are but the light of the unfolding conscious-energy. Let us remind ourselves of this fact, before we proceed further.

PRĀNA

We have studied conscious-energy at the elemental stage. Its next or higher phase is the vegetable kingdom which widely differs from the previous state. It is the emergence of a new principle which is responsible for this difference. The principle is *Prāna*.†

In evolution we find nothing absolutely new at any stage whatever. The seeds of all capabilities which are evolved later lie in the earliest stage, however indistinguishable they be. The elements have a life. They are born, they live and die. But, it is all so passive and ineffective in the case of elements that we took no notice of it in our study. This rudimentary life evolves into the form of full-fledged Life Force as 'conscious-energy' passes to the vegetable state.

Life Force is called *Prāna* or Anima. Both the terms come from the verb "an" to breathe. Breathing characterises *Prāna*. We may call it Vital Energy, for it gives life.

Life is ordinarily understood to be a phenomenon which

† *Prāna* is vital force, which is responsible for the vital functions of organisms.

is due to certain chemical changes going on in the body. It stops as they stop, and death is declared to have taken place. That is the rank materialistic view of life. 'With the passing out of breath, it is all over and nothing is left of life': so a materialist thinks.

The view is no longer of any value in the light of recent scientific discoveries. Matter is no longer the ultimate indissoluble unit of physical existence. It has yielded place to electrical energy. This latter can manifest as radio activity as well. Atoms are merely bundles of electrical energy and can be broken up to release it.

Energy acts upon matter as mechanical force and causes motion. It also acts as heat and light, and as electrical and magnetic force. Matter is inert, *i.e.*, incapable of self-motivation. It is energy which motivates it.

The specific disposition of electrical energy in atoms is responsible for their specific properties. The arrangement of atoms determines the nature of molecules and their properties.

From all these considerations, we may safely conclude that energy is primary and not matter. The materialist refuses to look deep enough. There is a system and a purposeful organisation in the chemical processes which he holds to be responsible for life. He cannot adequately account for the presence of this system and organisation. There must be something of a higher order than the elements themselves which can motivate them systematically and fulfil a purpose through their interaction, *viz.*, the chemical processes. This is *Prāṇa*.

Prāna is the principle of self-subsisting energy. It is of a higher order in evolution than the elements and hence has a hold on them. It acts upon them,† organises them, systematises their mutual reactions, and thus makes the manifestation of life possible on the physical plane. It is responsible for life in plants, animals and human beings. The organisation of elements composing the body and the systematisation of the chemical processes comes to an end as soon as this principle withdraws. The body disintegrates rapidly or gradually in accordance with the vigour of the disintegrating influences. When *Prāna* falls in abeyance as in the case of hibernation in animals, there is no disintegration, but life processes come to a standstill.

The Energy with which we are usually acquainted is of a much lower order, *i.e.* of the elemental order. It is a capacity of blind motivation, without any will or self-direction. Heat, light*, electricty, *etc.*, have a very limited sphere of function, totally predetermined by their inherent nature. They have no scope for a choice. But, *Prāna* is an energy of a much higher order. In evolution, it comes after the elemental stage and hence is, in every way, capable of accomplishing much more than elemental energy. We may call *Prāna* organic energy to give an indication of its functions. It is the energy of organic life, not of elemental existence. It is capable of purposeful activity, *i.e.* it functions for the fulfilment of

† It organises elements into organic tissues. That is its characteristic function.

* Light does bend round corners, no doubt.

an end. It chooses the most advisable course and adapts itself in the case of emergency to the new conditions, so as to attain its goal most readily. It acts upon the elements and through them manifests the complex phenomena of life. It gives evidence of great comprehension, almost ingenious intelligence in its own domain. Man is astonished at its working in plants and animals. It is what we generally call 'nature.' We shall study its functions in some detail.

Prāṇa is called *Prāṇa* because it sets going the process of breathing. This is the basic process of life. It is responsible for the continuation of life. Growth and rejuvenation both depend upon it. Organisms take in air, absorb carbon or oxygen according to necessity, and, thereby build new cells, replacing old and broken ones. The other life processes, circulation of blood, digestion, assimilation, excretion, *etc.*, depend upon breathing. With the cessation of breathing, they all come to an end. Breathing stops when *Prāṇa* becomes ineffective or is absent.

Self-preservation comes next. Organisms have the capacity to heal themselves without external aid. Leucocytes rush in thousands to a wound to save the organism from getting poisoned. Antibiotics for protection against ingenious germs are automatically produced in the body to fight out disease. *Prāṇa* thus functions very intelligently for the preservation of organic life ! We can know this in greater detail from a study of Biology.

The tendency of self-preservation is an evidence of

the existence of a tenacious 'will' to live on.* It is the *Sat* aspect, *i. e.*, conation of 'conscious-energy' which manifests as the life-preserving tendency. The *Chit* aspect of it, *i. e.*, comprehension, has to render aid and thus comes up in line with it in evolution. The process of breathing, the growth of secondary life processes, and the ingenious efforts to preserve the intactness of the organism are all attempts in the same line duly following upon each other. Each one of them grows out of the preceding, and extends the scope of life. Procreation is the next step in the same line.

The species is an extension of the individual. Procreation is a self-preservation in the broader sense. The parent is born and lives as its own off-spring. This is the fulfilment of that 'tenacious will to live on' in a longer sphere and in a broader sense. At the elemental stage conscious-energy could not procreate; at the organic stage it can. Plants reproduce themselves, as also the animals. Life continues because of this power of reproduction in organic life. Sterility is a rare phenomenon.

Next we come to decay and death. In a living organism cells die every moment of wear and tear. Living itself involves a wear and tear of the organism. Hence, the death of cells is inevitable. Where there is life, there is death, what a paradox! Life and death are interdependent. Normally† death comes where the *Prāṇa* can

*Patanjali's *Yogadarshana* calls it *abhinivesha*, the tendency to cling on to physical life.

†Organisms reproduce themselves *numerously*. If there were only birth and growth, but no decay and death, life would have

no longer repair the organism which is too worn out or has become too defective and hence discards it for ever. The *Prāṇa* departing, breathing ceases and, together with it, all the life processes.

Prāṇa is a great disintegrating force. It can destroy as vigorously as it can create. As breathing stops, the animal corpse rots. It is astir with myriads of germs which briskly disintegrate every tissue of it. The vast organisation, so carefully built and preserved, is shattered. It is the *Prāṇa* which gives birth to those germs which cause decay and death.

Prāṇa hungers; elements do not. It demands air, water and food, and has to be fed with them. It takes in matter which is at the elemental stage and turns it into organic tissues, and builds and rejuvenates the organism with them. The organisms are like miniature factories which take in raw material at elemental stage and convert it into organic stuff.

Elements have affinities and disaffinities. *Prāṇa* has likes and dislikes. They are much more distinct and far stronger than those of elements. Organic life centres around these, and further evolution proceeds along this line largely.

Likes and dislikes presuppose some degree of sensibi-

become impossible ; there would be no room for all the organism. Hence, *Prāṇa* has the necessary function of decay and death. Decay offsets growth, and, death birth. Death of children, fatal accident etc. are exceptions which may be considered later. See Chap. XIV below.

lity, some capability of feeling. If there were no inner modification in the organism as a result of a particular stimulus, why should the organism prefer one stimulus to another ? Thus we are forced to the conclusion that a rudimentary affection does exist even at the elemental stage. It is markedly present at the organic level.

Prāṇa likes stimuli which are friendly to the life of the organism and dislikes those which are not. The former cause pleasure and the latter pain. It is the self-preservation tendency, 'the tenacious will to be,' which is at the root of likes and dislikes. A friend is readily known from a foe. Food congenial to the organism is liked and readily absorbed by it, whereas that which is harmful is not accepted. If forced into it, it is expelled, as far as possible. This is the basic of pleasure and pain at the organic stage. The one purpose which dominates *Prāṇa* and organic life is to be, to grow, and to live on. It is the perpetuation of physical existence at which *Prāṇa* aims and for the attainment of which all its energies, intelligence and sensibilities are spent. It is existence, for the sake of existence. Here is another paradox. 'The tenacious will to be' is the key to the understanding of *Prāṇa*. 'Live in order to live : ' that is the motto of *Prāṇic* life.

The pleasant is useful, *i. e.* life giving. The life giving alone is pleasant. And, life is the *sine quo non* of *Prāṇa*. Naturally, there develops a zest for the pleasant in *Prāṇa*. This, also, clearly has its root in that basic 'will to be'.

Repetition dulls sensibility;* change keeps it sharp. In order to get more pleasure, there must be continuous change. That gives us the limitation of pleasure in the *Prāṇic* sphere. Hence, *Prāṇa* is seeking constant change of stimuli to fulfil its zest for the pleasant.

The intenser the stimulation, the greater the sensibility. So, to have more pleasure, intenser stimulation is necessary. *Prāṇa* is always after intenser and still intenser stimulation. That is its second line of search for pleasure.

Life-giving is pleasant. The more life-giving an experience, the more pleasant it should be. *Prāṇa* is after invigorating experiences. The more of life, the more of joy : that is basic sense of pleasure in *Prāṇa*. It is so because of its very nature.

Thus this zest for pleasure takes up three lines : search for change, search for intensity, and search for vigorous stimulation. We shall review its course of evolution through the three kindoms.

* It evolves into a great variety as evolution proceeds and ultimately outgrows the basic will, from which it springs. It becomes a search for the pleasant for its own sake even if the pleasant be injurious to life.

THE EVOLUTION OF PRĀṆA

We have seen that the evolving conscious-energy gives birth to the principle of elemental existence. As a result the atom is fashioned. More complex atoms follow. Then, complex molecules come into existence. With the march of evolution structural complexity increases. Elements of higher and still higher order are evolved. Evolution of the principle of elemental existence proceeds on along its own line.

When the ground is prepared for the appearance of life by the formation of sufficiently complex elements, conscious-energy gives birth to the next higher principle, *Prāṇa*. This *Prāṇa* has the capacity to integrate the elements into organisms.

It is hard to draw a definite line of demarcation to indicate the first appearance of *Prāṇa*. We get its earliest glimpse in the amoeba, the single-cellular-creature. It is very much like a molecule and very little different from it in behaviour ! It is a muddled up mass of indistinguishable life. The one remarkable thing about it is that it can reproduce. Molecules cannot generate molecules, but a cell can generate cells. This denotes

the advent of the new principle of *Prāṇa*. This principle runs a course of evolution of its own as does that of elemental existence beginning with the bacterial life, it passes through plant and animal life to the human kingdom. An ever-growing complexity, a perpetual readjustment, and a continuous specialisation characterise the interesting story of its evolution. We shall not attempt to recount this story. We shall merely try to secure the right perspective.

The fundamental characteristics of *Prāṇa* is 'the tenacious will to live.' It is not satisfied by eking out an existence. It seeks a fuller and still fuller existence as it evolves. By a fuller existence is meant a more effective existence. The organism should express more energy and should do so in more diverse ways. It should be capable of greater, more far-reaching and of more varying interaction with the environment. Fuller life also means that organism should be able to resist more effectively the inner and outer hostile forces. We find this being realised as the evolution proceeds.

The fuller life demands a growth in the structure of the organism, which necessitates a greater and greater complexity of organic functions. The amoeba differentiates and higher organisms follow. At the plant stage, the organism grows to gigantic dimensions. It shoots forth branches, leaves and trunk. It stretches out roots. It has a bark. A system of circulation is set up as also of respiration. The vital organs differentiate still further at the animal stage. We have a heart, a digestive and

an excretory system. A nervous system also develops stretching its ramifications throughout the body. Hands and feet appear. There is a mouth and a tongue. The organism can produce sound and can eat. Specialisation of functions reaches a climax in the human organism.

The growth of the organism and specialisation of organic processes are the basic aspects of *Prāṇic* life, but not the only one. The organism exists in an environment. As it grows in the course of evolution, the environment also becomes more and more complex. It has to feed itself and, therefore, to go out in search of food. It has to mate and bring up the off-spring for which it must build a nest. There are the elemental forces, heat, wind and cold against which it must protect itself. Struggle for existence between the species comes into evidence. Thus, wider channels of action and reaction between the organism and the environment open up. This behaviour of the organism which is directed towards the environment, we shall term environmental behaviour or environmental activity.

The goal of environmental activity is fixed. It is the realisation of the will to live. With the advancement of evolution the organism changes. The environmental is also changing. It is getting more and more complex for the organism on account of the growth of inner complexity and sensibility of it. The needs of the organism grow. The resistance of the environment also grows. *Prāṇa* behaves with an ingenious adaptability. The plant, without any possibility of translatory movement, stretches out its roots far and wide in the earth to catch moisture and nourishment. To protect itself from severe cold, it

grows thick leaves. It opens out its flowers to receive pollen carried by the wind, in order to form seeds to reproduce itself. It adjusts its growth so as to have the maximum of sunlight.

All these efforts are in pursuance of the basic will. This will manifests itself in still more ingenious behaviour in animals. The bees store their food for winter. They have a very complex organisation and strict discipline in their colony. Birds know the coming rain, so that they can seek shelter in time. Dogs and cats fast of their own accord, when their digestion is upset. For their offspring birds build nests and animals seek out dens.

The mother animal milks for the young one. The animal world is full of instances of ingenious adaptability to environmental needs.

This behaviour of the animal to meet the environmental necessity under pressure of the will to live, is called instinctive by the modern psychologists. The instincts are classified variously. But, this naming and classification serve no useful purpose from our point of view. We must be ready to understand *Prāṇa* in its numerous aspects as it evolves right from the bacterial level upwards.

This type of environmental activity is impossible without better means of comprehension of the environment. It also needs better means of influencing it than those already in existence at the elemental stage. This necessitates the evolution of senses. A fuller life is

impossible without them. *Prāṇa* unfolds the cognitive (*chit*) aspect of conscious-energy by evolving the sense-capabilities.

Elements have a rudimentary cognition. The presence of reaction evidences its existences and indicates its order. This cognition evolves into cognition of a higher order in the form of senses. The process is gradual and can be traced step by step through plant and animal life. It begins with the dull stirrings in amoebic life in response to vibrations of light, heat, electricity, *etc.*, and ends with the emergence of full-fledged senses of sight, touch, hearing, *etc.* Alongside with this proceeds the development of the appropriate organs of sense. The senses can be effective only through the organs, which serve as necessary instruments. This leads to a greater unison between the organism and environment and hence to a deeper and more far reaching interaction between the two than it was possible heretofore.

The organism must also have means of reacting in accordance with this higher degree of cognition, *i. e.*, through the senses. Hands, feet and voice are evolved to meet this demand. By means of these the organism can reach out to the environment, it can handle it, push it away or fly away from it. By means of voice it can contact it even from a distance. It can seek help in danger and give support to another organism.

This brings us to the consideration of the species. The principle of *Prāṇa* evolves through the species. They and not the individual organism form the unity of *Prāṇic*

evolution. The individual organism is born and lives for a limited period of time and disappears, whereas the species lives on and evolves, though through the medium of the individual organism, no doubt. The species is governed by a *Prāṇic* entity, called the group-soul. It is a form of expression, a unitary existence, of the principle of *Prāṇa*.

The species exists because of the group-soul which is its life. The individual is but a differentiation in the group soul, like an organism in a body. At the earlier stages of evolution the individual organism is very closely connected with other organisms. It means that very little differentiation exists in the group-soul. It increases as evolution proceeds. The organisms grow farther apart.

