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Reality at Dawn



By

Ram Chandra

President

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To

My Spiritual Brother

Late Shri Rameshwar Prasad Ji Misra

PREFACE

Before expressing my views over the subject dealt with in this brief treatise, I feel special pleasure in writing a few lines about the author. The author Mahatma Ram Chandra Ji is the President of Sri Ram Chandra Mission. He leads an ordinary Grahastha life surrounded by all kinds of worldly cares and responsibilities. He possesses a frail body with an absolutely unassuming exterior. Owing to my usual habit of examining things closely before coming to a definite conclusion, I studied him minutely for about five years and was convinced that he possesses all the qualities expected in a highly developed soul. In my opinion, it shall also not be an exaggeration to say that his spiritual attainments can properly be classified as rare. He has introduced a remodelled system of Raj Yoga under the name of Sahaj-Marg which is easily accessible to all and sundry alike. His earlier publication "Efficacy of Raj Yoga", in the light of Sahaj-Marg, deals elaborately with his system. The special feature of the system is said to be transmission of Yogic energy in an

Abhiyasi by which his inner complexities are removed and his Chakras are cleaned and illumined, making his path smooth and easy. I have written the above because it can never be overemphasised that it is always the efficacy of the system and the calibre of the guide that count, and a mistake in the selection of these may render all effort vain and useless.

The book is a brief treatise on Raj Yoga and it deserves to be studied with close attention by those interested in spirituality. The main object of Raj Yoga is to realise personally the truth depicted in the teachings of the great ancient sages. Doing lip-service to those teachings or even believing them to be the correct rules of conduct does not carry us far. But it makes all the difference if one succeeds in making the same teachings the rule of one's life, after realising their truth in himself. This helps him in attaining the highest spiritual development. The powers that such an individual gains are unlimited, but he himself remains unmindful of them and his actions are guided solely by directions from above. Such a one neither cares for wealth nor for the worldly comforts that it brings. Idea of acquiring popularity, name and fame never

enters his head. His actions are not guided by any desire of his own. These are the standards by which I have tried to judge the author ; and so far as I am personally concerned I am convinced that he does possess the above attributes in ample measure.

The topics dealt with in the book are all of vital importance to one having a craving for Realisation, the most lively and encouraging feature being that we can achieve the highest attainments leading all along the life of a Grahastha. We are greatly discouraged by being told constantly for ages that higher yogic attainments are never possible unless we take up Sanyastha. Vairagya, the essential feature of spiritual life, is generally preached, from almost all platforms, to mean only the breaking away of all worldly ties and taking up the life of religious mendicancy. This is really not so, and the life of Raja Janak is an instance in point. The state of Vairagya to be possible in all conditions and under all circumstances is quite understandable.

The author's conception of God as Absolute Nonentity, devoid of all attributes, power, and even activity or stimulus is a daring approach

towards Reality, pure and simple, which is beyond the scope of religion. In fact, as stated in the book, "Religion is only a preliminary stage for preparing a man for his march on the path of Freedom". Freedom can be attained when a man takes up the path of spirituality. The gist of Spirituality is nothing but giving up or discarding all the coverings (or limitations) that serve to keep the soul in bondage. The author's view of Reality is explained by the diagram in Chapter II. The outer-most circumference represents our present grossest form of existence while the Centre or the Absolute Base (the Nonentity) is the ultimate goal. Our march from the outer-most circumference right across towards the Centre covers all the spiritual stages up to the highest limit of human approach.

The last Chapter "My Vision" contains author's views regarding the future. It should not be treated as a mere prophecy by an astrologer. A Yogi at the highest stage of perfection is in direct communion with Nature. As such everything past or future may be clear to him as vividly as the present. It is possible for him to read everything in Nature in his clairvoyant state.

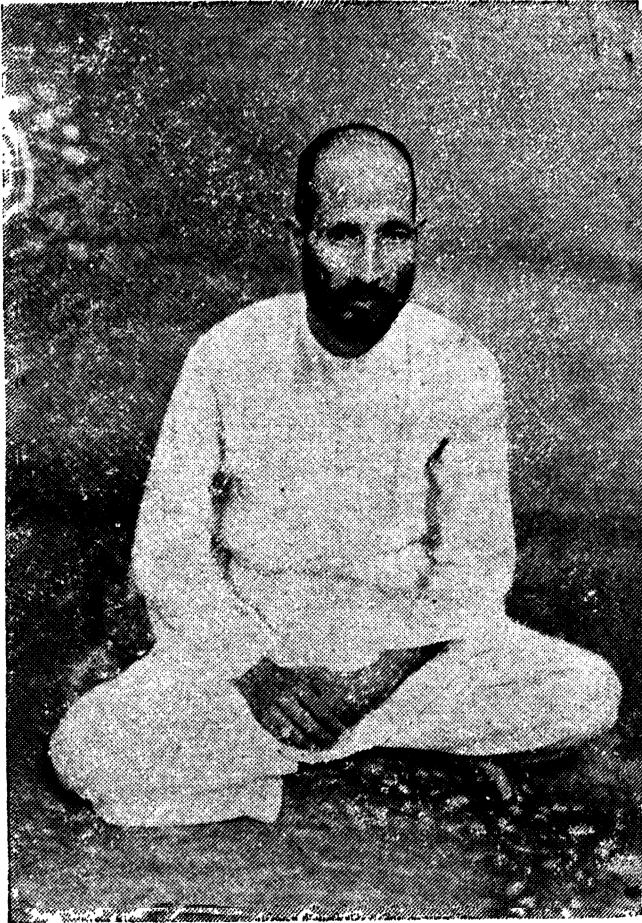
I have written these few lines in order to introduce the reader to this treatise which I believe would prove of great benefit to those interested in Realisation. I, therefore, unhesitatingly recommend a close study of it to every student of spirituality.

**Judge
High Court
Allahabad.**

M. L. CHATURVEDI

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Shri Ram Chandra Ji

CHAPTER I

RELIGION

The quest of mankind, ever since its birth has been to worship God, to unravel the mysteries behind the outward appearances and to grasp the fundamental truth. This is the genesis of religion. The worshipper has before his eyes the eternal bliss of the paradise or some similar view which he aims at as his final approach. There have thus arisen religions in the world with their prescribed forms and rituals, based upon the personal practical experiences of their great founders. But after the lapse of thousands of years, when the entire surroundings have changed and life has undergone a radical transformation, the same old forms and principles are being adhered to. The outer form alone now remains intact while the inner spirit is lost. The result is that the vehicle of religion has become hackneyed and it will not be wrong to say that the present-day religion has become only a relic of the past or the bones of the dead. We have really buried true religion in the grave. Only, we clap hands in the name of religion and do nothing else. The real spirit is lost and only

formalities remain in its place. Outward forms and rituals are the only things that remain open to view which are followed with extreme orthodoxy and tenacity without even the least touch of reality. Our faith in reality has thus diminished to the point of extinction. It is rather twisted into forms and rituals alone. Gradually it degenerates into bigotry or prejudice which has unfortunately become the permanent feature of the present-day religion. Our blind faith in formalities keeps us in the dark regarding the reality and unconsciously we develop within us a feeling of hatred against those who believe in other forms and rituals. There are consequently jealousies and quarrels among the followers of different religions.

India has achieved political freedom but self-independence or the freedom of soul is still wanting. The main obstacle is the want of capacity for a broader vision and free thinking. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with prejudice and rivalry. The entire structure of society and culture rests on the same foundation. Sectional jealousies are the main cause of the downfall of our civilisation. There are, at present, no less than 3000 castes in India,

each forming a distinct unit. These castes were originally the different guilds of workers and artisans organised in order to solve the question of division of labour. But today each guild tries to cut itself off from the rest of the community forming a separate independent unit, harbouring feelings of hatred and jealousies towards the other. The whole society is thus proceeding towards disintegration. The time is now at hand when this evil shall soon cease to exist. Nature is at work to put an end to this evil. The scythe of time is unsparing. Let this serve as a warning to the ardent supporters and advocates of the caste prejudice. They cannot escape the consequences unless they mend in time. The will of God must have its course. Prejudice is the greatest evil, rather the deadliest poison to spiritual life. It keeps one confined to himself, losing all access to a broader vision. It creates narrow-mindedness and all prospects of development and progress are lost to those who pin their souls to it. Prejudice breeds hatred towards others and it is nothing but a feeling of false self-superiority in a disguised form. If you nurture this evil, you thereby add one more link to the existing chain of egoism.

Consequently you remain farther away from reality. The realisation of the Limitless thus becomes an impossibility. Universal love, the very fundamental basis of religion having disappeared altogether, the religion which was generally considered to be a link between man and God, has now become a barrier instead. If we keep ourselves bound fast to a particular form or practice without a clear idea of its real significance and final approach, we are probably committing the greatest blunder. God is not to be found within the fold of a particular religion or sect. He is not confined within certain forms or rituals, nor is He to be traced out from within the scriptures. Him we have to seek for in the innermost core of our heart.

There are various conceptions of God. People look upon Him differently according to their capacity and understanding. The most commonly accepted conception of God is Eternal Power. But the philosophic view goes much beyond and includes the idea of Nirguna Brahma or Indeterminate Absolute which is above all multiplicity and distinctions. It is the ultimate cause and substratum of existence, the supra-active Centre of the entire manifestation or the

Absolute Base. It is beyond quality, activity, or consciousness. It is also known as Par Brahma. Next comes the idea of God as Supreme existence. We see the universe with all its diversities and differentiations and we are led to believe in its creator and controller. We call him Ishwar or Saguna Brahma (Determinate Absolute). We think of Him as a formless Eternal Existence which is Omnipotent and Omniscient and possesses all the finest attributes. He is the efficient cause of the world and He is also its preserver and destroyer. It is only when viewed from this lower standpoint that God (as the God of religion) becomes an object of worship and which is the final approach of almost all the religions. So far, God is conceived of as Nirakar or formless, but possessing of certain attributes. This is in itself a difficult idea for the common folk to grasp. They, therefore, try to secure an easier approach by taking up to a more tangible form. Some, therefore, think of Him as seated on the highest Heaven, administering justice and benevolence to all. Others think of Him as an all-pervading power controlling the Universe. Thus by degrees we are in a way gradually drifting away from the

Nirakar or formless aspect to some tangible form or Sakar. Much has been said in the religious books about the two conceptions, the Nirakar and the Sakar but really both the conceptions, as generally understood, are greatly misleading. Really God is neither Nirakar nor Sakar but beyond both. Those who treat him as Sakar limit the Limitless within bounds of form and shape. The result is that they cultivate narrow-mindedness and remain for ever within bounds. If we take Him as Nirakar the very idea brings to our mind the limitation of attributes as creator, controller and destroyer. Even the idea of God as Power or Energy is still a limited conception. We go on ahead to the idea of non-entity or zero ; still we are in a way somewhat away from Reality. What then? Expression now fails. Sufficient be it to say that if we are really away from either of the two conceptions, we may think ourselves to be in the right direction. So long as we remain confined within the bounds of religion the God of religion remains in our view and we remain entangled within one or the other view. The highest spiritual attainment is only possible when we go beyond. In fact spirituality begins where

religion ends. Religion is only a preliminary stage for preparing a man for his march on the path of freedom. When he has set his foot on the path, he is then beyond the limits of religion. The end of religion is the beginning of spirituality; the end of spirituality is the beginning of Reality and the end of Reality is the Real Bliss. When that too is gone, we have reached the destination. That is the highest mark which is almost inexpressible in words.

Worship of gods and deities in various forms is a crude development of the same Sakar theory. Worship of every power of nature and even of mountains, rivers and trees is a further degradation of the same view. What a pity! Instead of worshipping the Master, we are worshipping the servants ignoring the Master entirely and we are not prepared to hear even a word against our set prejudices. The result is that today we find so many sects and creeds, each worshipping its own god or goddess in its own particular way. Evidently the goal before their eye is not even liberation but in most cases deliverance from some particular form of misery or some material gain. People are driven to such forms of worship either

by the force of circumstances or through the faulty guidance of those who are themselves quite in dark in the matters of self-realization. Lord Krishna has made it clear in the Geeta that worship of gods may lead you at the most to their sphere only, which is a limited one and far below the point of liberation. They themselves have no capacity to go beyond. The approach of their devotees beyond this point is, therefore, out of question. Thus it is evident that these gods and deities are of no avail to us if we really aim at Reality. I have illustrated the point more clearly in my book 'Efficacy of Rajyoga'.

Mechanical form of worship, commonly adopted by those hankering after gods and goddesses to serve their worldly ends is also another absurdity. It is no worship at all. They only play the part of a labourer, so to say, and at the close they get their day's wages for the physical labour done. The solid material form of God entertained by them in the mind and worshipped with faith and devotion leads to internal grossness and if the practice continues for a long time they become more and more solid, barring their approach to Reality. The

result in such cases is evident to almost every eye. Ancient sages finding worship of the Immaterial Absolute, a difficult task for the masses to start with, had devised certain convenient means for their uplift. They made a start by taking up something apparent in the solid form which the masses could easily grasp or understand. Now the things which could be easily grasped or understood were different for different people. For the people of the lowest standard they adopted something in the apparently solid form. For others, more elevated, some abstract form, *e.g.*, splendour, light or any godly attribute was introduced to start with. For highly cultured minds a subtle idea of God was enough. Thus it was only for the people of the lowest standard that they had adopted the solid form such as picture or image and that too only as a temporary measure. When they attained some progress they gave it up and embarked upon the next stage, taking up a finer form. It is just like teaching writing to a baby by making her move her pen along the prints of letters. After a little practice the process is given up and the baby is able to write independently without the help of the prints. Thus the

solid form or the image was to be adopted by the beginners for a time only, after which, they came to the next stage. Besides the image set up for the purpose was fully charged with the spiritual force so that those sitting by, in devotion and worship, gained some of it through constant radiation. Now persons of calibre, having the power to infuse into the image the spiritual force are rare, although the process of Pran Pratishtha (प्राण प्रतिष्ठा) still continues as a matter of mere formality. The result is that the places and images thus charged thousands of years ago, have, by this time, almost lost all their effect and consequently no practical gain is derived by those going there for devotion and worship. It is, however, beyond doubt that the process was introduced only for the people of the lowest standard with little brain who could not otherwise devote themselves to the Lord in any way. It is but certain that the practice if tenaciously followed to the last, defeats its very purpose and does not provide any spiritual advantage. Saint Kabir has nicely expressed the idea in the following lines :—

पाहन पूजे हरि मिले, तो पूजिये पहाड़
ताते यह चक्की मली, पीस खान संसार

“If by worshipping stone one can reach God I shall be ready to worship a mountain. But for this purpose the grinding-stone which grinds the corn to feed the world may be better.”