It is the existence of this *Prāṇic* entity which can duly explain the evolutionary processes. The struggle for existence, the power of adaptability, the spreading of a mutation (change) over the whole species even though the members of the species be far distant from one another, *etc.*, become clear if we know the group-soul.*

Group-souls are born and die. They differentiate into other group-souls. The species being an expression of them on the physical plane, are also born and die. They evolve other species. The evolution of species is but a reflection of the evolution of the group-soul, and the instincts are an expression of the nature of the group-soul.

*There is much evidence in biology that forces on us the conclusion that a link other than physical exists between the members of a species.

The group-soul is the mother consciousness of the species which holds all the organisms of species in its womb, as it were. It records the actions and reactions of the individual organisms, learns from them and re-adjusts itself in accordance with the necessities of evolution and the environment. It is the soul of the group of organisms forming the species. As the cells lose their identity in the organisms and the molecules in a cell, so do the organisms lose their identity in the group-soul. In fact, they have no identity apart from the group-soul.

The group-soul is linked to the organism by a *Prāṇic* structure. It is specific to each organism and is responsible for the life of organism. It is called the *Prāṇic* or etheric double.† It is a structure of the vital energy, the life of the organism, and makes the organism go. It is what sets going all the functions, viz., the life-processes in the organism.

Prāṇic-energy organises the elemental life through the agency of this etheric double. The cells perform their specific duties because of it. They share the life of this entity.* This is what departs at the time of death. Recent scientific experiments reveal that etheric double can be weighed.‡

† It is called double because it is a counterpart of the physical.

* It is an entity in the sense that it has an individual existence.

‡ Ref. 'Where Science and Theosophy Meet,' Theosophical Publishing House, London.

This *Prāṇic* structure evolves with the process of evolution. It is most developed in the case of a civilized man, and the least in the case of bacteria.

What a group-soul is to the species, the *Prāṇic*-double is to the organism. It is the evolution of the group-soul as affected through the *Prāṇic*-double of the organism which we observe in the evolution of the organism. It is an integrated process. We find its expression along three lines: growth of a structure and specialization of organic functions, unfoldment of sense-capabilities, and attainment of skill in environmental activity. In fact, these are the three aspects of a single evolutionary process, They are mutually so interdependent that they cannot be separated from one another.

Prāṇa has still another line along which it evolves later on as it passes into the human stage. The human organism develops the zest for the pleasant. This is possible only at the human level, because then *Prāṇa* becomes free from its assigned task, having developed the organism to its full and won a victory over the environment. At the vegetable and the animal stage, living is the arch problem of evolution. The plant eats to live, and the animal mates only in order to reproduce. But the human being, when civilized,† lives to eat and indulges for the joy of it. In search of a fuller life, which is but an extension of the basic will to live, *Prāṇa* begins to act exactly in contradiction to it. That tendency overshoots the mark and becomes self-destroying.

† The *Negro* is very much like the animal in this respect.

Prāṇa is a self-subsisting form of conscious energy. It is a principle of vital energy which runs its own course of evolution. It cannot reason, but it is capable of very complex purposeful activity.* It can discover new ways to attain its objective and can adapt itself ingeniously to the environmental demands.

The evolution of the organism, specialization of functions, appearance of senses and sense organs, the behaviour of the animals, their sense of organisation, discipline, foresight, and skill, *etc.*, are a miracle of ingenious capability before which human intelligence stands agape. It is a century of scientific investigation that has opened up the little understanding that we have of evolution. Man feels like a pigmy before this ever-wakeful, ever-active, ever-adjusting, so grand and so powerful hand of *Prāṇic* Energy, which he terms 'Nature'. He would fain make God out of this principle and do obeisance to it on his knees. From the view-point of evolutionary spiritualism, it is but a principle of conscious-energy of the Transcendental Supreme, second in the order of evolution.

* Physical science has invented a machine-man, which can do various complicated tasks. It is the result of intelligent handling of electro-magnetic-energy, which is energy of the elemental order after all. *Prāṇa* is energy of the organic order. What wonder, if it is capable of much more !

DESIRE PRINCIPLE

We have already seen that at the human level *Prāna* develops a zest for the pleasant, its goal to attain a stable organic existence having been accomplished. This zest becomes a lasting tendency in human evolution. We shall call it the Desire Principle. Its name well expresses its nature. It grows as evolution proceeds through the human kingdom and is responsible for the acceleration of its pace.

Animals have no desire. Their activity is limited to their organic needs. Man desires.* He desires much

* Plants have needs, animals have impulses, whereas men have desires. Desire involves the idea of conscious self which plants and animals cannot have. Desire is thus possible only at the human level.

Urge for a fuller expression is basic in evolution or else evolution will be impossible. It becomes in *Prāna* the tenacious will to be, and later develops into 'the will to a fuller life'. There is a difference between this and the zest for the pleasant. At the pre-human stage, a fuller life is necessary for the attainment of stability in the organism. It has to pass the severe test of the struggle for existence and it can pass it only if it grows to a certain degree of fullness. The zest for the pleasant is governed by such necessity.

more than his organic needs. Even his needs have to be fulfilled in an appropriate manner and not in the animal fashion. His desires and wants increase. His standard of living rises. He desires refinement and comfort. He desires name and fame. He desires possessions, earthly and unearthly, for the present and for the future. He desires knowledge, power and what not. And, to crown it all, he always desires more and more of these. Desire has measureless wings and makes limitless flights to endless regions. The desire principle is constantly extending the scope of human activity. To fulfil his desires man must know more. The story of scientific discovery and invention bears ample evidence to this fact. It thus aids the evolution of the cognitive (*chit*) aspect of conscious energy.

Man must not only know more to fulfil his desire, he must also toil more. This develops the conative (*sat*) aspect of conscious energy. His knowledge he must put to use. And we see how production has increased per capita in the last few decades. Man today is far more active than his predecessor of the last century.

It is the environment from which he has to demand the fulfilment of his desires. For this he must act upon it more effectively. It is as true of his human environment as for the rest of it. This brings him in much closer contact with other human beings. A very complex and unending chain of actions and reactions starts, which leads to the development of emotions.

Hope, anger, hatred, love, sympathy, *etc.*, come into play. The feelings of joy and suffering deepen. Man becomes more and more sensitive as evolution proceeds. Thus the feeling aspect of conscious energy, *i.e.* *ānand*, is evolved.

So we see that the Desire Principle is, as it were, the motive force behind the evolution of man. It awakens the slumbering animal-like human existence and turns it into the civilized, smart and sensitive humanity of the twentieth century.

The Desire Principle quickens the pace of evolution. Whereas it increases his joys and the capacity to enjoy, it also increases his sorrows and the capacity to suffer. It multiplies his problems. Life at once becomes a boon and a curse for him. Tossed from an object of desire to another, man would fain return to the animal state where desire is not. By desiring he has tasted the forbidden apple of the garden of Eden and lost his innocence. He has become self-conscious, and a mighty responsibility now devolves upon his shoulders. He has become man, the fashioner of his own destiny. He can make or mar his future.

Like an ever-growing genii, steady and strong, dark yet luring, the Desire Principle grows and envelops the horizon of entire human life. It overshadows and denaturalises *prāṇic* existence, it quickens the mind with both evil and good, and clouds human reason. It ushers in the advent of Mind (*mānas*), the principle next higher in evolution to *prāṇa*. We shall consider it a little further.

The Desire Principle awakens as the zest for pleasure in *Prāṇa*. Man begins to seek pleasure and the easiest way is to seek it through the sense organs and organic functions. He begins to eat for pleasure and develops tastes injurious to the organism. He mates for the joy of it and falls into excesses. Sex comes to the foreground. He loses the sense of knowing life-giving from life-destroying foods, which the animal has got. His life centres round food, drink and sex. Eat, drink and be merry : towards this motto he begins to drift. It tells heavily upon the organism and the individual has to pay with disease.

Man has greater capacities than the animal. He knows more. He is capable of more complex activity. He also becomes more sensitive to pleasure and pain. He can feel greater pleasure and more intense pain than the animal. With these more developed capabilities he goes headlong in search of pleasure. Man comes in clash with man, for every man wants the maximum of good things of life for himself. There is competition. It stimulates the lower nature of man. He hates his fellow creatures, fights them and tries to injure them. Malice and anger develop. Jealousy appears. He seeks to take revenge. The beast in him springs up in a super-beastly fashion.

On the other hand, far and wide he runs impelled by this principle. He flies high in the skies links the sea from shore to shore, and digs deep into the earth. He conquers nature and forces it to yield all that he wants. He would fain conquer disease, death, time and

space. He would rule over the elemental forces, heat, light, water, electricity, *etc.*

In fulfilling his desires, he unwittingly fulfils the desires of others and affords them pleasures. He is very intimately connected with other human beings. He desires name and fame. This can be secured by doing good to others. He would like to lord it over others. For that he must treat them kindly. He must give love and make sacrifice. The Desire Principle, thus, stimulates his higher nature side by side with the lower one. It can make a demon as well as a god of man. They both develop alongside as evolution proceeds.

The lower nature drives him to suffering, and the higher one to joy. The more effective the Desire Principle becomes, the more the two natures of man develop and intenser become his sorrows as well as joys. What a paradox! This is because his sensibility grows on the whole. The picture of man as we see to-day is due to the effectiveness of this principle. How very happy and how very miserable man is today! How base and how noble he is at once; a super-beast and a god! What a mockery of fate!

The Desire Principle is responsible for the wealth of emotions that man is capable of. At the back of literature, poetry, drama and fine arts, we discover it actively at work. We find it behind the grand activities, the Red Cross, the missionary work, and even blind faith and forgiveness. It is there behind logic and philosophy. Patriotism and naturalism, capitalism and totalitarianism,

and socialism and communism, all spring from this principle of Desire. It is all pervading. It leaves untouched nought that is human. Even the gods cannot escape it. All make their obeisance to it. Only the Divine and the man of Divinity remain above it.

This principle has been condemned very vigorously by all religions. Mahatma Buddha called it *Māra*. Hindu scriptures call it *Kāma*. It is Satan in the Christian Doctrine. But a condemnation of it will not do. We must understand its place in evolution. That we have tried to do above. Then we can discover the way beyond it.

Like all evolutionary tendencies it is governed by the law of necessity. It has a necessary function in evolution, that is the reason for its appearance. It is to quicken life, to activate *Mānas*, to accelerate the pace of evolution and to develop sensibility, intelligence and volition. That having been done, it becomes inactive. Therefore, it is not a principle in the same sense as elemental existence or *Prāṇa* is. It has no future. There is no course of evolution which it has to run like the other two. We have called it a principle because it is a tendency which lasts throughout the human stage of evolution and has a unitary function to discharge.

It creates problems. The necessity of self-restraint in the matter of sense organs, emotion and thought is on account of this. The problems of ignorance and evil are born of it. In the social and political spheres it raises problems of immense magnitude. We have political

tussels and wars. It accelerates activity everywhere, and ultimately precipitates a crisis. The only possible way out of it is by the awakening of a principle higher than *Mānas*. Man gets hedged in on all sides so that he is forced to relinquish inwardly all that this feverish activity due to desire produced. He is forced to look up beyond the mind, *i.e.*, the human level. He cannot afford to linger on in indulgence.

Thus, we owe to it that man can become super-man. We owe to it that aspiration for the attainment of Godhood is born in man, and that he can realise it. Conscious effort for the advancement of one's evolution would have been impossible without it.

We need not condemn desire. Out of animal it makes man, and urges him to Godhood. It is a mighty force. It can become the force of spiritual aspiration. We need recognise it and steer it aright. It is the Transcendental Divine which appears as *Kāma*, the Divine Principle.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION & SOCIETY

Social environment is indispensable for human evolution. Family provides but a limited scope for it. It helps the growth of human emotions. Love, hate and sympathy come into play in this sphere. The spirit of self-sacrifice also springs up. Sense of appropriation also has a scope to manifest. There is a field for the growth of skill and application ; the sense of responsibility and a feeling of security can manifest. Such is the little world in which the child is ushered.

In the primitive stage humanity lives at the family stage; each family being as far as possible self-sufficient. Necessity, environmental and inner, drives one family into closer contacts with other families. Certain advantages accrue as also a certain amount sacrifice and discipline become incumbent upon the families coming together. A social group of families, the tribes, comes into being. A larger field for the evolution of human consciousness

N.B. Necessity of procuring food, drink, shelter, protection *etc.* is environmental necessity, and that of having love from others, of being respected *etc.* is inher necessity.

than the family comes into existence. The individual has now to solve tribal problems along with the family ones.

Next, the tribes come *together* into a closer unity and form a race. The individual feels himself a unit of it and identifies his interests with those of the race. His self expands from the family to the race. His outlook becomes more impersonal than heretofore. His emotions have, now, a far more impersonal sphere of exercise. He feels his identity even with those whom he has never seen and known. He can respond to their pleasures and pains. His ambitions also grow in like manner.

Several races combine and form a nation. Birth of a much higher unit demands a partial sacrifice on the part of the smaller units. Races forego their independent characteristics and privileges and their members partially their independent ego to become units of a nation. National consciousness replaces, in part, if not wholly, the racial consciousness of the individual. His emotions widen and embrace the entire nation. He comes to have national heroes, national friends and foes. The self is identified with the nation and its motherland.

So far we have considered only one aspect of this social development. The other one is also as patent. At the family stage feuds are limited to the family and the hates, *etc.*, are short-lived. The members cannot afford to continue fighting with one another, or else life will become impossible. At the tribal level tribal feuds come into existence. There are enmities between families and

between the members of the family itself. They are of considerable importance, and result in murders and other inhuman acts. At the racial level we have wars between tribes. There are murders, intrigues and large scale massacres. At the national level nations go to war and they continue for years, devastating homeland and ruining families. Nations combine against nations and pool their resources to destroy other nations and cultures. We have seen enough of it in our life time.

This growth of higher and higher social units is accompanied by the growth of both the higher and the lower nature of man. He learns to identify himself with large sections of humanity. He sacrifices for them. His skill and appreciation grow immensely. Alongside with it his lower nature is equally stimulated. He acquires power of destruction. His lower nature gets an unlimited scope and he wages global wars. The growth of social units provides a fine picture of the process of human evolution.

The whole of humanity is not at the same stage of evolution. Nations vary in the stages of evolution they reach and their evolutionary necessities. Nations are like different schools, as it were, which are meant to teach different subjects. Certain nations are more objective while others are more subjective. Some are emotional and some are matter of fact in their outlook on life. Some again have a markedly prominent artistic bend. Birth in a nation helps a man to assimilate the national characteristics. Human evolution is many-sided and

hence taking birth in various nations alike becomes necessary for the individual.† There develops in the nation in a course of evolution a natural consciousness. It is to all intents and purposes like a group-soul into characteristic mentalities of the individuals comprising the nationality, but has an effective independent existence, modifying the members and is modified by the members of the nationality. It is the spirit of the nation and lives and dies with the nation.

The individual too has his peculiarities. He has some traits in common with the other members of the nationality, but there is a lot in him which is not common. Every individual is unique as far as evolution goes. The nation has to provide scope for the evolution of the individuals comprising it. Evolving, they modify the national consciousness, however, to an appreciable degree, and in their turn are affected by it. This interplay of influences goes on from birth till the death of the individual.