To my view those who stick to this sort of worship throughout their life, are wading deep through the mire of ungodliness. It is extremely difficult to extricate them out from it. In course of time after constant practice they become so firmly rooted to it that they cannot even think of getting away from it at any stage. They remain at a stand-still. They do not want to get rid of the ideas they have already imbibed. Further they apply their power of thought and make them stronger and more solid. Everything casts a reflection in a form similar to its own. If the thing is subtle its reflection will also be subtle in character while if it is gross the reflection will likewise be gross. If we concentrate on a solid thing we are sure to become ourselves inwardly solid. Great havoc has been wrought by teachers, who have presented to the ignorant masses everything they had learnt from the holy books in hard and solid form. It destroys the reflexive power of mind. If one develops such a horrible state he is gone for

ever. He loses his approach to a broader vision and the capacity for further progress becomes extinct. Such persons may be compared to frogs in the well, with a little field of activity which they consider all and enough. They remain whirling round in a closed sphere, hemmed in on all sides. They are hammering on the same thing all their life. Stories and illustrations of gods are all and enough for them. When the practice continues for long the cells of the brain are affected and they become saturated with the thoughts which grow stronger day by day. Finally the whole nervous system is affected. The external opacity gradually creeps inwards and completes the work. They are now completely impervious both within and without, blocking the passage for the Divine Light. Their approach to innerself is completely barred. I shall prefer to call them living stones. The hardened crust which they thus developed keeps them aloof from slightest association with anything higher or finer. They are almost spell-bound by its effects which they consider to be a spiritual stage although in fact they are far away from it. My personal experience in the spiritual field has revealed to me that it is a

pretty hard and tedious task to shatter the hard crust created by such form of practice from the hearts of those coming to me for spiritual pursuit. If one wants to free himself from these bondages of soul he must necessarily clear off the layer of grossness and solidity settled over his mind as a result of these stultifying practices.

Another form of worship commonly thought to be more advanced is to sing or recite in chorus, lines in praise of the god or goddess they worship. People assemble together in parties and at late hours in the night, sing in chorus at the top of their voice disturbing the calm atmosphere of the night. They think that they are thereby discharging a pious duty of injecting, as they say, into the ears of as many, as they can, the sacred name of God. Not only this but they sometimes even make use of microphone to broadcast the sound. They are totally unmindful of the discomfort or inconvenience it might cause to persons who may possibly be in need of quiet repose after their day's tiring labour or illness. It may at the same time be offering serious disturbance to those practising meditation in the calm hours of the night.

Moreover the practice, as generally followed today, is of no great utility in our spiritual progress and consequently no substantial gain is derived therefrom. The chantings of the Sankirtanists may be compared more appropriately to the groans of a sick man which only offer him a temporary consolation but do not actually relieve him of the pain. So these chantings are of no avail to them except that they are charmed by the effect of the sweet melody which helps to draw their thoughts for the time being to the ideal in view. Now whatever we think or contemplate, produces vibrations within. When these vibrations multiply, they create power which gushes out with the sound. The vibrations carry with them the effect of thoughts and feelings of individuals. So the pious effect of the pure minds in the company is likely to be spoiled by the evil effect of impious minds. The undesirable element must, therefore, be kept away if full advantage is to be derived from these performances. Such was the practice followed by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who held Sankirtans (congregational chants) with the party consisting only of those thoroughly known to him for goodness and piety. The perform-

ance was, therefore, conducted behind closed doors and no outsider was allowed in. Sankirtan (congregational chant) in fact, does not offer means of preliminary advancement but is rather helpful only to some extent after sufficient advancement. It is most effective only when conducted in a congenial atmosphere overflowing with pious thoughts. It may also serve as a recreative change after serious mental practices. Moreover unfortunately today the ideal too kept in view during these practices is not the highest. In most cases they remain all along in close touch with the idea of gods in the physical form keeping in view their gross body and activities. The effect of this gross conception is nothing but internal grossness and opacity which they inhale all along during the practice. A gross conception will necessarily keep you within bounds and limitations and final approach or absolute freedom can never be possible. This is the reason why in spite of years of practice they find themselves at the lowest level of attainment. They are, so to say, searching everything in a stagnant pool where even oxygen, necessary for the upkeep of life, is wanting. They have made such a pool their

permanent abode. Proper light is needed to make pearls. What we must strive for in order to secure absolute freedom from bondage is to become the lightest and the finest, closely corresponding with the godly attributes and securing complete similarity with Him. The nectar of real life is for him and him alone who brings himself up to the standard required for the purpose.

CHAPTER II

THE GOAL OF LIFE

There are perhaps only a few among the masses who have ever given any serious consideration to the problem of life. Generally they take a very narrow view of it. The only problem before them is to secure a decent living, well provided with the desired comforts. In other words, to them the object of life is only to achieve the greatest possible comfort and prominence in the world. If they are able to achieve it, they think their life to be a success, otherwise not. They may, however, pass on as great men, philosophers, scientists or politicians and acquire world-wide fame and riches, but their problem of life still remains unsolved. It does not really end with death, for it is only a change of form. Our next life, whatever it may be, begins after death. Just as prior to our present life we have had numerous other lives in different forms, similarly even after our deaths we may have numerous other lives. The cycle of birth and death continues indefinitely. The problem before us is not to find out a solution of our present life but for all lives that

we may henceforth have. In the wider sense, it covers the entire existence of soul in various forms, gross or subtle, at different times till the time of Mahapralaya (Final extinction). There may be difference of opinion over the question of births and deaths, among the followers of different creeds, but it is certain that mere theoretical knowledge of the scriptures will not solve the question. Practical experience in the spiritual field is necessary for the purpose. The question ends when one acquires 'Anubhava Shakti' (feeling power) of the finest type and can himself realise the true state of life hereafter. The mystery is, however, explained by people in various ways, but almost all agree on the point that the object of life is to achieve eternal bliss after death. For this they insist on a life of virtue, sacrifice and devotion which will bring to them the eternal joy of the paradise or salvation or peace. But that is not the end of the problem. It goes on much beyond. Now in order to trace out the solution of the problem we must look back to the point wherefrom our existence has started. Our existence in the present grossest form is neither sudden nor accidental but it is the result of a slow process

of evolution. The existence of soul can be traced out as far back as to the time of creation when the soul existed in its naked form as a separate entity. From that primary state of existence of the soul in its most subtle form we marched on to grosser and grosser forms of existence. These may be expressed as coverings round the soul. The earliest coverings were of a finest nature and with them we existed in our homeland, the Realm of God. The additions of more and more coverings of ego continued and subsequently Manas (Psyche), Chit (consciousness), Buddhi (intellect) and Ahankar (ego) in cruder forms began to contribute to our grossness. In due course Sanskars (impressions) began to be formed which brought about their resultant effects. Virtue and vice made their appearances. Slowly our existence assumed the densest form. The effect of Sanskars is the commencement of the feelings of comforts, miseries, joys and sorrows. Our likings for joys and comforts and our dislikings for sorrows and miseries have created further more complications. We generally find ourselves surrounded with pain and misery and we think that deliverance from them is our main goal. This is a

very narrow view of the problem. The aims and objects of life conceived in terms of worldly ends are almost meaningless. We forget that pains and miseries are only the symptoms of a disease but the disease lies elsewhere. To practise devotion to please God in order to secure worldly comforts or gains is but a mockery. The problem before us is not mere deliverance from pain and misery but freedom from bondage which is the ultimate cause of pain and misery. Freedom from bondage is liberation. It is different from salvation which is not the end of the process of rebirth. Salvation is only a temporary pause in the rotation. It is the suspension of the process of birth and death only for a certain fixed period after which we again assume the material form. The endless circle of rebirth ends only when we have secured liberation. It is the end of all our pains and miseries. Anything short of liberation cannot be taken as the goal of life although there remains still a lot beyond it. We find but a few persons who have even liberation as the final goal of their life which represents the lowest rung in the spiritual flight. The problem of life remains totally unsolved if we are below this