† Every nation evolves a social structure in accordance with its characteristics. The social structure provides facilities for the growth of specific qualities in the members comprising the nation. Birth in India may help one to grow an introspective vision and to learn to appreciate super-human values. A birth amongst the Germans may help the ego to grow to strength and simplicity. A life time amongst the French may teach the lesson of refinement. Thus every nation and every society has its place in the economy of nations. The usefulness of its existence lies in the fulfilment of its purpose. It can best do so by living its own life. The more effective natural consciousness, the more successfully can it be done.

Internationalism can become an actuality only when the lower nature of man with the ego, selfishness and lust of power and possessions, *etc.*, comes to be dominated by the dawning wisdom-consciousness. Practical demonstrations of the futility of lower nature by means of severe shocks is not enough to release man from its grip.

The lower nature clouds reason and drives man into wrong ways in spite of himself. We have the evidence of this even today in Korea and elsewhere.

Till the higher nature of man becomes powerful, this state of affairs is bound to continue. The shocks work-off the intensity of lower nature and prepare the way for the descent of the higher consciousness and the supremacy of the higher nature no doubt. The day is yet far off for the present humanity.

II

Both the individual and the society evolve side by side. Social structure springs up spontaneously according to the evolutionary necessities. Both his higher and lower nature contribute to the growth of the social institutions. The evolutionary necessity above all governs birth and death of social institutions. Family, religion, law, justice, morality, *etc.*, are such growths.

Man today is suffering immensely. It is on account of his lower nature. He exploits the social and political institutions because of his lower nature, and thereby causes a great deal of misery. He appropriates wealth and the means of production and uses them selfishly. He

gathers power and becomes an aggressor. Man is playing in the hands of his ego and acquisitiveness. They lead him to make war upon his fellow-beings. His evolved intellect aligns itself with the lower nature and he rains fire on innocent brethren. Could we profitably stop him from evil by abolishing the institutions which give scope for the play of his lower nature ? It is a problem which faces intelligent humanity today.

We have to find our way through limitations. Perfection in social structure is an impossibility with imperfect members constituting it. Our weaknesses must be reflected in every system that we evolve. They reflect positively in the form of evil and suffering and negatively in the form of suppression and concentration camps as in Russia. Every system that we have, demands a price and has its shortcomings. Evolutionary necessity governs societies as it drives individuals.

From patriarchy and tribalism we shift to capitalism and nationalism; and from nationalism and socialism to fascism and communism. From autocracy to democracy and from democracy to totalitarianism. There is no absoluteness anywhere. Every 'ism and every 'cracy has its drawbacks and suits some more than others. In the evolutionary course we do find an interesting interplay of forces at the social level.

Society is a field of evolution for the individual and it must remain so. A certain amount of freedom is indispensable for this growth of the individual. Spiritual evolution proceeds through all 'isms and 'cracies. The

individuals needing specific influence repair to the specific areas. From one clime to another we go and from country to country, gathering necessary experiences for our evolution.

That growth of individuals would refine the social structure so as to reflect their inner enlightenment and love goes without saying. Their higher stage of evolution will demand for further growth a more refined and enlightened social structure. The social structure will fall to pieces and society disintegrate when it ceases to be so. That is because the Law of Necessity governs society. But it cannot be said that it leads to a particular structure. Hence, there exists no order of evolution in the various 'isms and 'cracies.

With the dawn of the wisdom-consciousness in the humanity at large, 'isms loose their meaning. It is a virtual communism when the sense of appropriation is gone, when people live for others, and when there is universal love and sympathy. It is socialism then, for the means of production are not utilised in such a humanity by anyone for his exclusive advantage. It is a virtual democracy because all wise men understand a right and are mutually in agreement. It matters not whether it is capitalism or autocracy.

The ultimate solution of our social problems lies not in the change of social structures. They do and will change out of evolutionary necessity. As we solve one set of social problems by a particular change, another equally baffling will come up; and this will go on.

Problems are due to the lower nature of man, which succeeds in finding an outlet, in spite of all our stop-gap arrangements. Human ego shifts from the family to the tribal, and from the tribal to the racial sphere. Man verily thinks that he has rooted it out. At the national level it causes global wars. Similar is the case with enmity, lust and greed. The present day story of humanity is the story of magnification of his lower nature; the suffering lies here primarily and not in the type of our social institutions.

Solution of all our problems lies in speeding up our evolutionary march, so that we transcend our lower nature for ever. Let the wisdom-consciousness dawn and these problems—political, economic, social, national and international will cease for ever. With the dawn of that consciousness our values will undergo a total change and the environment will be metamorphosed for us.

The change of environment cannot produce any far-reaching or lasting evolutionary effects. It is a make-shift, stop-gap arrangement. Isolation does not rid the individual of sex, nor abolition of property rid him of his sense of acquisitiveness. It merely puts those tendencies in abeyance for the time being. The solution lies elsewhere. The Master of Evolution determines the pace of our evolution. We can contribute our mite to it, no doubt.

N.B.—There are differences between race and race, no doubt, as far as evolution goes. Evolution is a multi-process and mutual differences are inevitable from individual to individual and race to race.

III

This brings us to a wider consideration. The present humanity is a homogeneous collection of human beings as far as evolution goes. The races which are lagging behind, such as the natives of Australia, have become almost extinct for the world is no longer suitable for their evolution. It has been adapted to the evolutionary needs of the human race at large.

Whereas the good in man is growing, as is evidenced by widening human sympathies and growing international outlook, we also find that the evil in him is getting vehemently effective. There was never such a time and never such intense man-made suffering. Looking to the dark side of human nature, it appears that man is not growing towards God-hood. He is rather going down to beastly level. There is no evolution but a definite degradation in his nature.

Childhood is the age of innocence and ignorance. It is when obedience to elders is natural. The present humanity has passed that child stage when it was led by great law-givers, perfected souls from a previous humanity. It followed them faithfully. Those were its golden days. Evil was not yet up, and hence there were no problems worth the name.

The child grows. He becomes self-conscious. He becomes a problem for himself and his parents, as he grows into youth. Desires, passions, attractions and hates awaken and torment him. A spirit of revolt against the established order, a lust for power and possessions and superiority and inferiority complexes spring up. It

is a difficult age. It is, all the same, a necessary preparation for the coming maturity which follows when the storms of youth have blown past. Much energy is let forth in youth and much experience is gained. This is necessary to make one sober. Similar is the case with the humanity at present. We are passing through a critical age with all the signs of mad youthfulness. Evil and suffering are natural.

As youth cannot be condemned, so we cannot condemn the present age.* In childhood there is innocence, but there is ignorance and helplessness as well. In youth there is strength together with evil and madness, but experience wears away madness and works off evil, giving birth to strength, sagacity and enlightenment. The youth matures into a useful and sober citizen. Humanity will stand on the threshold of wisdom-consciousness when it has passed through this critical age. We are growing towards Divinity ; the present is a necessary, though painful, stage which we must pass through.

The future of humanity is not dark. It is glorious. The wisdom-consciousness will be born, first in a few of its members and then it will spread forth in the race. We shall have an awakened humanity and a golden age, of which we shall ourselves be the fashioners. It will be an age of enlightened innocence, of power and love. Towards that we are heading decidedly. But, we must wait patiently on for centuries.

* Of course, we must keep guard over the young man lest he should harm himself or others irreparably. We may have to curb his independence to some degree.

HUMAN EVOLUTION

When a stable organic existence has been evolved by *Prāṇa*, the ground is ready for the emergence of the next higher principle. Animal organism is capable of very complex purposeful activity, but it lacks comprehension of the purpose and of the means of accomplishing it. It behaves like an intelligent* machine which performs complicated jobs alright, but cannot understand them. It is just a machine, and so are animals in this respect. They do not have imagination or reason, and also no appreciable will. It is the presence of imagination, reason and volition which distinguishes man from animals. A man's highly developed brain is necessary for these functions, and it is present in man and not in animals. The new principle which is responsible for it is mind. The story of its evolution is the story of the entire range of human evolution.

Mind is a very extensive principle. It covers both the emotional and reasoning side of human consciousness. These two aspects, though farther removed from *Prāṇa* than from each other, are yet quite distinct. They both run their own course of evolution, though, influenced

* Because it seems so, as far as a particular job is concerned.

greatly by each other at all stages of evolution. They are, in fact, two sister principles, and can be understood best like that. We shall study them one by one. The emotional Mind is usually called *mānas*, and the reasoning mind, *buddhi*. We shall use these terms.

Emotional Mind or Manas

The conscious energy when it reaches the human stage of evolution throws up *mānas*, also called the Astral Principle.*

The animal is at the perceptual level of cognition. It perceives objects as isolated from each other. It cannot recognise any relationship between them. It can know two dogs or ten dogs individually, but cannot form the concept dog. *Mānas* has this capacity. It can derive from the perceptions of senses concepts which last whereas perceptions pass away instantaneously. In this respect it is a higher sense. It has the capability of dealing in this way with the perceptions of all the senses, and, thus, can form concepts based upon any or all of them.

This gives it an immense hold upon them. By means of the concepts, so formed, it can influence perceptions. What man perceives through the senses is very little as compared to what he senses. The picture is filled up in details and colour by the conceptions which *mānas* has in store and pours in. In the far distance we perceive a verticle line on the sea, and we begin to see a

* It is called 'astral' because of the astral body which is shining like a star.

ship, rolling on the waves in our direction. By this type of linking up, it intensifies and complements sense-activity. To whichever sense it switches on, the same is lit up with colour and speed. *Mānas* is a master-sense.

It is capable of imagination. The concepts are thrown up on the inner canvas of consciousness in ever new permutations and combinations, in new setting and order, and with new colour and richness. Ever new objects and themes spring up out of the old ones. This is the creative faculty of *mānas* and is responsible to a great degree for human advancement in science, art and literature. The child's mind remains wrapped up in its own world of imagination. It is not self-conscious. Nor can it reason. This represents an early stage in the development of *mānas*.

An animal has instincts, the *prāṇic* tendencies. It has sex. It fears and frowns. It gets enraged and even bears malice. It takes care of its offspring and, whenever necessary, even makes great sacrifices for its sake. But, all that is for the sake of the evolution of the species, and maintenance of organic existence. In man, the instincts fall in abeyance. As *mānas* evolves, emotions grow. They begin to dominate and determine human behaviour.

Human emotions spring up from the animal instincts, but outgrow them. Conscious-energy seeks a fullness of expression of its *ānanda* (feeling) aspect through emotions. They become the springs of human activity as man evolves. For desire they serve as pivots, upon

which it revolves. Emotions are responsible for whatever is sweet and charming in human life as also for all that is insipid and bitter. Human art and literature will be non-existent but for emotion.

Mānas evolves intensity of feeling. Man can be far happier than animals, and also far more unhappy than them. He develops greater sensitiveness, alongside with greater sensibility. He feels the same stimuli much more than the animal does. This is about the physical side of man's life, which is due to a refinement of his nervous system. But, there springs up an altogether new field of joys and sorrows for man on account of emotions. Emotions and desires are the primary source of pleasure and pain for a civilized man. The physical sources are secondary.

He desires and toils for the fulfilment of his desires. The more intense the desire and the greater the labour he puts in, the greater the joy on fulfilment, and the greater the sorrow in frustration.

Emotions are a source of pleasure or pain in themselves. A welling up of love in the mother's breast at the sight of her child is so soothing ! Hatred and malice leave a heart-burn behind, even when they are spent up. Cruelty hardens one's heart, whereas sympathy softens it. To love is joy; to hate is sorrow. To be cruel is painful and to be sympathetic is so pleasant ! As *mānas* develops, emotions deepen. They give rise to permanent sentiments which give birth to noble human ideals. Upon these depends the formation of character.

The development of *mānas* is from the lower to the higher emotions. Hatred, jealousy, anger, fear and malice are lower emotions. They harm the physical organism by generating poisons in the system,* and wreck the nervous system by shaking it to its very roots. They unsteady the reasoning mind. They are by themselves painful. They close up consciousness, as it were, and stop the free flow of *prāṇa* through the body. On their account, the individual suffers and so does society. They are transcended in the course of evolution. Love, sympathy and kindness, the higher emotions replace them. For long, the higher and lower emotions exist side by side and man is like a play-thing in their midst. Like a shuttle cock, he is tossed from the one to the other.

The sympathetic nervous system is the seat of emotional mind, *i. e.*, *mānas*. As the child grows and his central nervous system develops, his emotional mind gradually falls back and his reasoning mind, *i. e.*, *buddhi* comes forward. Behind this emotional activity is the principle of *mānas* which develops behind the scenes an emotional body which is the actual seat of all this manifold activity.

We learnt about the *prāṇic* body or etheric double. It is the medium of *prāṇic* evolution. Similarly, the emotional body is the medium of astral evolution. This body is composed of astral atoms†, just as the physical one is of physical atoms. The *prāṇic* and astral atoms are of a relatively higher order than the physical. A study

* See: *In Tune with The Infinite* by R. W. Trine.

† As the *prāṇic* one is of *prāṇic* atoms.

of occult facts can lead to a better understanding of the nature of *prāṇic* and astral matter.‡

There is a group-soul at the animal level, and the etheric double is an extension of it. With the growth of *mānas*, the evolving conscious-energy becomes capable of standing alone, and individual personality comes into being. The experiences of the individual now react directly and fully upon him. There grows up a personality distinct from others. Emotional difference grows between man and man with evolution. Each one is unique.

An animal has an astral body, the early beginnings of *mānas* are traceable to the animal kingdom. This is insensitive, inactive and dull. It awakens in the human kingdom and grows ever more sensitive, active and brilliant as human evolution proceeds,* The emotions and feelings are vibrations in this body.

The Reasoning Mind or Buddhi

The reasoning mind or *buddhi* is a sister principle. It makes its appearance after *mānas*, and is inherently capable of restraining it. It may, therefore, be called the elder of the two, though younger in years.†

Manas can form concepts or general ideas. It can

‡ The reader will do well to read "Hidden side of things" and "Occult Chemistry," both Theosophical publications.

*The *prāṇic* as well as astral bodies can be seen through the sense of subtle sight. It is capable of catching a much higher order of vibrations and, therefore, can, see them.

†The later a principle appears in evolution, the higher it is.

also imagine. *Buddhi* is capable of forming more abstract ideas and ideals. A concept has a form and an association, but an abstract idea is something in the air.‡ There is no counterpart of it in the physical world. It is abstract. From concepts *buddhi* derives ideas. They link up concepts. This makes the process of thought possible. It is the characteristic of *buddhi*.

Thought process comprises an association of concepts and ideas. It includes their mutual comparison and contrast, and the necessary inductions and deductions. Reasoning consists of inductions and deductions.

Buddhi knows A from B because of this reasoning faculty. It is capable of discriminating. Combined with the imagination, it builds noble sentiments and high ideals. It gives birth to philosophy and is the bedrock of scientific research.

Along with *buddhi* there evolves volition, the conative aspect of conscious-energy. It carries the force of conscious-energy with it. It may be directed into any channel by *buddhi*. In combination with the reasoning capacity, it becomes a restraining factor in life. Man 'knows' good from bad, can 'will' to be good, and can 'become' good. The *prāṇic* life of instincts having been disintegrated by the advent of *mānas*, and the lower and higher emotions having been activated, human consciousness becomes the field of a terrible conflict. He is now pulled this way and now that way. Reason can show him the path, and the will can give him strength

‡ e.g. 'Goodness', 'evil', 'brightness' are ideas.

to follow it. Self-restraint is based upon these two, *i. e.*, reason and will. He can hold *prāṇa* and *mānas* in check.