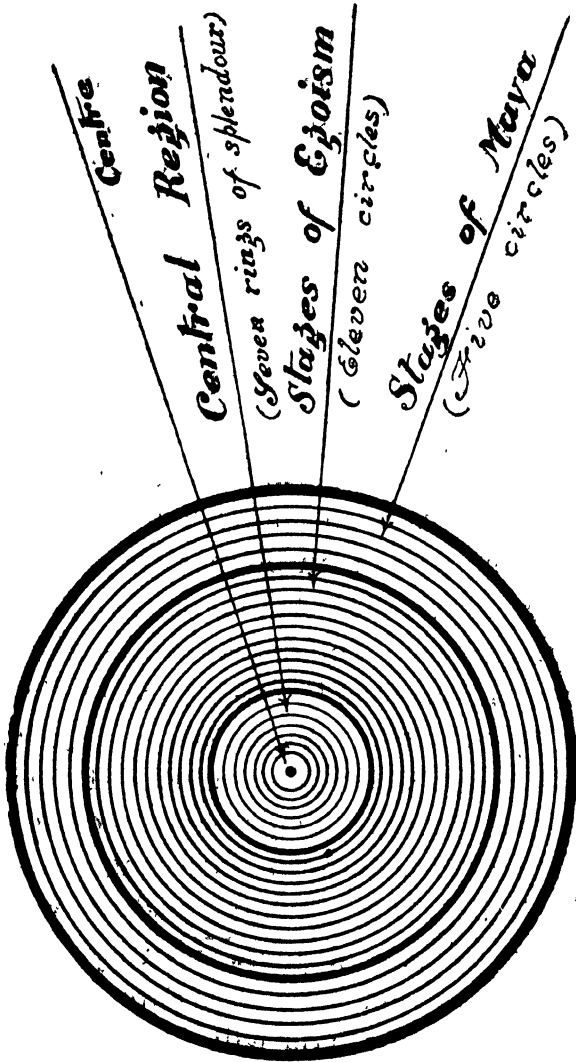
level. There are persons who may say that they do not want Mukti (liberation). They only want to come again and again into this world and practise Bhakti (devotion). Their goal of life is undetermined and indefinite. Bhakti and nothing beyond as they say is their goal. Really they are attracted by the charming effect of the condition of a Bhakta (devotee) and like to remain entangled in it for ever. They do it only to please themselves. Freedom from eternal bondage is not possible so long as we are within entanglements. The natural yearning of soul is to be free from bondage. If there is one who does not like to free himself from the entanglements there is no solution for him. Bhakti is the means of achieving the goal and not the goal itself. The fact as I have stated above is that they are allured by the charming effect of the primary condition and do not want to get away from it at any time. The narrow view that they have taken, bars their approach to a broader vision and anything beyond is out of their sight. Another fallacious argument advanced in support of the above view is that devotion, if practised with any particular object in view, is far from being 'Nishkam' (desireless).

The theory of 'Nishkam Upasna' (desireless devotion) as laid down in the Geeta emphasises upon us to practise devotion without keeping in view any specific purpose. It really means that we should practise devotion without our eyes being fixed upon any worldly object or without caring for the satisfaction of our desires. It does not stop us from fixing our mind upon the goal of life which is absolutely essential for those on the march. The goal of life means nothing but the point we have finally to arrive at. It is, in other words, the remanescence of our homeland or the primeval state of our present solid existence, which we have finally to return to. It is only the idea of destination which we keep alive in our minds and for that we practise devotion only as duty. Duty for duty's sake is without doubt 'Nishkam Karma' (selfless action) and to realize our goal of life is our bounden duty.

Now I come to the point what the real goal of life should be. It is generally admitted that the goal must be the highest, otherwise progress upto the final limit is doubtful. For this, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the highest possible limit of human approach. We have before us examples of Rama and Krishna, the

two incarnations of the Divinity. We worship them with faith and devotion and want to secure union with them. Automatically that becomes our goal of life and we can at the utmost secure approach up to their level. Now Rama and Krishna, as incarnations, were special personalities vested with supernatural powers to work as medium for the accomplishment of the work which nature demanded and for which they had come. They had full command over various powers of nature and could utilise them at any time in a way they thought proper. The scope of their activity was limited in accordance with the nature of the work they had to accomplish. They descended from the sphere of Mahamaya (महामाया), which is a state of Godly energy in the subtle form, hence the most powerful. It is due to this fact that we find excellent results coming into effect through their agency in their life-time. The highest possible point of human approach is much beyond the sphere of Mahamaya; hence a good deal above that level. It may be surprising to most of the readers but it is a fact beyond doubt. The final point of approach is where every kind of force, power, activity or even

stimulus disappears and a man enters a state of complete negation, Nothingness or Zero. That is the highest point of approach or the final goal of life. I have tried to express it by the diagram. The concentric circles drawn round the centre 'C', roughly denote the different spiritual spheres we come across during our progress. Beginning our march from the outermost circle we proceed towards the centre crossing each circle to acquire the next stage. It is a very vast expanse. If I speak of liberation, people will think it to be a very far-off thing which can be achieved by persistent efforts for a number of lives. In the diagram the state of liberation lies between the 2nd and the 3rd circle. The various conditions, we have to pass through in order to secure liberation are all acquired within about a circle and a half. This may help the reader to form a rough idea of what still remains to be achieved after we have reached the point of liberation which really, as commonly believed, is not an ordinary achievement. After achieving this state we go on further crossing other circles till we cross the fifth one. This is the stage of Awyakta Gati (undifferentiated state). At this stage a



man is totally free from the bounds of Maya. Very few of the sages of the past could reach upto this position. Raja Janak was one of those who could secure his approach to this state. His achievements were considered to be so great that even the prominent Rishis (sages) of the time used to send their sons and disciples to him for training. The region of Heart as described in my book 'Efficacy of Rajyoga' is now crossed and we enter the Mind region, after crossing the fifth circle. The eleven circles after this depict the various stages of egoism. The condition there is more subtle and grows finer still as we march on through the region. By the time we reach the 16th circle we are almost free from egoism. The condition at the stage is almost inconceivable and has rarely been attained by even the greatest of the sages. As far as my vision goes I find among the ancient sages none except Kabir who could have secured his approach upto this stage (*i.e.*, the 16th circle). What remains when we have crossed this circle is a mere identity which is still in a gross form. We now enter the Central Region. There, too, you will find seven rings of something, I may call it light for the sake of

expression, which we cross during our march onwards. The form of dense identity as I have called it, grows finer and subtler to the last possible limit. We have now secured a position which is nearest to the Centre, and it is the highest possible approach of man. There we are in close harmony with the very Real condition. Complete merging with the Centre is, however, not possible, so as to maintain a nominal difference between God and soul. Such is the extent of human achievement which a man should fix his eyes upon, from the very beginning, if he wants to make the greatest progress on the path of realisation. Very few among the saints and Yogis of the world had ever had any conception of it. Their farthest approach in most cases had been upto the 2nd or the 3rd circle at the utmost, and it is unfortunate that even at this preliminary stage they sometimes considered their achievements to be too great. I have given all this only to enable people to judge those so-called great Doctors of Divinity who are said to have attained perfection and are generally accepted as such by the ignorant masses who judge their worth only by their outward form or elegance.