Last, but not the least, *buddhi* intensifies the ego-sense, *i. e.*, 'I-ness' in man. A sense of unique self-superiority begins to obtain as his mental powers grow. He, with all that he appropriates to himself, stands out in his own eyes as something far superior to the rest of humanity. My body, my mind, my arguments, my son, my country, my race, my religion, my ism, my work, *etc.*, are but a few links in the chain of 'Myness' which binds him down to the earth on the one hand, and on the other, raises an iron curtain between him and the rest of the world. He becomes a prisoner in his self-cast steel-fortress of egoism. He would fain lord it over all and get himself declared as the greatest, the noblest, the wisest, the bravest and what not of the whole humanity, and of gods too, if they would hear his voice. He plays in the hands of his lower nature which lets loose its fury upon him in the form of desire. He becomes a titan, a curse, to himself and to the society.

This egoism gives strength to his individuality and he can stand well apart from others. Under the spell of this infatuation he blunders. He goes away; nay, even runs amuck. The reaction comes one day. He suffers as he has never suffered before. That awakens him to a high degree of self-consciousness. He learns to look within and becomes conscious of his own defects.

Self-consciousness, in fact, begins to develop with the

coming in of *mānas*. An animal is never self-conscious. Human child grows so, but to a small degree. He feels shy. As suffering comes, consciousness withdraws. Man is forced to look within. Reason together with suffering makes him introspective. Philosophies take birth. Spiritual aspiration awakens and man begins to realize the limitations of reason and seeks a way to real fulfilment, to lasting peace and unending joy.

Buddhi can take man right up to the door of Godhood. But, it cannot open the door and usher him into the temple of Divinity. It is a light, but a lesser one.

There is a joy of fulfilment in *buddhi*. The successful solution of a tough problem, the discovery of a scientific principle after years of hard labour, and the satisfactory accomplishment of work of art give joy. This joy differs from the instinctive pleasure of the animal and the enthusiastic self-indulgence of the civilized man. The joy of the artist, the poet, the musician, the philosopher and the scientist is the joy of *buddhi*. It is much finer, more balanced and more lasting than that of *prāna* and *mānas*. This is the *ānanda* aspect of *buddhi*.

Humanity grows with the evolution of *buddhi*. *Mānas* flourishes aided by *buddhi*. Fine arts and literature develop. Refinement and sensibility characterise the civilized man. His sympathies widen and embrace entire humanity. Nationalism grows. On the other hand, *buddhi* enriched by *mānas* also pushes forward. Philosophies and sciences, spring up and grow. A sense of morality comes into being. A struggle for self-restraint and self-

improvement starts. The noble ideals of equality, fraternity, liberty, *etc.*, are evolved.

There is an unpalatable, yet unforgettable, side of the picture too. Side by side with the higher emotions (love, sympathy, *etc.*) develop the lower ones (lust, anger, jealousy, *etc.*) and the ego. Desire overshadows entire life. Reason itself gets overclouded. It is yoked to the fulfilment of desires born of lower emotions. Egoistic designs reign supreme. It results in horrible manslaughters and terrible oppressions. Man becomes too self-centred, grabbing and tyrannical.

He is himself responsible for his terrible fate. He is in the grip of desire to which he himself clings. He sucks his own blood. He knows not and is helpless. He cries and blames the entire world for his suffering. A day comes when he awakens to the facts. He knows the cause of his suffering, but finds himself helpless. Reason and volition are too weak to conquer his lower nature. They are too meak to face desire, swollen to mighty magnitudes. He finds himself in total chaos, chaos within and chaos without. Glamour and refinement of the chaos mock at him. They threaten him with utter annihilation. This is the impasse into which man is driven by the development of these two sister principles : *mānas* and *buddhi*. This, as we shall show, is the necessary preparation for the next step in evolution. ‡

Buddhi, like *mānas*, develops a body, called the mental body. It works out its evolution through it. Made up

‡ See below Chapter XI

of a still finer matter than the astral; it is capable of these higher mental functions. Thoughts are vibrations in this body and reasonings their chains. It has a limited hold on *prāṇic* and emotional bodies. It can curb their activities, but cannot fulfil them and reintegrate them into a higher unity.† *Buddhi* is but an elder sister, not a mother to these. That task is reserved for the coming next principle.

Central nervous system and especially the brain are the physical seat for the manifestation of *buddhi* activity on the physical plane. Its growth subordinates the sympathetic nervous system and, hence, also the emotional mind. The development of brain is necessitated by the evolving *buddhi* for it requires a higher instrument of expression than *mānas*.*

† An undue domination of reason makes life dry and dull, almost inhuman. It kills emotions and starves life.

*In cases of madness, it is the brain which goes wrong and not *buddhi*. The *buddhi* fails to find proper expression on the physical plane. The control system and the volition are also paralysed to a lesser or greater degree. A fit of passion from this point of view, is but a short-lived madness.

SUPER-HUMAN EVOLUTION

Conscious-energy does not stop with human evolution. It takes far greater strides ahead in order to unfold the Transcendental Divine involved in it.

Reasoning mind is the distinguishing characteristic of man. As we saw in the last chapter, its development intensifies good and evil in man and, hence, and his joys and sufferings. It gives rise to an inner struggle in him. Having lost the fascination for objects of enjoyment, but, being unable to restrain himself, he is in the midst of a strange uneasiness. Reason cannot deliver the goods. He is helpless. This prepares the ground for the advent of the next higher principle, Wisdom, *Jñāna*.

The mind could know, feel and will. Through the mind conscious-energy found a fuller expression than heretofore. It evolved diversity in every sphere and intensified it. It coloured existence with a richness of variety. It gave birth to good and evil and raised the problem of self-restraint. It created a chaos side by side with a fine rhythm. Now comes Wisdom, to unify all diversity, to lead the many to the one, to take the doer beyond good and evil. It comes to end the chaos for

ever. It washes away the very problem of self-restraint. It comes to do what reason could not.

Prāṇī represents a state of consciousness. So also does the emotional and the reasoning-mind. The latter corresponds to the conscious-mind of modern psychology, whereas the former (*i. e. prāṇa*) to the sub-conscious. The elemental existence corresponds to the unconscious mind. Wisdom standing above the conscious may be said to correspond to the super-conscious. Evolution of the super-conscious in man may well be termed super-human evolution.*

The organism has attained a stable existence. The two-fold mind also is well evolved. Wisdom can manifest only under these conditions. It is a principle of far greater magnitude than those evolved so far and has a tremendous influence on its predecessors. It calls them to order and prepares them to share the final consummation of the realization of the Divine, a perfect unfolding of the Transcendental Supreme. Wisdom corresponds to the status of the two co-existing aspects of the Supreme, Absolute Consciousness (Supreme Being) and Absolute Energy (Supreme Becoming).† It does not correspond to the Transcendental Supreme itself.

There is a unity pervading all diversity, a unity subsisting in spite of and supporting all diversity. Wisdom is the consciousness of it. The one, the immeasurable, actionless, attributeless, immutable *Brahman*, the *Ātman*

* See above Chapter I

† See above Chapter II

exists in all and all exist in it. Wisdom is the key to its realization. It is on the one hand this realization of the One, and one on the other it is a comprehension of the Absolute Energy in its play as the universe. It is total understanding of the environment. Wisdom is not wisdom in the worldly sense of the term. It is knowledge of both Being and Becoming.

It is different from the reasoning mind. The mind is capable of a three dimensional understanding. It can know unity or diversity, but cannot comprehend the two at once. That appears to it a contradiction. It can know a thing as black *or* as white, but not at once as black *and* white. That shocks it as an impossibility. It can comprehend only that aspect of Reality which comes through facts, which occur in time and space. Beyond that, it has no reach. Wisdom begins where the intellect leaves off. Wisdom sees the one in many and the many in one. It comprehends the self in all and the all in the self. It realizes the attributeless *Brahman*. It can sense an existence which is unmanifest.

Wisdom is a principle. It is not the product of any reasoning, or the result of any *karma*. It is a higher consciousness which unfolds itself when one is ready for it. Like all other principles, it has a birth and grows gradually to a fullness of manifestation. In the earlier stages, this consciousness comes and goes. Later it comes to stay for longer and longer periods. One ceases being clouded by the incomplete and erratic vision of the emotional and reasoning mind when this principle is established in its fullness of maturity.

Wisdom is a consciousness of a distinctly different order. It is different from reason, as reason is different from *Prāṇa*. It differs from reason as a solid does from a surface. No accumulation of surfaces can make a solid, there being a dimensional difference.* No sharpness of intellect can produce wisdom. It is hard for reason to visualize its nature exactly. A gulf wider than the one which exists between *prāṇa* and mind separates reason from wisdom.

Reasoning mind has to undergo a laboured process of induction or deduction in order to know. It knows things and events from a distance. Wisdom enables one to identify oneself with everything and every setting. Thus, there results an intimate knowledge, which is without the possibility of an error. No more process is necessary for the attainment of knowledge; one has merely to identify oneself with what one wants to know.

This capability is developed when wisdom is fully manifested, but that comes in due course and by stages. The earliest manifestation of the dawning wisdom is flashes of intuition. We know things just by a flash and they turn out to be true. They may be about present, past or future. We neither understand this process, nor have any control over it. Later on it develops into a steady illumination which penetrates beyond the barriers of time and space. In the purity of this consciousness are visible the shadows of things to come and things gone by.

* A surface has no thickness.

Wisdom bestows a fuller comprehension of things. Reason knows but a few facets, and only one at a time; thus wisdom is much higher than reason.

This is about the *chit* (cognitive) aspect of the new principle, wisdom.

Wisdom is the consciousness of absolute stability. It is absolute actionlessness. All activities sink into it. The sense of doership vanishes. The impressions‡ of actions are washed away. As wisdom develops, we see all activity in the environment and remain unmoved witnesses to it. We act not, but see action in the Absolute Energy of the Supreme.

Man is released from both good and evil. When there is no doer-ship, good and evil are meaningless. The ego vanishes. There is no 'I' and 'mine' in wisdom consciousness. 'It Is', and that is enough. The zest for action is gone, as also for inaction, for both of them are in the environment. There is no urge to appropriate, nor any to cast off. The self is fulfilled. There is no stress and strain. It is a reactionless state of consciousness, a comfortable pose of being, beyond any possibility of a shake up.

Outer activity or inactivity does not indicate the presence or the absence of wisdom. This wisdom consciousness depends upon no outer circumstance. It can co-exist with both action and inaction. It makes no demands upon the environment; and, no outer circumstances can delimit it, nor produce it.

Desire no longer activates the will. The lower nature

‡Samskars

is also out of the picture, and cannot move the man of wisdom to action. Ego no longer binds the will, because consciousness is established beyond. Man of wisdom acts from the motivation of momentum of past *samskāras*. The coming events cast their shadows on such a transparent volition. He wills that which is coming ; and what he wills comes about. His volition is free from the shackles of his personality, but it is inactive. If he can will anything, it is the well-being, from the highest standpoint, of all alike.

With the dawn of wisdom, turmoil begins to settle down. The chaos takes leave and a new order comes to light. The desire principle must reach its climax before the dawn of wisdom begins, hence, the unpalatable aspect of human life at this juncture. With the coming in of the new principle, desire dwindles. It is replaced by an aspiration for the higher life of wisdom. To the degree the aspiration grows, desire wears out. With this is established a peace, which is unshakeable, which passeth understanding, which makes of man a superman. Unswerving in the ups and downs of life, he stands a pillar of peace in the tumultuous sea of life. This much is to indicate the conative aspect of wisdom.

The zest for pleasure which dislocated *prāṇic* life dies with the advent of wisdom. Reason and will struggle but cannot call *prāṇic* life to order. Self-control remains a problem till the establishment of wisdom. The fall of sages and saints of *yoga*, of great penitents and dogmatics proves the truth of this statement. The disrupting factor taking leave, order returns to *prāṇic* life. Man of wisdom has not to restrain, for he has no temptation.

There is no problem of self-restraint for him. He has gone beyond lust, greed, anger and hate.

Lower emotions awaken with the development of the emotional mind and begin to dominate human life, bringing misery in their wake. Reason and will can hold them in check but only partially. Suppressions are dangerous to human existence like inactive volcanoes. They burst and tear up life to its very roots. They disorganise human personality with physical disease or mental abnormality. If lower emotions are allowed to have their way, man would disrupt social life, and in the end destroy his fellow-beings and himself. He is on the horns of a dilemma. Wisdom alone can help him out of it.

The growth of wisdom purges *prāṇa* of the zest for pleasure. It purges *mānas* of the lower emotions. Anger and fear, hate and malice, jealousy and covetousness pass off gradually. It is a slow process no doubt, but it is a sure one. As light and darkness cannot co-exist, so wisdom and lower emotions cannot. They are not suppressed, but are quietly cleared away. Passing away, they leave behind no permanent vacuum. Ultimately, life is not any the less rich for their exit. Wisdom establishes a higher order of consciousness in man and all that cannot conform to it must clear away.

Higher emotions are intensified, but for a while only. The emotional mind ceases to have a hold on the personality. The emotional is unsteady; the higher one is less than the lower one, but it is unsteady all the same. The seat of working consciousness is so much higher than the emotional mind at the advent of wisdom

that it cannot shake the man of wisdom. Emotions are refined. One grows above sensivity, and ceases to be sentimental or emotional.

Pleasures and pains can toss him no longer. He loses the wealth of physical pleasures and emotional joys as also the sting of physical and mental pains. They come and go their way. The man of wisdom neither exults when pleasures come, nor sorrows when they go. He covets not the pleasures, nor hates the pains. He is superbly indifferent, like an elephant towards a barking dog. Wisdom gives him inner stability and he develops an evenness of temperament which never leaves him. He cannot sorrow, even if he would.

The man of wisdom does not lose sensibility and return to a state of elemental existence. Far from it, He is capable of far greater sensibility than ordinary human being who is at the level of the reasoning mind. He sees through men and events. Nothing obstructs his vision. It is the peace of the self and the stability of the wisdom consciousness which have made him pleasureless and painless.

Wisdom is the sense of perfect equality. The man of wisdom sees the one in all, and hence sees them all as equals. His vision is focussed at the One which pervades all and supports the many and it is present equally in a saint and a sinner, a cow and a crow, and, in a friend and a foe. The mind creates diversity and sees inequality. Its consciousness dwells on the surface, but wisdom touches the very roots of existence. It sees

and dwells in a unity. As a result the Ego sinks. Pride dies. Resentment vanishes. Sense of appropriation, *i.e.*, 'myself' takes leave. Past, present and future melt into an infinity where hope cannot breathe and anxiety cannot exist. Freed from these shackles of mental and emotional consciousness, rid of the dross of *prāṇic* life, one breathes the infinite air of self-existence.‡

He has a peace which is greater than all joys of the world put together. Possessing nought, he is the king of all that he surveys. He cannot lose, for he possesses nothing. He fears no disrespect, for he has no respect. He does not demand and hence he has no responsibilities. He does not transgress, therefore, he has no sense of morality. Wisdom is a consciousness, so different from the mental consciousness, that without an actual fore-taste of it, a fair understanding of it is well nigh impossible.

This sense of inner equality and the vision of a unity, bestows upon him a sense of universal sympathy. He has no selfish end to attain by his existence. Being one with all, he lives for all. That becomes his nature. Untouched by selfishness, as he ever is, philanthropy has no meaning for him.

Reasoning mind, not understanding the nature of this higher life, even doubts whether such a state of existence would be covetable. This merely reflects his ignorance and has no meaning. As a man perturbed by his lower nature, sick of the problems which human life

‡ Consciousness is established beyond ego, and the limited self is merged into the Self, which is equally the self of all.

has in store for him, sometimes thinks of going back to animal existence, which is free from these human worries, so does he, afraid of passing beyond the present, fear the unknown but glorious future. Wisdom is a higher principle than reason.

Even to vegetable stage :—

'In a dreary nighted December

Too happy happy tree

Thy branches never remember

Their green felicity

With, a *numbed sense* to steal them.

In the course of evolution, reasoning mind with its dominant analytical aspect, gradually emerges as the most determining power in human life. Its understanding is limited and also its scope. It wants to dictate a rule of the thumb to the emotional mind and *prāṇa*. If this comes about, life becomes dry and dull, stagnant, mechanical and business like. Emotions dry up and along with it die the wealth and richness of human endeavour, experience and attainment. A stoic existence of a rational philosopher or of a penancing mendicant is the result-out. But, it is a rare specimen in human species.

Wisdom comes. Reason gives in, recognising its superior in it, Wisdom leads and reason serves under him. In the new order, reason is no longer a means of knowing; it is a means of expressing knowledge gathered by wisdom. It rationalises and interprets it for the sake of the mind and *prāṇa*. The age of reason passes as the age of wisdom comes. Together with it pass away

intolerance, in thought and deed, in human oppressions, and fanatical tirades. Man learns to accommodate man in the physical and the mental worlds, Reason understands less and confuses more and hence it blunders, making this large large earth far too small for its children to live upon in peace and plenty. Reason fails in its haughtiness to respect life in others and destroys it. Wisdom is accommodating, nay, it is life-giving. It is ever toiling for the good of one and all. It is the mother consciousness standing and supporting all.

Behind the scenes a wisdom-body is evolved. It is of a much superior stuff than the mental one. It is far more powerful than those preceding bodies. This serves as the vehicle of wisdom consciousness.

The mental, emotional and the *prāṇic* bodies all undergo far reaching transformation with the awakening of this wisdom body. It sets up a new note of vibration which, ringing through the entire being, clears away all that cannot vibrate in accord with it. The *Prāṇa* is cleansed of the lower stuff which vibrated in response to the zest for pleasures. The emotional body loses the stuff which corresponded to lower emotions and the desire principle. The mental one is rid of the capacity to vibrate to the tune of egoism, pride, and resentment. A general refinement and vivification, however, comes about in all the bodies. Man stands as a *deva*, nay, greater than *devas*, blessed with wisdom. He is a superman, ready to enter into Godhood, the final consummation of his long long journey of evolution.

LOVE, THE FINAL CONSUMMATION

The unfoldment of wisdom has prepared man for the final consummation. He has entered the sanctum sanctorum, but blindfolded. The light which shines above and in all lights, which is the mother of Absolute Being as well as of Absolute Becoming, is yet invisible. Pure as ice and clear as crystal, perfectly transparent in his selflessness, he stands awaiting for his eyes to be opened. Aspiration is gone, volition is gone, and, in a 'stirless' ocean of infinite peace, he lies effortless. He has become the Self of all, the One in many. He cannot do anything.

At long last, a ray of Love touches his inmost being. He has a vision of the Divinity, the Transcendental Supreme. The Father and the Mother, the Friend, the the Comrade, the Lord of sacrifices and the Master of Evolution, the Spirit of absolute well-being, the True, the Good and the Beautiful, the Eternal Beloved of the soul, the unit of evolving conscious energy, the One from where the many spring and to whom they return, the Lord of Lords who dwells in the innermost recesses of our heart comes up in a glimpse. His grace has descended. The silence of the ocean of infinite peace is drowned

in the all-pervading rhythm of Divine Bliss. The actionless realisation of the self (*ātman*) is replaced by the consciousness of the Dynamic Energy of the Divine, working infinitely with numberless hands, in countless ways. The quality of the self and not-self, of the real and the unreal vanishes. The man is gone. The Divine remains. Nought but the Divine remains. Matter and mind, energy and consciousness, knowledge and ignorance, sin and righteousness, anger and greed, life and death, the ant and the hill: all are Divine to that consciousness. The Dynamic Divine, the Transcendental Being is manifesting as all, doing all, enjoying all and suffering all; yet, it is untouched, untarnished and ever perfect. The man of God-consciousness swims in the ocean of Bliss; nay, he himself becomes bliss of compact.

The new principle which is responsible for this consummation is love. Like all other principles, it represents a consciousness which has a beginning and gradually grows to fullness. It is quite distinct from every other principle. Without Love, the Divine cannot be realized. One cannot even have a glimpse of Him, much less know Him and merge into Him, without the unfoldment of Love. As one needs eyes to see a form, and ears to hear a voice, one must have Love to see and realize the Divine. Wisdom can give peace. It can release one from the bondage of *Prakṛti*, Absolute Becoming. It can give miraculous powers, but not the vision of the Transcendental Godhood. Love is absolutely indispensable for the Supreme Consummation.*

* Admitted that a man of wisdom will automatically receive

This love is not an emotion, a vibration of the emotional body. That is human love which has a wide and divergent sphere. That is but a limited movement of the mind. It ennobles man, teaching him spontaneous self-giving. It stirs man to great self-sacrifice. It sweetens life. It also has another aspect. It infatuates; sometimes, it even maddens. It binds down man with unreasonable demands. Frustrated, it wrecks life. At its lowest, human love is a gross attachment, clouding reason and leading man to intense heart-aches. At its best, it is a source of unearthly joy. It purifies man of his lower nature to a degree, makes him selfless and quickens his pace in evolution. But this Love, the Love Divine is of quite a different order. Human love is a reflection of it on the emotional level.

Love Divine ripens when the emotional body is already clear of dross and incapable of any lower emotions. Far from feeling besides oneself under its influence, it manifests fully only when the control of wisdom consciousness is fully established over *prāṇa* and emotional mind. An unflinching hold on the entire being characterises Love. It does not cloud reason, but keeps it steady and responsive even when it is at its highest. Human love centres round the ego, 'I' and 'mine', but Divine Love transcends it. In Divine Love all is Divine and every being is of the Divine. Human love being an emotional vibration comes and goes. As a sentiment, it is steadier, but is yet capable of being shaken and

the gift of Love and realise the Divinity in course of time, yet the fact remains as stated.

replaced by hate and anger. Divine Love is constant. It grows and grows, but never dwindles. Here perversity is unimaginable.

Human love is tarnished with misery. It begs and demands. It taunts and weeps. It can be frustrated. Divine Love is a joy in itself. It is bliss. It is self-filled and perfect. It seeks neither reward nor any fulfilment. Yes, it seeks no fulfilment from 'outside', for when it awakens, duality ceases. The Lord and Love become one, and in this supreme unity the soul loses its identity. The lover, the Beloved and Love become a triune unity, the three in one. What reward can love seek? It is the highest reward and fulfilment in itself. Love is God and God is love.

This love is infinite. Wisdom consciousness is infinite. It perceives the One in many. Love which is higher must indeed be infinite. Love is directed towards the Infinite Divine. Whichever way the man of Love looks he sees the Same Infinite. For Love nothing but the Divine, which is the One Object, exists. Hence, it can be directed towards none but the Divine. Where it can have any object other than the Highest, it is not Divine Love, but a human emotion.

With Divine Love fully unfolded, therefore, there can be no question of pain or frustration. In the earlier stages, like wisdom it comes and goes. It flashes forth, the man is lost in the bliss of Love for a while and it goes away. He sinks down to a lower level, where there is a feeling of loss, of separation from the Divine Beloved.

A yearning for the Divine seizes him. Intense pangs of separation are quite natural, till Divine Love ripens and meets with fulfilment. This suffering purifies man and prepares him for the full unfoldment of Divine Love. Love as *sādhana* is a tremendous force, the like of which is not known to exist. Like a fresh conflagration it burns away the dross, awakening wisdom, and speeding up remarkably the entire process of evolution.*

There are paths of *sādhana*, based upon the awakening of Divine Love. The aspirant is accepted without any consideration of his stage of evolution. Divine love is kindled in him. It flourishes in accordance with the intensity of aspiration and his stage of evolution. It brings down tremendous consciousness-force for which the entire system has to be prepared. A rapid process of purgation sets in. The aspirant has to pay for this speed in terms of intense pangs of separation besides much more.

Human love is but a spark of Divine love and the latter gradually manifests itself in the course of *sādhana*.

When love ripens, it is fulfilled and no pain remains. If it remains, it is a proof positive that Love Divine has not ripened yet.

Love Divine is called Love, because it is so much like human love, in spite of being so widely different from it. Moreover, the spark of this consciousness can be kindled in the heart and fanned to a full blaze by *sādhana*.

* *Sādhana* is a path of conscious self-endeavour for evolution. See 'Evolutionary Sadhana' by the author.

Love is bliss; that is the feeling (*ānanda*) aspect of the evolving 'conscious-energy'. Love is God-consciousness. It is conscious of the Transcendental Supreme as the all, and doing all. It is conscious of God and God alone, within and without. Here all actions and responsibilities cease, morals and restraints die, and all philosophies fail. It is the crowning glory of the evolutionary process. This is the cognitive (*chit* aspect) of the evolving conscious energy. When the spark enters the flame, it becomes identical with the flame. The lesser light merges into the One light. A man of Love has no consciousness apart from God-consciousness. God is Omniscient, and so is God-man.

It is the Lord who is seen as the One Agent, doing all and suffering all. It is the Divine Will which is unfolding this cosmic *līlā*.* The human will is but a reflection of it. Human volition merges into the Divine one. as self-dedication is finally made by the individual and accepted by the Divine. It is the Divine which wills and works in and as him. His will becomes the Divine will. This is the *sat* (conative) aspect of Love.

This final consummation does not leave the rest of the being untouched. It fills one through and through. *Prāṇa* is satiated, the emotional mind floats in bliss, and the reasoning mind lives in the omniscient light of the Divine. Wisdom-consciousness merges into the Love-consciousness. Godhood descends right down to the

* *Līlā* is play out of the fullness of the Divine's Being.

physical body which radiates the Divine Light. The molecules right down to the physical body undergo a trans-substantiation. Seemingly physical matter, but is in fact compact Divine Light. Man of love becomes a manifest Divinity, verily God on earth, the Infinite in the finite, a living epitome of the Transcendental Supreme.

The conscious-energy of the Transcendental Supreme having run this long long course of evolution at long last reaches back its source. It left as a spark, but it has come back as the sun. The finite, *viz.*, involved infinite, has become the infinite. The toil and turmoil is worthwhile indeed ! When it started on its journey it was almost a non-existence, imponderable, inconsiderable and ineffective, an atom of Being and Becoming. At the end it emerges as God, *Sat*, *Chit* and *Anāṇḍa*. It is the most wonderful of miracles, an evidence of the infinite skill of the Master of Evolution.‡

A final reintegration on the basis of God consciousness is responsible for this metamorphosis of the human into Divine. Man of Love lives in the Divine, lives in Him and the Divine lives in him, nay, is his very self. Like the Divine he is filled with compassion, and is a friend of all, living for their good. He is skilful as the Lord, and is the master of *Prakṛti*. He becomes an

‡ That the evolutionary process does not pass beyond this consummation to higher ones, we cannot say. We know of nothing beyond this; that we readily admit. We have no ground, either, to rule out such a possibility.

instrument of Divine grace, verily a pen in the hands of the Divine.*

* There are persons who declare wisdom to be the highest consummation. Practically that makes no difference, for the man of wisdom automatically passes on to love consciousness, the difference between the two is subtle and temporary. They include the wisdom consciousness in Love consciousness. We are forced to do so by our approach and understanding.

THE PRINCIPLES OF EVOLUTION

In the foregoing pages we have traced the process of evolution from the level of elemental existence to the stage of its final consummation in God-consciousness. A consideration of the general principles governing this process will not be out of place.

Action and reaction between the evolving conscious-energy and its environment characterise the whole process. This is the measure, in fact, of the progress of evolution. As the process advances, this interaction grows in intensity and extensity. It also changes its form with the awakening of each new principle. It gathers momentum as evolution proceeds.

This interaction is a necessary factor in the process of evolution. Conscious-energy has the inherent will to unfold. The Divine creates for it the necessary environment and agencies to help the unfoldment. But, how does it actually come about? The gold must be melted to be recast. The ball must be set rolling before it can hit the mark. The action of the environment upon the evolving unit awakens it to reaction. It reacts and the environment hits back. It hits back again. Thus, a

chain of action and reaction is set up. This stirs up, mobilising the hidden capabilities of the evolving unit into action. In this manner, the evolving unit grows till it is ready for the awakening of the next principle. It awakens. A new type of inter-action starts between the environment and the evolving unit. This also gathers momentum gradually. Both the environment and the evolving unit undergo the necessary changes. In due course they become ready for the unfoldment of the next higher principle. The same story is repeated over and over again.

The new principle comes in when the previous one is fairly evolved to prepare the ground for its appearance. The two now begin to unfold side by side.* *Prāṇic* evolution is not complete when mind comes in. We find the glimpses of the emotional mind amongst the animals. The organism continues to develop† even after the appearance of mind. When this second one is well established, and the individual is ready for the next higher principle, wisdom comes in. The two former principles, however, go on unfolding side by side with this new one.‡ It means that the process does not aim at perfection in the unfoldment of the principles singly. If it were so, the organism should be perfect before

* The one which was already then and the one which is newly introduced.

† Which concerns the evolution *prāṇa*.

‡ The emotional mind is yet in the evolving, when the reasoning mind makes its appearance. Again, this latter is yet in the process of unfoldment when wisdom awakens.

the emotional mind appears, and this latter should be perfect before the reasoning mind appears, and so on. But, we find that it is not so.

In fact, the evolutionary process is not meant to evolve any principle for its own sake. It is for the perfect unfoldment of the Transcendental Supreme which lies involved in conscious-energy. The law of Necessity governs the entire process. The goal of evolution is never lost sight of even for a single moment, it seems. It is in accordance with this law that every tendency makes its appearance and grows. It is again in strict accordance with this that it is eliminated. We have numerous instances of it in the biological field. The animals inhabiting cold climate have furs. Trees of colder regions have thick leaves to stand the cold. Being unnecessary in warm lands, these (*i. e.* furs *etc.*) are not there. The tail lasts only as long as it is necessary. Desire subsists only so long as man needs being activated. Having accomplished its task in a man of wisdom, it retires. Similar is the case with passions and pains. A principle is evolved only as far as it is absolutely necessary for the next one to come in.

The law of Necessity is an inherent necessity of the process of evolution, if it has to attain its objective. Without such a law, the process would be side-tracked. The final consummation would be an impossibility.

Moreover, further evolution of a principle (*i. e.* after it has reached a particular stage) becomes impossible without the coming in of the next one. We cannot think

of the human organism being evolved without the appearance of human mentality. The brain is meant to express the reasoning mind. The delicate and complex central nervous system is of use to the human intelligence, and not to the animal consciousness. Wisdom cannot appear in an animal, and love Divine in a plant.