CHAPTER III

WAYS AND MEANS

Having determined our goal, the next problem before us is to find out means for the realisation of the object. Sages and teachers have elaborately dealt with the subject. They have laid down various forms of practices or 'Sadhans', helpful for the attainment of what they put forth as the final goal. But for the realisation of God, the Indeterminate Absolute or Par Brahm we have to adopt means which lead us to the complete negation. Our goal of life, as discussed in the previous chapter is the final stage where we are nearest to the Super-active Centre or zero, which is the primeval cause of the entire manifestation and to which everything will ultimately return after Maha Pralaya (complete dissolution). To acquire this state we have ourselves to become zero. No doubt we shall reach that point in natural course at the time of Maha Pralaya, but what we strive for, is to acquire it as early as possible in order to save ourselves from the miseries of innumerable lives. Just as Maha Pralaya or complete

dissolution is essential for the return of everything to the origin, similarly for our return to the point we must bring about our Pralaya (destruction) or acquire a state of complete dissolution of all things of our own making. It means we have to be free from all our belongings and assume the same naked form in which we were at the time of creation. Our belongings are a pile of Sanskars (impressions) with their resultant effects in the form of complexities and the diverse coverings which we have gathered round the soul and which are the results of our thoughts and actions. We possess mental and intellectual faculties which are all active. Our mind determines the actions of the body. We see, hear, feel and understand things. We begin to like or dislike them. Desires gradually begin to creep in and affect our actions. The rings go on multiplying and we exert ourselves for the fulfilment of desires. A desire, when satisfied generally creates another to follow in its place. We are seldom free from them even for a moment. We see most of the things with an idea of having them. These desires mould our physical and mental actions and lead to the formation of Sanskars (impressions), adding thus

more and more coverings to the soul. Fresh desires every moment and our efforts to satisfy them lead to continuous additions. Their impressions remain on our causal body so long as they are not wiped off through the process of 'Bhog'. The completion of the Bhog of all the Sanskars, formed every moment cannot ordinarily be possible during the whole life. Thus when our life comes to a close we still have a lot of Sanskars in store within us. These very Sanskars become the cause of our rebirth, in order to offer us an opportunity to complete their Bhog, but unfortunately, instead of finishing them we add more than those we have exhausted.

Another serious obstruction in our path is caused by our sufferings and miseries. Almost every one in the world complains of the miseries he is faced with and which he wants to do away with. But he neglects the right means. He thinks fulfilment of desires to be the only way of removing miseries. But that is not the solution. Miseries are commonly considered to be detestable, but there have been sages who voluntarily courted miseries, thinking them to be a boon and have often prayed to God for them.

The mystery of the problem will be clear if we look into the origin of miseries. Soul possesses consciousness as a result of God's will to effect creation. The soul likewise began to form its own tiny creation and gathered round it things of its own creation. Now a stir, a motion (*i.e.*, unrest or disturbance) was the main factor in bringing about the creation. Similarly for the tiny creation of the soul too, unrest or disturbance is indispensable. We also possess the force of will which we apply to impart power to the factors necessary for setting up this creation. They appear before us in the form of joy or sorrow, comfort or misery. The mind, too, being constantly active creates within us liking for the one and dislike for the other, introducing the two extremities of a thing. Thus miseries come into existence. This is all the creation of the human mind which results from our ignorance of the right relationship of things. Our passions, emotions and impulses too contribute a good deal in aggravating the troubles and at times cause fierce tempest strong enough to threaten a complete wreck. We generally attribute its causes to circumstances. But it is a wrong notion. Mind is the centre of this outer expan-

sion of man in the form of human body and everything which is exhibited through the medium of the body proceeds from the centre, the mind. If our mind comes to a harmonious state, circumstances and environments will have no effect on it and there will be no disturbance within. Peace and tranquillity shall reign all through under all circumstances. Passions, excitements and desires will lose their intensity and sorrow, joy or misery will disappear from the view. Our desires are the main cause of miseries. So the only solution of miseries is the curtailment of desires. Fewer the desires, lesser shall be our miseries. But to become desireless is another problem. Desires form a net-work which we are entangled in. The more we try to get rid of it, tighter become the fibres of the net. The only way to free ourselves from the entanglements is to divert our attention from them and fix our eyes on the very Real thing. If we cultivate a habit of remaining unmindful of them, they will soon begin to disappear from our view and consequently our miseries will be minimised. Reality alone will remain constantly before our eyes and everything else will lose its charm or significance.

Total absence of sufferings and miseries in life is, however, impossible and unnatural. In fact they are rather meant for our betterment. They are just like bitter pills of medicine given to a patient to restore health. The misuse of even the best thing creates trouble. So is the case with miseries. Proper utility of everything at the proper time and in the proper way is sure to bring forth good results in the long run. Miseries are really our best guide which make our path smooth. To a man in ordinary sphere of life, miseries are very helpful for his making. Referring to domestic troubles and miseries of a worldly life my Master used to say, "Our home is the training ground of patience and endurance. To endure calmly the adversities of a household life is for us the greatest penance which is the noblest of all other forms of penances. What we have, therefore, to do under the circumstances is not to give way to the feeling of anger or grief but to assume an unquestioning attitude thinking that we ourselves are in the wrong for which we have to forbear with a cool mind. Solitary life in a forest and aloofness from all worldly concerns may be, to some, the means of cultivating patience and forbearance but to us,

the taunts and rebukes of our friends and relations is the greatest penance and the surest means of success." In fact, to put up coolly with miseries and troubles contributes much to our betterment, hence they are valuable assets to our progress. It is only by their wrong use that we spoil their effect and thus get deprived of their best advantages.

Renunciation or non-attachment is no doubt an essential stage in realisation and we can never be free from the entanglements of Maya unless we cultivate non-attachment. But it does not mean severing our connection with home, the family and all worldly concerns and taking up the life of a religious mendicant. I do not agree with those who hold the view that the only means of cultivating non-attachment is to get away from home and family and retire to a solitary corner discarding all worldly ties. Renunciation effected by such forced means, is seldom found to be genuine, for it is just possible that in spite of their apparent forced detachment from the world, they may still inwardly be clinging to it. No doubt as a householder we have to look after many things. We have to support our family ; we have to provide

for the education of our children ; we have to look to their wants and necessities ; we have to protect them from heat and cold, from trouble and sickness and so on. For these necessities we earn and possess money and property. The real evil is only our undue attachment with things which we are associated with. This is the main cause of our sufferings. But if we are able to do everything in life thinking it to be our duty without any feeling of attraction or repulsion we are in a way free from worldly ties and have renounced the world in the true sense although we possess and make use of many things. Everything we possess shall, then, seem to be a sacred trust from the Supreme Master, for the discharge of the duties entrusted to us. Renunciation truly means non-attachment with worldly objects and not the non-possession of things. Thus a household life in which possession of things and worldly ties are indispensable is no impediment in the way of renunciation and consequently of realization, only if one is not unduly attached to the objects he is connected with. There are numerous examples of saints having attained the highest degree of perfection leading a household life

all through. Renunciation is in fact a condition or an inner state of mind which brings to our view the transitory and changing character of things and creates a feeling of non-attachment with such objects. His eyes are fixed every moment on Reality which is unchanging and eternal and he is free from feeling of attraction and repulsion. This is Vairagya (renunciation) in the true sense of the term. When we have achieved this state of mind we are free from desires. We feel contented with what is available to us. The end of desires means the stopping of the formation of Sanskars. What remains now is only to undergo the effect (Bhog) of the previously formed Sanskars (impressions) which are to be worked out during the course of our life. Nature too helps us in the work by creating field for Bhog in order to remove the impressions of our thoughts and actions from the causal body. When these coverings melt away we begin to assume finer forms of existence.

In order to control our thoughts and actions we have to look to the proper working of the mind which is never at rest even for a moment. I have often heard religious teachers railing at it in bitterest terms, ascribing all bad names to

it and proclaiming it to be our worst enemy. The reason is quite plain. They think it to be the cause of all evil within us, and consequently they advise people to crush it and not to follow its biddings. But generally people find it a hard task to restrain the diverse activities of the mind, or to disregard its biddings. Their theoretical advices and lectures in this respect are, therefore, not of much avail to them and almost none of those attending their lectures has ever been able to achieve the object in a practical way. Besides the present circumstances and the environments too contribute much towards the ever-increasing activities of the individual mind. Almost every one, today, feels his life to be a hard struggle for existence confronting acute problems of poverty, insecurity, distress and rivalry and it is almost impossible to keep himself free from its effect. The result is the constant unrest and disturbance of mind. We breathe in the same thing from the atmosphere and are consequently led away by circumstances and surroundings. Our individual mind has become the weather-cock, turning its face at every blast towards the direction in which the wind blows. The real hero in the struggle is

one, who braves them courageously and keeps himself free from their effect.

I, no doubt, agree with those who say that every evil has its origin in the mind and which alone is, therefore, responsible for it ; though at the same time, I may remind them that it is the very same mind that leads us to virtue and also helps us to realize our highest self. So it is not every evil alone that proceeds from the mind but also every good. Hence those who condemn it in the bitterest terms have no justification for it at all. It is really only due to the defective moulding of the mind, and what is actually required, is not the crushing or the killing of the mind but merely its proper training. The mind is like the pendulum of a clock. The clock goes all right so long as the movement of the pendulum is regulated. If it is disturbed the clock is out of order. Similarly for this human clock it is necessary that the movement of the mind be well regulated and adjusted. The methods to mould the mind and regulate its activities are also very simple. Really we have spoiled the mind ourselves by allowing it to wander about aimlessly during leisure hours. The practice has continued for years and it has now become

almost its second nature. If we now try to control the mind by putting it under restraint we meet with little success. The more we try to suppress it by force, the more it rebounds and counteracts causing greater disturbance. The proper method to control the activities of the mind is to fix it on one sacred thought just as we do in meditation, and dispel from it everything unwanted or superfluous. In course of time after constant practice, the mind gets disciplined and regulated and much of the inner disturbance is eliminated. The best course to free yourself from unwanted ideas is to treat them as uninvited guests and remain unmindful of them. They will then wither away like unwatered plants and ultimately the same sacred thought will remain predominant. The only way to accomplish it is, therefore, meditation under the guidance of a capable master. By constant practice in meditation the mind will become calm and peaceful and the unwanted ideas will cease to trouble you. I often hear beginners complaining about the wandering of the mind during meditation. From the very first day they expect that during their practice at meditation the mind should remain at a standstill but when

they find different ideas and thoughts haunting their mind they feel greatly perturbed. I must clear it to them that it is not the suspended condition of the mind we are striving for in our practice, but only the moulding of its multifarious activities. We do not want to stop its normal working but only to bring it to a regulated and disciplined state. If the activities of the mind are stopped from the very beginning we probably do not stand in need of practising meditation at all. Meditation is only process to achieve that end. Concentration is its natural result in due course. The proper method is to meditate all along remaining quite unmindful of the foreign ideas and thoughts coming to our mind during that time. Mental struggle to keep off the unwanted ideas often proves unsuccessful for it causes a strong reaction which is often impossible for man of ordinary capabilities to overcome and which is sometimes likely to result in serious mental disturbance or even insanity. It may be possible for those who by leading a life of celibacy have gained sufficient ojas (lustre) to cope successfully with the flow of thoughts and to withstand the effect of their reaction but for ordinary man it is almost an

impossibility. If instead of struggling to keep off ideas we only remain unmindful of them, very soon they will lose their effect and cease troubling us. They will then be only like dogs barking after a caravan which goes forward without paying any heed to them.

A most common excuse advanced by certain people today is that they are too busy to devote any time to meditation or similar other practices. 'But the busiest man has the greatest leisure' is a well-known saying. I think a man has more time at his disposal than there is work for him to do. Their complaint of the scarcity of time is due only to its wrong adjustment. If we utilize our time to the best advantage we shall never have cause to complain that it is short or scarce. There are others who are a bit frank to admit that it is not for want of time that they remain away from devotional duties but for their habitual negligence and sluggishness which they cannot overcome. To them I would say that they are probably never negligent or sluggish in their trade or profession which they attend to with full zeal in spite of all personal inconvenience and even illness, only because some monetary gain or profit is in view. Their

longing for the material gain turns them unmindful of their inconvenience or illness. Similarly if our longing (or Lagan) for the realization of the goal is great, our negligent or sluggish habits will not stand in the way of our efforts or progress. If we go through the history of ancient sages we find that they had sacrificed all the comforts of life for the sake of attaining Reality. They led a life of austerity and penance, undergoing every kind of hardship and trouble for the sake of the object so dear to their heart. Intense longing for the goal made them blind to everything else and they remained firm on the path not minding the difficulties and reverses that came across their way. Such an intense longing for the object and an iron will to achieve the goal is absolutely necessary to ensure complete success. I may assure you that you can win laurels in the spiritual field if only you turn your attention towards God and proceed with will, faith and confidence, no matter how adversely you may be placed in, surrounded by all the worries and miseries of a household life. Your busy life will then offer no hindrance in your way. Generally people go hesitatingly towards God, thinking themselves to be too incapable

and weak to achieve the real thing. A powerful will made at the very first step and maintained all through, shall never fail to achieve complete success. Half the distance is crossed if a man enters the field with a firm mind. Difficulties and dejections will melt away at a mere glance and the path of success will be made smooth. Indecisive attitude leads to half-hearted efforts and generally results in mere partial success or more often in failure. Our firm will enables us, automatically to draw in power from unknown sources, for the accomplishment of the task. A firm will supplemented by an ever-increasing impatience or yearning to achieve the object will enhance the force of our effort and we shall thereby remain in constant touch with the same real thing, catching every hint conducive to our spiritual well-being and progress. Impatience or constant restlessness to reach the goal in the shortest possible time is, thus, by far the most important factor which contributes to our speedy success. We must not rest even for a while till we have gained the real object, the eternal peace and calmness. Intense longing for an object naturally creates restlessness for it and we have no peace till we achieve the desired object. It

is, therefore, a very essential thing and must be cultivated by whatever means possible. Thus for gaining the eternal peace we cultivate within us restlessness and impatience at the preliminary stage. It may look strange at the very face of it when I ask you to cultivate the very thing we want to do away with but it is the only way to achieve sure and speedy success. The restlessness thus created is temporary and different in character from the ordinary restless condition of the mind. It is finer and more pleasant. It creates an inlet in our heart for the divine current to flow in and smoothens our passage to the kingdom of God. If you thrust a man down into the water you find that he makes desperate efforts to free himself from your grip. It is only because his impatience to get out of water at once increases his force of effort and he does not rest till he is out of water. Similarly such desperate efforts caused by extreme impatience to reach the goal at once, will quicken our steps on the path of realization and ensure easy success in the least possible time. That is the easiest and the most efficient means of speedy success. My associates have often enquired from me the method for creating such type of restlessness within them. I

may tell them that intense love for the object will automatically lead them to it. When we are in deep love, we shall naturally feel impatient to secure nearness with the loved object. When we are greatly in love with any of the worldly objects its idea comes to our mind again and again, and we think of it over and over again. Now in order to develop Divine love in our heart we have only to reverse the process. If we remember God frequently or for the most part of the day, we will automatically develop love for Him, which if continued with earnestness will create impatience in our heart to secure union at the earliest. Another way of developing love with God is to play the part of a lover as if you are enacting a drama. But it is only for those who are almost incapable of finer means. The method though artificial will shortly bring you to reality and feelings of true love and impatience will begin to agitate your heart.

The most important factor in realization is self-confidence in our own capacity and power to achieve success. It is absurd to think, even for a moment, that we are in any way too weak or deficient to acquire the highest state of perfection ever attained so far even by the greatest sages of

the past. We must march on the path of realization like a brave soldier with full faith and confidence, not minding the difficulties or reverses. Dejections and disappointments weaken our will and shatter our firmness. We should meet reverses with a brave heart and should never give way to the feeling of despondency which is the worst drawback and the deadliest poison to spiritual life.