Thus, an absolute necessity governs the appearance of every new principle. This law holds in every phase of this entire process. A much higher consciousness than human, directs the evolutionary processes. It can see the absolute necessity and so arrange every factor that all goes well everywhere. Human intelligence fails to understand its working—so often. Man cannot see the necessity of death and disease, poverty and privation, and of sin and ignorance. Rather than sharpening his understanding and lifting his vision, he denies the law of necessity which is so patent a fact. This is but his ignorance, if not folly. As he grows into the wisdom-consciousness, his vision opens up. He understands the Law of Necessity working without exception everywhere. As he enters Love-consciousness, he realizes the meaning of Divine Grace. The Law of Necessity appears to him as a manifestation of His Grace.

'Law of Integration' is the second Law of Spiritual evolution. The process of evolution has a goal. It is the full unfoldment of Godhood in the evolving unit of conscious-energy. The evolution of principles by themselves has no meaning. They exist and evolve to serve the final consummation. They are being evolved so that

they may fill properly the place assigned to them in the man of God-consciousness as evolved to perfection. The elements are needed for his physical body. The *prāṇa* has to fashion his body out of the physical atoms. It has to evolve the senses and sense-organs for him. Similarly, mind and wisdom have their parts to play. The entire process, every single movement of it, is directed to the evolution of an integrated Divine existence of the grand 'finale'. This is the genesis of this Law of Integration.*

The process of Integration consists in keeping up the integrity of the evolving unit. All else is subordinated to it. It is made to fit in the coming shape of the evolving unit. A mutual balancing and complementation of constituting principles and tendencies are necessary. Mind appears; *prāṇa* gives in. The latter so adjusts itself that mind can have every possible aid in its evolution from *Prāṇa*. The sympathetic and central nervous systems are built up. The physical system is made more and more sensitive to serve for the coming finer sensibility of mind. The awakening of mind

* Integration can best be understood from an example from plant-life. When a plant grows, its leaves grow. Its branches, trunk and the roots grow. The circulation of the sap increases. The tree grows in height and thickness. It puts forth new leaves and branches.

Growth in each sphere is so adjusted to the growth in other spheres that the growth of the organism as a whole is not hindered. Growth in one part balances and complements the growth elsewhere so that the plant grows as a unity. It is for the sake of the plant that its parts grow.

stimulates *Prāṇa* to this higher task of developing the organism further. *Prāṇa* forms with Mind an integral unity. It subordinates itself to the Mind, or else it will be a chaos and evolution will be impossible.

The same thing happens when wisdom comes. The emotional and the reasoning mind are subordinated to it. They are readjusted in the light of the wisdom consciousness which forms the new basis of the individual's existence. They are cleared of the lower stuff. They cease to determine the activity of the individual, but, are themselves determined by the wisdom-consciousness. The reasoning mind which was originally an instrument for knowledge, becomes a means of expressing the knowledge of wisdom and later on Love. In this manner a fundamental unity in the evolving unit is maintained at all stages of evolution. That which cannot be integrated is thrown out.

The three aspects of consciousness do not always evolve to the same extent side by side. Sometimes the cognitive aspect dominates and sometimes the feeling one. Sometimes it is the will which dominates. This is so evident in human evolution. But, a mutual balancing always takes place. The one which is left behind comes up and the one which was leading holds up. The process does not aim at the development of one aspect at the cost of the others. The whole must grow and grow entirely. It demands that a mutual balancing should take place. This is another aspect of the Law of Integration.

There is no standing still in evolution. There is a steady and continuous change. This necessitates a continuous process of readjustment. Every moment the mind is evolving. The *Prāṇa* must readjust itself to it, and so must the physical elements, or else integration will break up. The balance of the entire being is shaken up gently every moment and every moment it is being recreated. What a miracle of infinite vigilance !

This brings us to the Law of Sacrifice. Integration is possible because of the spirit of sacrifice which dominates all the principles. 'Duty before self', seems to be the motto of them all. The elemental life sacrifices its independent states; then alone can they be organised by *Prāṇa* into organic tissues, and organic life can come into existence. When an element becomes a part of a cell, it ceases to behave in accordance with its original nature. Iron in a plant is not affected by magnetic force. Hydrogen and carbon do not behave independently when they carbo-hydrate.

The inherent urge in *Prāṇa* is the evolution of a stable and fullest organic existence. When mind appears, it begins to work to prepare the body for the manifestation of the mental consciousness. The system is re-aligned. The nervous system is evolved. The instinctive tendencies are sacrificed. *Prāṇa* sacrifices the very stability of the organism for the sake of the mind. As a proof, we find human organism much less healthy than the animal one.

We find vegetables and plants sacrificing their exist-

ence for the sake of the animal; else animal life would have been impossible. Members of both the vegetable and the animal kingdom sacrifice themselves so that the human kingdom may come into being. It is not a conscious sacrifice on their part; that we admit. But, whether conscious or unconscious, without such a sacrifice human existence is not possible; this can't be gainsaid.

Sacrifice is the fundamental law of evolution. Without this neither existence nor growth is possible. It is the key to growth. The lower existence sacrifices itself; a higher existence comes into being. The lower one becoming a part of the higher existence, shares the existence of the higher. The element sacrificing its independent status becomes a part of the body. It becomes capable of housing *Prāṇa* and, later, it becomes a seat for the manifestation of mental-and-wisdom-consciousness. By virtue of this sacrifice, it has the privilege of sharing Love-consciousness one day. The element which has become a part of the body of a saint, has learnt to respond to the higher grades of consciousness. Similarly, the *Prāṇa* has the rare privilege of sharing this high consciousness when it is an integral part of the being of a Divine man.

Thus sacrifice is not a negative process. It is not self-destruction for nothing. To sacrifice is to live and to grow. It is a self-giving for growth. It is a creative process and is at the basis of the entire creation. Nothing can stand out as a separate and independent entity in this mighty cosmos. Everything, every force and atom

is knit in a grand unity. The microcosm is a part and parcel of the macrocosm whose life it shares and to whom its own life it gives. It is Sacrifice, Yajna ! The elemental, the *Prāṇic*, the emotional and the mental, all exist by sacrifice. Upon sacrifice depends family life as also social life, the national as well as the international life.

To stand apart and to hold back one's life for one's own sake is to court annihilation. It is to try to bypass this Law which one can only do by paying the penalty with evolutionary death. It is utter selfishness.

The lower kingdoms sacrifice by force of the inherent urge of involved Divinity. They sacrifice because the Master of Evolution wants them to. They are unconscious, incapable of discrimination and volition. Man is given the capacity to discriminate. He can willfully sacrifice or hold back. Upto the human level the evolution was the result of the Master of Evolution pouring in His Divine Energy and pushing it on by His force. The animal could not do anything to aid his evolution or hinder it. The Master brings us to the human level, the very threshold of Divinity, and endows us with reason. We can now help, or to some extent hinder, our evolution. We can sacrifice for the sake of the whole and go ahead quickly with the current of the evolutionary process, or hold back in ignorant selfishness and try to stem this tide of spontaneous self-giving which is enveloping this entire universe.

Society is based upon mutual sacrifice. The farmer

creates food for the society, and the society clothes him and educates his children. A teacher teaches the children of the society, and the society feeds and clothes him. A merchant helps in the proper distribution of consumer goods; and the society meets his wants. Superficially, all this appears to be a selfish game. But our vision is at fault. On account of our self-centredness we do not see properly. It is all a mighty sacrifice on which this social edifice stands and affords a field for the evolution of human beings. Sacrifice is the Law of human evolution.

Struggle for existence is evidenced in plant and animal life. It is manifestation of the *Prāṇic* 'will to be'. Without it organic existence will be impossible. Without organic existence the mental and the higher principles cannot evolve. Thus, the struggle for existence is also necessary for evolution.

It is a basic tendency in *Prāṇa*. Its sphere is limited to the species which threaten the existence of another species. *Prāṇa* recognizes its superior in mind, and does not struggle with it. It gives in and makes sacrifice.‡

In the biological world there is 'survival of the fittest'. That merely indicates that the group-soul wants to evolve the fittest organism. That *Prāṇa* aims at

‡ Some pseudo scientific minds dare suggest that man should copy the animals and make struggle for existence and survival of the fittest his motto. It is a dangerous self-destructive doctrine, unworthy of the human species, who have evolved a mind, and are heading toward Divinity.

evolving a stable organic existence, we have already seen. Selection is the proper way for it. To make 'survival of the fittest' the rule for human beings is meaningless.

Competition helps growth at the human level. It stimulates activity. The desire principle awakens the sense of competition. It has its reactions as well, but they are inevitable, and necessary for evolution. As man outgrows the mental and wisdom-consciousness opens up, desire passes away. The sense of competition also takes leave. The Law of love begins to reign supreme. At the earlier levels the higher and the lower emotions co-exist. Man competes with, as well as helps others. Man kills in war, but also heals the wounded of his enemy.

The evolutionary process can proceed with the pace it does because of the law of Compressed Processes. Every movement leaves behind an impression which makes a reproduction of the same at each successive turn easier and easier. An act which is very difficult to perform for the first time, can be done so very easily later on. A stage may arrive when it may require no attention worth the name at all. It takes ages for an organism to evolve, as it passes from stage to stage through the species. At a later stage the entire range of development is gone through in a short time. A study of human embryology will illustrate this Law. In the course of its nine months' existence in the womb the human foetus passes through the series of numerous forms which it may have taken millions of years to evolve.

Similar is the case with emotional and reasoning tendencies.* The child lives out in his early years the earlier stages of the mental evolution of humanity. Without this, evolution will be impossible.

We stand in every way on the shoulders of our ancestors. We inherit the entire past of the evolutionary process and start where they leave off. That we grow beyond them, is not to our credit. We are just links in the mighty chain of evolution. The credit goes to the Master of Evolution who compresses the evolutionary process of milleniums into the period of a few months or years.

* Whatever has been evolved and established is like a territory won and consolidated by a king. He can turn now to the conquest of new lands. Similarly, in evolution the conscious-energy having established a stable organism through *Prāṇa*, turns to the unfoldment of the emotional, *etc.* Thus, the focus (*i.e.* conscious state) of the evolving conscious-energy is always shifting. When the evolutionary process is the *Prāṇic* level, *Pranic* is the conscious level and elemental the sub-conscious. Later on the mental becomes the conscious and *Prāṇic* (or animal) the sub-conscious. Later on the mental level becomes sub-conscious and the wisdom level the conscious. Thus, we are mounting a staircase of conscious levels as it were.

REINCARNATION

I

Evolution of the species presupposes that something is handed down from the parent to the off-spring as the former passes into oblivion. This transmission of mutations makes possible for the ground gained to be maintained. According to the biologist, the genes are the vehicles of transmission. That microscopic speck of existence is supposed to carry within itself the form and structure of the species. A tiny banyan seed is supposed to conceal within itself the giant tree in some form. It is responsible for its form and structure which make their appearance as the seed sprouts forth and grows. Evidently, this is not a purely physical phenomenon. It is a physiological, *i.e.* a *prāṇic* phenomenon.

It is the group-soul behind the individual members of the species which is being evolved. This takes place by means of the experiences the group-soul has through the individuals comprising the species. The mutations are actually in the group-soul which expresses itself through the members of its species. It is so upto the

prehuman level of evolution. There is actually no question of transmission of a mutation on the physical plane.* The group-soul, in fact, incarnates again and again as the members and goes on evolving. The gene is but the unit of its expression on the physical plane.

Coming to the human level, the group-soul is replaced by *prāṇic* double which ensouls every human body. It is responsible for the formation of the physical body, its form, structure and functions. Its main undertaking is to run the body which is the vehicle of experience for the soul, the presiding consciousness of the individual. It carries the Karma† of the physical body within itself, and it unrolls like a film in the form of physical conditions, *viz.*, disease, suffering, health, *etc.*, as the years pass by. Like the group-soul manifesting through the individuals of the species, the etheric double expresses itself through the physical.

Behind the physical is the conditional (or astral) body. It is also in the likeness of the physical. It is a vehicle for the expression of the emotional side of man, which finds further expression through the *prāṇic* and the physical bodies. The mental body, which is subtler still, also uses the *prāṇic* and the physical for expression. Behind these four bodies is the wisdom-body, subtler than these all, and much more powerful. But it is evolved only in the case of one who has evolved wisdom-

* Reincarnation at the animal and preanimal stage has only this meaning.

† The potential forces which are responsible for the incarnation of the individual on the physical plane.

consciousness. The soul, the unit of conscious-energy, shines through these all and is permanent.

The conscious-energy evolves these principles to unfold and express its latent capabilities. It stands above and uses these vehicles of expression and experience. It learns from experience and flowers up. As a group-soul uses the members of its species for experience and evolution, so does the soul use the bodies for experience and evolution. As in the case of the group-soul, experience is accumulated in it and not in the individual which passes away, the experience is not gathered in the various bodies but in the soul which presides and uses them. This accumulation of experience is necessary for its evolution.

These bodies pass away. When the physical body is no longer of any use for further experience, it is discarded by the soul. An old body, degenerating with years, is of no use. The *prāṇic* body (etheric double) withdraws. The physical frame becomes like a log of wood. It begins to rot. It is called dead in common parlance.*

We must here understand the importance of the physical plane in evolution. It is the greatest plane of existence and hence a great force is required to act upon it effectively. Thought and emotion are much finer and can be generated much more easily. The greater the force expressed, the greater the reaction. Thus, physical

* The case of those who die young or are killed is different. The necessity of evolution in such cases probably demands a sudden change in his environment. Sometimes, the Karmic holds are responsible for such a sudden exit.

action, and similarly, physical experience is of most far-reaching effect as far as evolution is concerned. It is most dynamic of all the planes from this point of view and is indispensable up to a certain stage for evolution. Action upon this plane is normally possible through the physical body alone. Hence, when one body is cast off, there arises the necessity of another body, if the soul has to evolve.

The human soul equips itself with new physical bodies one after the other as they become useless in turn, till it no longer needs experience of the physical plane. This is called reincarnation of the soul. As the evolution of a species† is impossible without the group soul manifesting itself through its members again and again, similarly is the evolution of the human soul impossible without its incarnating in physical bodies for experience again and again.‡

The soul maintains its identity throughout these manifestations. In fact it is the soul for which these manifestations exist. There is no question of a change of soul. The soul is a thing immutable which ever was and will ever be.

What is the proof of reincarnation ? Memory. Con-

† Which is in fact, the evolution of the group-soul.

‡ We have already seen that interplay between the individual and environment is indispensable to evolution.

The English idiom in such cases probably 'give up the ghost' misleading. It is the soul which gives up the body and not *vice versa*.

sciousness of a past physical existence can prove that the conscious-energy (*i. e.* soul) inhabiting this physical body was a different one sometime ago. We have much varified evidence of memories of a past life-time, not only here in India but in other countries as well. It is unreasonable to deny this evidence.

By certain yogic practices, we can develop the vision which can trace back the thread of Karma from life to life. It is not an easy job and demands a great price. But, in the face of such a possibility, we cannot deny the fact of reincarnation, which is evidenced by it.

Reincarnation is an utter necessity of human evolution. What we can learn in a single body is but limited. If it all ends with this frame, this isolated existence has no meaning. That means evolution is also meaningless. We are landed on a purposeless chaotic existence, just a freak of nature, which we do not understand.

“But we do not remember our past lives,” it may be objected. The span of human memory is so short. We remember so little of our childhood. What wonder if we forget everything of an existence prior to birth.

It is apt that the memory of the previous lives does not persist. If it did, we could not pitch down our consciousness to the present, and act as fully as we can. Can a man who has a host of fathers, mothers and children hovering in his mind or even actually clinging to him, love and cling to any ?* Life in that case would become too complex to serve the evolutionary purpose. What is

* There have actually been such cases.

lost in extension of memory, is gained in intensity of it, and of consciousness in general. We can live with our whole being in the present devoting ourselves fully to the solution of the problems of the present. Such activity and such a life means a lot in the matter of growth.

It is really an exception where such memory is retained. This brings us to the process of reincarnation. The casting away of the physical body leaves the conscious-energy with the *Prāṇic*, emotional and mental bodies.† The physical body was the pivot of all experience, emotional and mental included. It was the main plank of the evolutionary process. This having gone, a new one is needed. In forming a new body the experiences of the present life time must be availed of, or else the life would have been lived in vain. The experiences are of all the planes, *prāṇic*, emotional and mental. Therefore, the corresponding bodies must also be formed anew after assimilation of the experiences of this life time. So there arises the necessity of having all the bodies anew. This is possible only when the old ones have dropped off.

Thus, physical death is followed in course of time by the death of the *pārṇic* body (the etheric double). The intervening time between the falling away of the two varies in accordance with many factors.‡ Like the physical frame, the etheric double, cut away from the

† We shall consider the case of a man yet at the human level of evolution.

‡ The earthly desires of the soul, the residual samskara of the physical, etc.

rest of the bodies, and hence also from the soul, dissipates. Later on, the emotional and the mental bodies also share the same fate in turn. The soul, the receptacle of experiences of all these bodies, of course, remains. It has been toiling for a life-time through the physical and it now goes into well-deserved rest. The duration of the rest period varies with the necessities of evolution. During this period of rest the assimilation of the experiences of the past life takes place. At the end of it, comes forth a new personality (in a seed form†) to be projected upon the physical through, of course, the intervening bodies. This causal body gathers around itself mental matter and a mental body is formed according to the pattern of this new personality. An emotional one follows up in like manner, and an etheric double completes up the personality on the *prāṇic* plane. It is ready to be projected in the physical plane.

The formation of a physical body needs a couple. It must be of the right type for his evolution and within his *Kārmic* limitations. It is not always forth-coming readily and the prospective soul may have to wait. When the favourable circumstances are available, conception takes place and the foetus in the mother's womb grows supervised by the incoming soul.‡ A permanent link between the soul and the body is set up sometime later on. The rest of the story is so well-known.

† All this is done by the evolutionary agencies for the sake of the evolving soul,

‡ The Karmic agencies deputed for the job determine the circumstances. They handle the Karmic forces of the individual.

When a soul is ready for incarnation but the necessary conditions for it are not available, it has to wait. It sometimes takes birth temporarily, in order to exhaust some *Karma* of his own and of his temporary parents. ‡ This body is cast off while yet in childhood or boyhood. That is the secret of infant and child deaths. They are cases of temporary births, not meant for a full life time of experience and evolution.

II

We shall take up now a few considerations, arising from reincarnation, and its relationship with the Law of *Karma*.

It was mentioned that some persons retain memories of a past birth. Such a phenomenon is an evidence of the fact that the mental body in this new birth is the same as it was in the previous. Memory remains stored in it. If there was a new mental body, the memory would have been absent. This happens in cases where death is followed immediately by birth. Such a birth is, in fact, a continuation of the previous life. The personality is the same, and the experiences of the past life time have not been assimilated. It happens generally where earthly attachments dominate very much.* Such memories pass away with childhood, as they are linked with the sympathetic nervous system which is outgrown by the central one as childhood passes away.

‡ See also Chapter XIV, on *Karma*.

* Or in the case of an aspirant whose further evolution demands a total change over immediately.

'We do not have the memories of our past deeds. Their fruits we have to enjoy in our present life. Suffering we do not know what we are suffering for, and enjoying we do not know it either. How can we correct ourselves? What justice is this which punishes and rewards without letting us know of our faults and good deeds? This objection is so commonly raised.

This betrays an ignorance of the process of evolution. Man has to pass through all experiences, good and evil, and pleasant and painful, in order to pass on to the Super-human levels. He is beyond good and evil, and pleasure and pain alike in that stage.* Evolution does not aim at producing a good man, who never commits a sin, but at producing one who is beyond sin as well virtue.† Knowledge of our sins and virtues would have been necessary, if the good of Evolution were the production of good man.‡ But, evolution of man does demand an understanding of good and evil that develops in spite of this memory being absent. Evil is evil because the doer makes himself miserable by the very act. The reaction from outside comes much later. We have to learn that evil is evil because it is contrary to the law of evolution, the will of the Divine. We must avoid it for this,

* It aims at the production of a God-man who is goodness all compact but his goodness is, in reality, beyond the so called good and evil.

† See Supra Chapter XII.

‡ If a man could not err, he could not grow. Sin and error are necessary for evolution as their counter parts. But it does not mean that we go in for the former by choice.

even if it brought us pleasant fruit from outside. Till this insight into the evil is born, man cannot be actually moral.* He can be so by temptation or threat. The knowledge of the correlation of sin and punishment is of no use from this standpoint.†

Moreover, this correlation is not so simple as it is usually thought. An act may bear fruit in many instalments and in many ways and at different times. It is not so easy to trace threads of *Karma*.

In the course of evolution we pass from the animal to the human level. Can we go back to the animal state of existence, as a result of doing evil deeds or otherwise? The issue is interesting to consider.

It is generally believed that if we do not do good deeds in our present life-time, and do much evil, we may be next born as an animal, as a dog, a cat or a horse, *etc.* If we torture an animal, the animal will torture us in some next birth. Our positions will be changed. The driver will become the driven and *vice versa*.

What useful purpose can be served by our going back to the animal state? If the going back is meant to teach the individual lesson by giving him exemplary punishment, it is ineffective.

An individual may go back to the animal existence in two ways. He may be thrown back in the evolutionary

* We must be moral before we can transcend morality and be superhuman.

† See below Chapter XV.

process and become just an animal within a groupsoul as he probably was in his onward evolutionary march years and years back. He would then have much less sensibility than he had as a human being. It means that he will not be able to feel the pain as intensely as he could in the human form. In that case, it will be no exemplary punishment for him.

Being yet without a conscious will, the responsibility of his evolution again to the human level will totally be of the evolutionary forces. They will have to do their work over again. Thus it will be a punishment to them, and not to him.

The second possibility is that the man remains as he is right down to his etheric double. Only the physical form of an animal is assumed. Here, again the physical organism of an animal cannot be worked by the etheric double of a man, the two being so very different from each other. The only possibility is that the man in his etheric double gets linked up with an animal, as it is. He may share his physical and emotional life. Through too much of attachment, it is possible that such a man may have totally an animal mentality, though, in fact, a human being. We have the historical instance of one Jada-Bharata a great saint, becoming a deer on account of his attachment to it. This is a temporary affair. It is not a case of possession but is something akin to it. The man comes back to his own line of evolution as soon as the force of attachment is exhausted.

Thus, the only possibility of going back to animal

existence is of this sort. It is a temporary arrangement in order to exhaust some *kārmic saṃskāra*. It is possible in case of intense attachment, or in case of beastly passion. In the latter case, as soon as the passion is worked off to a human level, the man is released.

The juxta-position method of exhausting *karma* is also not very intelligible. If there were a personal grudge between the animal and the man, it could have some meaning. The animal is not emotionally so developed, nor his conscious-will is so aroused as to be able to entertain a grudge for long. Where such a thing is possible, the animal passes on to the human kingdom quickly. The two can then square their accounts without the man having to go to the animal kingdom.

There is a juxta-position method in exhausting *karma*, but it is very different. After death when he is at the astral plane, the scenes of his past flit past his eyes one after the other. He begins to re-live his life, with the difference that now he is identified with all the actors in every situation. He feels as he did when he tortured some one, as also like the one who was tortured by him. He experiences the pain of the later. This process exhausts his *karma* to a degree.

Still another consideration. We find very pious people suffering physically or socially, and bad persons on the other hand in very good bodies and well placed in life. It appears a contradiction of the Law of *Karma*; but, it is not so in fact. We have to take the past into account. A man who has done evil in a past existence, but has

realised his folly and changed his ways, will indeed be a sufferer in this life. He has to pay for his evil deeds. This he is doing. But, as he realised his error, he is doing good now. The other case is just the reverse. He was good and is now reaping the consequences of his goodness. He has not realized the value of goodness, is intoxicated with power of wealth, *etc.*, and is going into bad ways. It is experience which teaches. It will teach him one day.

Reincarnation is so closely connected with the Law of *Karma*. We shall now turn to the consideration of it.

KARMA

From evolutionary standpoint all action is *karma*. The term denotes action in its widest possible significance. In the following pages we shall study its nature. We shall try to follow it up from kingdom to kindom with reference to the evolutionary process. We shall study (the Law of *Karma*) the great law which governs it.

Karma at its source is the primal impulse which sets the wheel of creation going. It is the impulse of the One, the Divine, to be many. It is the Divine Will which starts movement in the form of an interplay between the two aspects of the Transcendental, Absolute Being and Absolute Becoming.* The evolutionary process is set going. Out of the One without a second, this mighty cosmos with its infinite multiplicity springs into being. *Karma* is responsible for it.

The interplay between the two aspects of the Transcendental develops as evolution gathers momentum. A stage comes when the evolving unit of self-conscious energy emerges from the one indistinguishable mass of

* See above Chapter II.

existence. The distinction between the individual and the environment becomes appreciable. The elemental stage of existence is evolved. *Karma* assumes the form of action and reaction between the elements and their environment. Various manifestations of energy, heat, light, electricity, *etc.*, are the forms of *Karma* at that level. This interaction stimulates the elements to activity. Complexity of forces naturally results. Nature with its wonderful play of light, water, heat and electricity in the ever changing atmospheric conditions evidences this state of *Karma*.

Karma, we must remember, is the expression of the evolving conscious-energy at any plane whatever. It manifests as an interaction between the individual and his environment. It has a two-fold effect, *Karma* reacts upon the individual, and acting upon the environment, it arouses reaction which also comes to the individual. We shall have to study *Karma* in both its aspects.

Every action is the result of an inner modification in the individual, however, temporary. We must lift the hand to strike. We must have a love vibration to give love to another, and must have hatred to hate another. The modification though temporary does not go without leaving behind an impression. The act oft repeated may become a habit or the capacity for a new act. It may have far reaching effects. A pen improves by proper handling and so does a string-instrument. A musician improves his throat by practice. Muscles grow stronger by moderate exercise. This we shall term direct

reaction or fruit of *Karma*. It is not possible to avoid it. By our *karma* we are remaking ourselves every moment. This is an important aspect of *Karma* as an evolutionary force.

By means of *Karma*, the individual acts upon his surrounding. The surrounding reacts. The reaction travels back to the individual and affects him. It sets him vibrating at its own rate. A man standing in water strikes water. The water travels to the shore. The shore reacts and a counter-wave comes and strikes him. A man beats the ground with his foot, the ground beats him back with equal force. This is the result of his *karma* from outside. This we shall call the indirect effect of *karma*.

These two, (1) the inner adjustment (the direct reaction) (2) adjustment with the environment (the indirect *Karma* of reaction), aspects of *karmic* reaction are like the wheels on which the vehicle of evolutionary process moves. They are indispensable to it. Its speed is measured by them.

At the elemental level it is hard to distinguish the two aspects clearly. But, the evolution of atoms and molecules from the single atom element hydrogen must be the result of this two-fold process. Stimulation from without and readjustment within, this is the natural course that evolution takes in the other kingdoms. We have no reason to say that it is otherwise in the elemental one.

As conscious-energy mounts step by step, the inner readjustment (the direct reaction) becomes prominent as also the indirect reaction. An animal is visibly more

moved to anger or love than the plants, and a human being is moved still more. The growth or sensibility and the appearance of the emotional mind are responsible for it. He can act more effectively upon the environment as the sense organs and mind evolve. He aspires to become a master of his environment, so that he may escape the reaction of his *karma*. Far from it, his ever-growing sensibility makes him feel more intensely even the ordinary reactions. Both the direct and the indirect reactions effect him much more than heretofore. He changes fast, as a result of it, and evolution gathers momentum.

At the *prāṇic* stage, *karma* is an organic force. It is the interplay of vital energy between organisms and elements. All that the plants and animals do are *karma*. The direct reactions of their *karmas* are appreciable. A tree develops thick bark and needle like leaves to fight the cold. A species of animal in having to fight an enemy, develops a particular colour in its skin so that it can conceal itself.

A plant by its existence affects the earth and atmosphere. It may have to fight other plants trying to out-grow it. It gives out oxygen by its respiration. The carnivorous plants catch their prey and kill it. *Karma* in plant life is so limited. The necessities of the environment egg it on to change by reaction.

Animal *karma* is more extensive and intensive. He can move from place to place. He can search out his

food, make a nest for the protection of the offspring. He can run for protection, and can do so many things more.

Karma at the plant and animal stage of life is centered in the species. It is the species which receives the direct as well as the indirect reaction of the *karma*, of its members, and, it is the species which evolves, though of course, through the individual. Individual *karma* is not possible, because the individual will is not evolved yet at the plant or animal level. There is no choice before the individual to act or not, or to act in one way or another. It is just an instrument in the hands of the group-soul (which is the soul of the species) and upon which the responsibility of *karma* rests.

Good and evil are not born yet, for, reasoning mind (the discriminating consciousness) is not yet evolved. *Prāṇic* activity has a goal before it. Its *karma* is directed towards its attainment. There is no question of its being side-tracked. Ingeniously and faithfully it goes to its task. Direct and indirect reaction both gather momentum accelerating the pace of evolution. Pleasure and pain there are, but they have no moral implications. They have organic implications. They are like the green and the red signals to *karma*; they are the sign-posts of the roads to life and death respectively.

Karma gains in complexity with evolution. It is merely an elemental (or physical) force at the elemental level. At the *prāṇic* level it is an organic force as well as a physical one. A plant falls and kills an animal. A plant reacts to the wind. An animal runs for life or after

its prey. These are physical acts due to the exercise of the physical force. At the human level, *karma* is much more. A man takes his food. It is a physical activity. It has got to be digested; this *karma* is organic. Taking his food, he may like or dislike it. This is his mental reaction to food. It includes emotional and reasoning activity. Thus the simple act of taking food is such a complex *karma*. Forces of all the planes have come into play.

It has far-reaching direct reaction. He dislikes his food and a feeling of detestation is produced. He bolts his food. It affects his digestion, as the feeling of detestation stops the natural flow of digestive juices to the stomach. It upsets his system. He blames the person who invited him for dinner. There are actions and reactions. How a simple act is no longer simple at the human level.

The indirect reaction is also very complex. He has consumed some food. In preparing the food as it was served, he has taken upon himself the obligations of numberless persons. Right from the tiller of the ground and the miner who dug the iron ore to make his plough to the bearer who served, a vast host of persons have contributed to the making of his food. He is connected with them all by taking that morsel of food.*

By entertaining hatred towards another, one not only

* Paying for what one gets will not clear the accounts. One will have to work for others as they have done for him. Money by itself has no value as far as *karma* goes.

harms himself, but also pollutes the atmosphere. It injures those who breathe in it. This is how *Karma* links all human beings, (and in fact animals, plants and elements too) in one inextricable web. None can stand alone. It can well be imagined how the endless chain of actions and reactions, obligations and counter-obligations starts. They help in the growth of our consciousness, pulling us upto greater cognition, intenser feeling and steadier volition.