One of the essentials in the making of a man engaged in spiritual pursuit is moderation. It is a very wide term and covers every phase of human activity. It means perfect balance in all senses and faculties; nothing more or less than what is naturally required at the time for any specific purpose without its slightest impression on the mind. Generally, today, we find moderation disturbed in almost all cases. The reason mainly is that we attach undue importance to whatever thing comes to our view and we strengthen it by the force of our thought with the result that it grows stronger over all others. We cultivate this habit and apply it to different things with varying intensity. The result that follows is nothing but disturbance and mental conflict and it is the

root cause of all our troubles and miseries. Realization is not possible unless perfect moderation and balance is restored. It corresponds closely with the very real thing which existed at the time of creation, when everything was in a perfectly balanced state. Now after the lapse of time, degeneration crept in. Our senses and faculties lost the balance and everything went into disorder. What we have to do now is to control our senses and faculties in order to restore moderation in them. To cultivate moderation we have to pay special attention to external ways of life too, *e.g.*, gentle and polite language, courteous dealing, sympathy and love with fellow beings, reverence to elders, un-revengeful nature and so on. These habits are greatly helpful in our making. Moderation is a characteristic of nature. If we gain complete moderation we are in a way in conformity with nature and it is the very essence of spirituality.

Lastly the most important and unfailing means of success is the prayer. It connects our link with God to whom we surrender ourselves with love and devotion. In prayer we stand before Him as an humble suppliant presenting to Him our true state and completely resigning our-

selves to His will. This is the true form of prayer and as a true devotee we must also feel satisfied with the will of the Master. It is a folly to pray to God for petty worldly ends except in most exceptional cases when peace of mind is greatly disturbed for want of bare necessities. We should always pray to the supreme Master the Omnipotent and the Omniscient alone with a mind totally absorbed in love and submission to him forgetting even ourselves altogether. This is the proper way of offering prayer which in such a state seldom goes unrewarded. I have dealt with this point more elaborately in my book 'Commentary on Ten Commandments of Sahaj Marg.'

In the end I may also bring home to your mind that there are different forms and practices for achieving the end. They might lead you on the path of realization to some distance, but how far ; I do not propose to discuss here. I leave it to the judgment and the experience of the readers themselves. But I assure you positively that it is Raj Yog and the Raj Yog alone that can lead you on to your ultimate destination or the highest point of human approach, where you are in perfect harmony with nature,

assuming your absolute and pure form. No other form or practice can bring forth such results. It is, therefore, essential to have recourse to this science if you aim at the highest point. The help and support of a truly worthy guide is, of course, the essential factor and at the same time a serious problem of the day too, but a true seeker, I assure you, shall never fail to find him.

CHAPTER IV

THE GURU

Having in view our determined goal and the proper means to achieve it, our next look-out must be to find out the right type of person for our guide, who might successfully take us along the path of realization. In all cases (including those pertaining to worldly attainments), we stand in need of the help of a capable guide. It may, however, be possible that after acquiring some knowledge, we may proceed further by our self-effort. But even then we have to depend upon the experience of the teachers of the past contained in their books and writings. In spirituality the case is otherwise. The need of a Guru or Master, grows greater and greater as we go on advancing and securing higher stages. Books are of no avail to us in this respect. They may help us to acquire superficial knowledge of things to enable us to deliver eloquent discourses on spiritual topics and to win arguments, but practical approach in spirituality through them alone is impossible. Yogic practices and Sadhanas, based on knowledge acquired through books, are mostly misleading and even harmful to our spiritual advancement.

It is only the helping support of a capable guide that can take us on up to our destination. It is said of Maulana Room, a celebrated Persian poet and the author of eighteen books on spirituality, that once he approached a great saint to receive spiritual training from him. The saint asked him to throw all his books into the river, if he wanted to have practical training from him. As this meant to him the loss of his life-long labour he did not agree to it. Several times he approached the saint with the same request but received the same reply. Finding no other alternative, he at last submitted to his demand, threw away all his writings into the water and became his disciple. Actual realisation comes only after training in the realm of practice, and for that knowledge or erudition proves to be of little assistance.

The help of a Guru or Master is, therefore, essential and indispensable for those engaged in spiritual pursuit. There have been cases, however, where sages have attained perfection by mere self-effort, surrendering themselves direct to God. But such examples are rare. It is really a very difficult course and can be followed only by persons, specially gifted with uncommon genius. Guru is the connecting link between

God and man. It is through his medium only that we can reach God. He is the only power that can extricate us from the intricacies of the path. During our spiritual march we have to pass through various points, known as Chakras (figuratively called lotuses). They are the centres of concentrated energy of the Real Power or Divine force inherited by man. They are located in different places within the human frame. The intervening space between the two points is characterised as a net-work interwoven by numerous intricate fibres. As we proceed along we have to pass through these entanglements of the intervening layers. We have to stay there for a considerable time to complete the Bhog. Bhog does not only mean undergoing the effect of our past actions but it really means passing through the process of unfolding the intricacies of the point which we have already arrived at. Our stay at these points for the purpose of Bhog is often very long and in most cases it is almost impossible to get out of it by mere self-effort. It may, however, be possible at a few preliminary stages but subsequently it becomes quite impracticable. It has been observed that most of the sages of the past who had tried it by self-effort

only remained lingering for their whole life on the very first or the second stage and could not cross it. The fact is that at somewhat advanced stages we have to face what may be expressed as the slippery condition of the place. There we may sometimes go up a little but soon slip down again. The same thing happens again and again with the result that higher ascent becomes arduous and well-nigh impracticable. Under the circumstances it is only a forceful push by the worthy Master that can bring us out of the whirlpool. If the Master is not lacking in power and capacity, he will by his own force, push the disciple up out of the entanglement and place him on the next higher stage. It is, therefore, essential that the guide we select must be one of the highest calibre and worthy of the task of tearing off the intricacies at a glance with the aid of the extraordinary power at his command. It can only be one who has himself attained perfection or complete negation of self. Hence we must connect ourselves with such a great power by feelings of love and attraction. It does not matter much what conception of him we entertain in our mind. We may call him our friend, Master, servant or whatever we might

be pleased to choose. But he remains after all our guide or Guru, as he is commonly called.

Unfortunately, today, the selection of the proper guide is much neglected, although every religious-minded Hindu believes that it is incumbent upon him to have a Guru in order to satisfy his craving for spiritual benefit. Generally people select anyone for the purpose without any regard to his capabilities or worth. They are induced to do so mostly by persuasions or by miracles displayed by these so-called Gurus to attract the ignorant masses. The disciple-hunters are not wanting. They are as numerous as the leaves of a tree, for to most of them Gurudom is a very profitable job, which can secure enormous income which they cannot otherwise earn. Besides they command highest respect and personal service from their disciples. The ignorant masses thus fall a ready prey to these self-seeking professionals. A petty miracle or an ordinary display of something charming or attractive, is enough to attract hundreds of these silly sheep to their fold of Gurudom. A simple threat to pronounce curse upon one who happens to displease them, may bring thousands into their abject submission. Not only this but

in order to ensure monopoly of their profession they declare that none but one belonging to the privileged class has the right of being a Guru, whether he may be a Sanyasin or a house-holder. They claim to be world teachers of religion by birth irrespective of their capability and worth. Sanyasins too, you will find these days in multitude posing as Mahatmas and professing to be Jagat Gurus (world teachers). Is it not a pity to find such professional impostors, who are shame to the nation and the religion, roaming about with complete impunity to cheat and defraud the ignorant people, in order to serve their own selfish ends? It is high time for the masses to open their eyes and see what havoc has been wrought by them. Gurudom, as a monopoly of a privileged class is only an absurdity, introduced by the professional Gurus to safeguard their personal interests. The popularly believed principle that a disciple can never break off the sacred connection with his Guru under any circumstances, is also a cunning device adopted by those false Gurus to make their position safe and secure and is nothing but a fraud. The practice of initiating a disciple (though really based on sound principle) has been much