At the human level *karma* gathers a moral tone. The reasoning mind which can discriminate between good and evil is born. Along with it, is evolved the conscious will. An independent personality is born. He can act of his own. The action is centred in him. He can choose to act or not. He can choose to follow one way of *karma* or another. The goal before the evolutionary forces is no longer so simple as it was in the animal kingdom. Man can appreciate the plan of evolution. He can appreciate the consequences of his acts. He can help himself on to move ahead faster or choose to lag behind. He has become the fashioner of his destiny. *Karma* expresses the creative human will. Man can grow in the likeness of what he wills, given the necessary patience, time and effort. He can become one with the Transcendental, the Lord himself.

It is interesting to study how *Karma* reshapes. It is easy to understand it at the mental level. *Karma* appears as a vibration, generally a composite one in the bodies of man. The vibration gathers into the body

from the atmosphere of the plane matter which can vibrate to the tune of that vibration. Anger gathers matter capable of responding to anger in the astral body, and love that of its own type. This gradually comes to stay. Man develops an anger or love habit. Thought acts as the leader. It tends to direct entire life. When in league with a dynamic will it can change the shape of life quickly. This is how the *karma* of the subtler planes counts for transformation.

Birth of morality is the declaration of human share in his evolution. He is no longer driven by the evolutionary forces as were plants and animals. He has the right to err and suffer, as also the right to accelerate the pace of his evolution. This introduces another complexity in *karma*. The social reaction to his *karma* begins to count in the choice of his actions.

The various aspects of human *karma* cannot be kept separate as in water-tight compartments. As our various bodies mentally influence each other, so do the various aspects of *karma*. Our thoughts affect our emotions. Looking to the brighter side of a situation, we become hopeful, and looking to the darker we feel disappointed. Similarly, we love and hate others. Our emotions affect our thoughts as well. We can appreciate the limitations of those whom we love, but not of others. Our emotions and thought habits affect our physical organism and *vice versa*. Hatred develops rheumatism. Worry brings blood pressure and stomach ulcers. An upset liver causes irritation as also do irritated nerves.

Human personality acts as an integral unity in *karma*. It is so in the matter of the direct reaction of *karma* upon it, as also of indirect reaction. The outward reactions affect the whole. If the body is injured mind is affected and *vice versa*.

Karma is impersonal at prehuman levels. It becomes personal as human will is evolved and an independent human personality comes into being. His environment no longer remains merely impersonal but becomes personal as well. He has to deal with human beings like himself. He loves and hates and is loved and hated in return by others. Attachments and hates bind down individuals very intimately. They draw them together life after life until they are worked off. They play an important part as far as the indirect reaction of *Karma* goes.

Desire causes still greater complexity. With its tough, though elastic, chords it binds down the individual to other individuals and objects in so far as they are means of its fulfilment. It springs up imperceptibly in the heart of a man. Thought nurtures it into a seedling. It strikes roots with the passage of time. To mighty dimensions it shoots up like a banyan tree. It throws forth new roots from its branches which take root again as new desires. Thus, it multiplies and remultiplies. Desire drives man into *karma* and stimulates his lower nature. It maddens him, creating numberless complexities.

II

This brings us to the Law of *Karma*. It deals with

the manner in which *karma* bears fruits. It holds equally in the prehuman and the human kingdom. At the prehuman levels pleasure and pain do not have the importance they have at the human level, and the moral implications are absent.

Karma is for evolution, and it bears fruits as it does, in accordance with the process of evolution. It is not like a human law which may be violated and is not governed by the narrow human concepts of justice, mercy, etc. It has a goal and this is evolution. All else is subordinated to it.

The evolutionary process is a well guided intelligent process. *Karma* is also dispensed with very aptly by a very highly evolved consciousness. It is the omniscient Lord of *Karma* who errs not. The past, present and future are like an open book before him. All the possible factors involved in the fruiting of *karma* are self evident to him. His resources and comprehension never fail him. In ingenious ways he makes *karma* bear its fruit, so that it also helps in the evolutionary process.

The Law of *Karma* and the fact of reincarnation explain the wide diversity of circumstances in human life. We find some persons born intelligent, and others dull. Some are strong and beautiful in appearance, while others are sickly and ugly. Some are good by birth, while yet others are evil-natured. There are the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the wise and the foolish. There is no end to this diversity. Whence does it all spring? Emerging out of the self-same Transcendental in the

form of conscious energy, how does so much of difference come about ?

Every one of the individuals in a group-soul has a different environment. Their *karma* also differs as each one passes through particular experiences in a particular environment specific to him. Some emerge into the human kingdom earlier while others later. This accounts for the initial difference, which is not so glaring. There is not so much of diversity in the primitive races as in the civilized ones, as the individuals in the latter have passed through a larger span of human evolution than those in the others. Self-consciousness appearing, *karmas* become very divergent and their reactions far intenser. This deepens divergences.

Karma stretches from life to life. Death intervenes merely like a lull. It makes no more difference as far as *karma* goes. Assimilating his karmic experiences, man comes back recast, as it were. Thus, his personality gathers a deeper and a deeper tinge from life to life.

The Law is not meant to punish. Pleasure and pain have no fundamental value in evolution. They are ephemeral though necessary experiences, so also are good and evil. Man has to pass through all experiences before he can attain to wisdom and finally to Love and Godhood. The Law is educative. From pleasure as well as from pain we learn. They cause expansion and deepening in our consciousness respectively. By suffering we understand evil and can cultivate sympathy.

We shall now see how the Law works.

Feelings and intentions tend to reproduce themselves in others. They succeed* in doing so where they find suitable medium. The feelings and intentions bear a personal link. The like feelings and intentions when reproduced tend to affect the person† from whom they originally start. To take an example. A wave strikes against the shore and returns to the starting point, thus dissipating the energy of the original wave. Similarly every feeling and thought is like a wave which tends to reproduce itself in a like medium and turns back upon the original actor dissipating the energy of the original action. This process continues till the energy of the original *karma* is totally dissipated and a balance is regained by the medium, just as the waves and counter-waves continue till the energy of the original action (*i.e.* striking water with a pebble) is spent up and water gains its own level.

'To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, says the third law of motion. Why? Because, every action tends to reproduce itself in the medium, which reacts because it wants to maintain equilibrium. The reaction should naturally be equal to the disturbing

* They do not always succeed. By hating or loving we cannot force every man to hate or love us. He does so if, and to the degree, he has a tendency to do so.

† Vicarious atonement is a possibility though a rare one. It is possible only when the one who is ready to atone is capable of rising beyond the mental plane (by prayer etc.) of willing in that plane for such. We have some historical instances of such atonement, even in cases, other than of saints. Babar's atonement for Humayun is so well known.

factor and should continue, till the energy of the original action is totally spent up. For, then alone can the equilibrium of the medium be established. This is the key to the Law of *Karma*.

Now, about the time when *karma* bears fruit. In the physical world we have an immediate reaction. It can't be held up except when especially so arranged. But, it is not so in the *prāṇic* world. The organism reacts only under suitable conditions and to the degree that the reaction is needed. For example, we try to smoke. The organism reacts to the poison and tries to throw it out by producing giddiness, vomiting, headache *etc.* But, if we persist in smoking, the organism submits quietly. It no more reacts in that fashion. It accepts the poison. It reacts again when we leave off smoking. Then similar symptoms make their appearance again. The organism keeps a disease in abeyance till the stronger one has run its course. There is an understanding behind the *prāṇic* life. It acts to a purpose.

The emotional and reasoning minds are still more intelligent in reacting. We restrain our anger before one whom we respect. Lust automatically subsides when in the holy presence of a greater person, or when overpowered with grief. Our reason fails in the presence of personality, for its manifestation there will be a folly. It comes up with all its vigour before one whom we can overpower with it. Grief is known to have lain in abeyance for days before there were conditions suitable for its expression. Vengeance is not always wreaked immediately.

What wonder, then, if *karma* does not bear fruit immediately. It may even have to wait for a number of life-times, before it can ripen. The Law of *Karma* is not blind. It is neither merely mechanical. *Karma* has to work for evolution. In ripening, the evolutionary necessity of the individual is the foremost consideration. A *karma* will bear its fruit for the doer only when that fruit fits in with his evolutionary requirement. If he needs that type of experience (which is to come as the fruit of his *karma*) it comes; if not it waits.

We shall now consider a few issues arising out of the *karmic* Law.

Is it the outer resultant of our action which counts in the matter of reaction of our *karma*? A man may not have wanted to kill a person but he may die. Is the individual responsible for the *karma* of man-slaughter? Many times in life *karma* misses the mark.

The direct reaction of *karma* upon the individual must of necessity be in accordance with his intention. It will have †*samskara* exactly of the composite nature of his *karma*. The outward effect does not lie in the hands of the doer. He is just one factor amongst the many. The other person's *karma* also counts. The indirect reaction of the *karma* must take into account other factors also. Where we see that a proportionately greater or a smaller fruit comes, there must be some other *karmic* influences. The force generated by our *karma* has to be

†The direct and indirect reaction in potentio are called *Samskaras*.

exhausted by us. There is no question of exhausting a *karmic* force by an individual which has not been generated by him.†

“Is suffering or joy always the result of a past *karma*? Can we not cause suffering to an individual because we bear malice to him? Is it always necessary that a person should have done something in the past for which he is suffering now?” It is an interesting consideration.

We create *karmic* ties by anger, hatred, malice, as also by attachment, sympathy, service, *etc.* We are creating a *karmic* tie when such personal feelings are present. It is a fresh account which will have to be squared some day. Where involuntarily we occasion pain to another, we are not responsible. It is past *karma* of the other person which accounts for his suffering.

It is the direct reaction of *karma* which is most important. By means of it we can make or mar our destiny. Pleasures and pains are of no direct value as far as evolution goes. They are valuable by virtue of the reactions they have upon us.

The law of *karma* is not a determinism,‡ as it must

† In involuntary acts the doer has no intention, and hence the act is not the outcome of a force generated by him. It is not his *karma* from the evolutionary stand point.

N. B. :—If the desire to wreak vengeance is present, a repetition of the act is natural, or else desire will persist as a *karmic* force.

‡ A theory which says that everything is predetermined in life, and that man is helpless creature of destiny.

have been clear by now. It is not a blind law of justice. It is a living law of life, the expression of the evolutionary process in the sphere of *karmas*.

We shall consider now the Law of *Karma*, as it works for super-human evolution.

III

The utility of *karma* may be questioned. Why to tie at all, if the ties have to be loosened later on? Without undergoing the *karmic* ties, the stresses and strains, the conscious energy could not come even to the human level, much less pass beyond it. *Karma* awakens consciousness. It arouses the creative will of man. It arouses him to a sense of responsibility. All these are necessary for a passage beyond. We must be men before we can be Divine.

The very Law of *Karma* which bound the individual works to release him; we shall see how it is done.

The *karma* motivated by personal feeling cannot be exhausted in a simple way. The two persons so connected have got to come together before they can square up and become normal towards one another. An injury need not be returned by an injury. The murdered must not necessarily murder the murderer in another life. That does not break the tie. For such an act generally produces resentment and hence a repetition. †

† Called *Pravritti*, going forth. Its opposite is *Nivritti*, turning back.

The two must forgive each other to break the karmic link. That is possible only when each one realizes his own fault and appreciates the limitations of the other. And, this is possible only when the two have evolved enough to discriminate between the right and the wrong. They must understand the law of evolution and have right values. That takes many a life time and demands a lot of experience of much surrendering. The above holds for attachment. Attachment (in the form of worldly love) ties the persons together. The more effort is made to untie the knot, the stronger and closer does the tie become. A repaying of good deeds does not exhaust the pull. It rather strengthens the pull because good deeds invite more good deeds, and the thread is interwoven still more.

Distance makes one conscious of attachment. Proximity obscures this consciousness, but does not exhaust it. More often attachment and hatred go together. We are attached to a person but cannot accept him wholly, because we see his shortcomings. We expect many a thing of him and so many times, expectations failing, resentment is born. The tie gathers complexity by the two persons coming together.

Only the evolution of the higher consciousness can release us. We must grow above the mental into the wisdom consciousness which sees all evenly and so deals with all. All attachments, hates and resentments die when wisdom appears. One can be released from the bondage of *karma* only by outgrowing the ego conscious-

ness which lies at its root. On transcending the mental, *karma* becomes ego-less. It is impersonal and cannot bind the doer.

The growth of consciousness is a gradual process. The karmic pressure stands in the way of this growth so many times. The karmic ties of attachment so cloud the vision that it takes time before the higher light can shine forth. There is a stage* in evolution upto which we are building up ties, we are creating more and more karmic links. When we awaken to our miserable position one day, we turn our face back. We renounce desire. We aspire for higher light. The ties begin to snap. No new links are formed. The older ones are gradually loosened. This happens when one is ready to enter into wisdom. But all karmic ties must be snapped before the individual can be fully established in wisdom. He must be clean through and through. The exhaustion

N. B. Karma binds only when it is personal.

* The judge awards punishment. The mother slaps the child to correct him. The teacher scolds his pupil to make him work hard. Their intention is good, but their physical act is painful. What type of *karma* is this? What will be its result? The judge is merely doing his duty. He is not moved by any personal feelings or motives to punish a culprit. In so far as he carries out his duty with a sense of duty, he stands free. The *karma* of punishment cannot bind him. The mother is also free from the *karmic* bondage in the degree that the sense of duty prevails. In the degree there is irritation, or she has any personal consideration, she is bound down. The *karma* binds her. She is responsible for the physical act (pain caused as well as the mental (the good intention).

of *karmas* and the coming in of wisdom are processes running simultaneously. They are, in fact, two aspects of the one process, of evolution.

Desire is a great force in evolution. Backed by will it creates circumstances. It binds the individual who can be released either by fulfilling it or by renouncing it. It can be renounced only when it is young. Later on, the only way to be rid of it is to exhaust it by fulfilment. That creates more *karma* and binds still more in the case of one who has risen above the mental, and is capable of impersonal action.‡

Good and evil *karma* do not cancel each other. They are forces of a different order and cannot be rightened off. Our loves and hates do not cancel each other and create a state of indifference. They increase complexity, rather. In fact, the *karma* at each plane runs its own course. The normal course is that one should transcend in order to be released of *karmic* bondage. The individual has to rise to the wisdom plane where ego is transcended and *karma* ceases to bind. There goodness and evil both vanish. *Karma* is spontaneous in that state.

Karma is an immense force. When aligned to the personal emotions and desires it creates complexities and develops capabilities and causes refinement. It releases the very ties which it fashioned when it is aligned to a sense of duty or is done as an act of worship to the transcendental or offered up to him later on. Then it

‡ The bad physical aspect of a *karma* is not atoned for by its good mental aspect. This applies to the teacher as well.

becomes impersonal. In that case, it does not fashion new bonds. It releases the individual from all that is personal and limited and leads him to wisdom. From action he rises into an actionless state. There is activity but no *samskara*, and, hence no bondage. .

Wisdom is the state of *karmaless* activity.

Errata

Page Line

- 55 24 for 'antibiotics' please read 'anti-bodies'
62 9-10 for 'the environment also becomes more
and more complex' please read 'its concern
with environment increases.'
104 2 for 'above sensivity' read 'in sensibility'.