abused by most of the modern professionals who do not understand its real significance. Their only function as a Guru is to breathe a few mystical words into the ear of the disciple at the time of initiation and tell him to follow certain ceremonial practices by way of worship. Their duty to the disciple ends with it and nothing remains for them to do for the betterment of the disciple except to give him their Darshan every year and get their annual tribute from him. Really a disciple should formally be initiated only when true faith exists in him and Divine love takes prime root in his heart. Initiation signifies that the disciple's link has been connected with the Supreme Power. In that case the spiritual force begins to flow to the disciple automatically according to the absorbing capacity he develops in himself. It depends much upon the power and capability of the Master to establish a sound connection for which high calibre is needed. A sound connection once established shall continue as long as the disciple does not secure liberation which in such cases is not a far-off matter to be attained after numerous lives. In fact if a disciple is initiated in the right sense as mentioned above by a Guru of high calibre

the question of breaking off from him can never arise. But for the professional Gurus who perform mock initiations to serve their purpose, it is a matter of constant anxiety. Therefore, in order to keep a disciple permanently in their grip, they proclaim it as a Divine dictate that he shall be courting all the miseries of the hell if he ever thought of breaking off from them at any time. The ignorant masses accepted it as the gospel truth, trembling at the very idea of doing anything which might displease their Guru. So they always try to put up with all their atrocities in passive submission. I am sure, there is not the slightest suggestion to this effect found in our Shastras. It is only an ingenuity on the part of these teachers of religion. I hold it to be the birth-right of every man to break off from his Guru at any time if he finds that he had made a wrong selection or had misjudged the Guru's capacity or worth. He is also free to seek another Guru if at any stage he finds that his Guru has not the capacity to take him beyond what he has already acquired. On the other hand, a conscientious Guru must himself, under the circumstances, direct his disciple to seek another, more advanced and better qualified, so

that the disciple may not in any way suffer progress. This is the sacred duty of a true and selfless Guru. If, however, permission to break off, sought for by the disciple, is denied by the Guru on account of his selfish motives, the disciple is at liberty to break off from him at once and seek another. No moral or religious law ever forbids him from doing so.

A little advanced among the class of Gurus are considered to be those who teach and preach on the basis of their knowledge of the Shastras and other holy books. They have established orders and Ashrams where they enjoy a kingly position among their followers. They go out and address large audiences telling them what to do and what not to do and explaining to them problems concerning Maya, Jiva and Brahm. People flock to them in thousands to hear their sermons admiring their high ideas and extensive knowledge and regard them as great Mahatmas or saints. They ask them numerous intricate questions and if they are able to answer them out of their stock of the knowledge of Shastras their greatness as a Mahatma is established in their minds and they are induced to accept them as Gurus. But really they have, thus, put to

test their learning and not the real worth. It must well be borne in mind that it is not learning or knowledge that makes a man perfect but it is only realisation in the right sense that makes a true Yogi or saint. It is just possible that the man who has thus impressed you with his outward form, learning or eloquence, may be at the lowest level as regards practical attainments. Knowledge, therefore, is no criterion of a true Mahatma or Yogi. Similarly the real test of a Mahatma or Guru is not his miracles or his extraordinary ways and manners but only his practical attainments on the path of realisation. The popular meaning of a Mahatma as a great individuality does not seem appealing to me. I would define a Mahatma as the most insignificant being or rather a neglected figure, beyond all feelings of greatness, pride or egoism, dwelling permanently in a state of complete self-negation. There are some who hold the view that knowledge being the preliminary stage of realisation is essential and indispensable. I do not agree with them on the ground that knowledge is only an achievement of brain whereas realisation is the awakening of soul and hence far beyond its scope. In books on spiritual

science we read much about the conditions of mind at various spiritual stages and get acquainted with them but as regards practical attainments we are far away from them. We can talk to people about those conditions, advance arguments for and against them and establish our superiority in learning but inwardly we are quite ignorant of them. We attend lectures and hear sermons on Gita ; we recite portions from Gita regularly every day; we read commentaries on it written by great men of learning but what practical effect is thereby produced upon us ? Has any one of us been ever able to acquire practically any one of the conditions depicted in it. They may, however, repeat the words "World is Maya—Man is Brahm" and so on, but inwardly they are quite unconscious of what they speak in words. None has ever been able to develop the conditions, discussed therein, just as Arjun did when he heard it from Lord Krishna. Gita as we have it today is really a commentary on what Lord Krishna spoke to Arjuna on the eve of the battle of Mahabharat. Lord Krishna had actually transmitted the very conditions, explained by words of mouth into the heart of Arjun with the result that Arjun was literally feeling the same

condition prevailing all over, both within and without. Thus it was that every word which he heard descended right into his heart producing a permanent effect. The cause of failure of modern teachers and preachers of Gita to produce the desired effect upon the mind of the hearers is their lack of power to transmit those conditions. The various conditions of mind discussed in the Gita are really the different stages, which a man comes across during his march on the path of spirituality. They develop automatically from within. Formal means adopted to acquire a particular state of mind at a premature stage increases internal grossness which is detrimental to our progress.

A real teacher is not one who can explain to us the soundness of the religious dogmas or who can prescribe to us do's and dont's. Almost every one of us knows enough of it. What we stand in need of from a Guru is the true impulse to effect the awakening of the soul and his direct support in the course of our further march on the path of realisation. Such a man we have to seek for, if we aim at success. It is, therefore, evident that while judging a man for our spiritual guide we must take into account not his

learning or miracles but his practical achievements in the field of realization. A man who is himself free can free you from eternal bondage. If your Guru is not free from the bondages of Sanskars, Maya or Ahankar it is not possible for him to free you from those bondages. Suppose you are bound to one pole and your Guru to another, how is it possible for your Guru to free you from the bondage? Only a man who is himself free, can release you from the bondage. People have, in most cases gone astray for this very reason as they have submitted themselves to the guidance of such unworthy teachers, whose primary motive is perhaps mere self-aggrandizement or some personal gain. With this view in mind they are generally found to be eager to maintain their position and prestige by false impositions. To them it is probably the greatest shock to their pride of power and position to acknowledge the superiority of anyone more advanced or better accomplished. This is nothing but Ahankar in the crudest form. If you submit yourself to such a Guru, you are sure to inherit the same feeling of pride which is the worst type of grossness and is sure to hamper your spiritual advancement. Liberation

is never possible so long as this evil exists. Spirituality is in fact such a superfine state of mind that every other thing will seem to be heavier or grosser in comparison to it. The delicate feeling caused on the senses by the sweet smell of a rose is far heavier. I may express it as a state of perfect tranquillity and moderation, in complete harmony with nature. In this state of mind all senses and faculties are so to say in a sleeping (or dormant) state. Their working becomes automatic, bearing no impression upon the mind. Perfect peace is one of its high stages although the real thing is still onwards, when even the consciousness of peace fails. For the consciousness of peace, too, causes some weight upon the mind, though it is very insignificant. When we are really quite unconscious of the very presence of peace, we are in true sense free from the impression or the weight of the feeling. The condition at this stage is peculiar. It is really neither *Ānandam* (Bliss) nor the otherwise. Words fail to express the real condition at this stage. Such is the condition we have finally to achieve for which he and he alone can be a capable Guru, who is permanently abiding in the condition described above, and has the power

and capacity to transmit by his will force the spiritual states into the heart of the Abhyasi and to remove complexities and obstructions therefrom. None below this level is fit to impart spiritual training to others. It is a matter of greatest regret and pity that this age-old process of Yogic transmission originated and widely practised by our ancient sages has now gone into complete oblivion in the very land of its origin where today only but a few might feel inclined to believe it even. Some people try to ridicule it by misinterpreting it as nothing but mesmerism or hypnotism. I have explained this point in my book 'Efficacy of Rajyoga.' Here I may assure you that spiritual training for the attainment of higher stages is only possible by the process of Yogic transmission and by no other means. Frequent refernce to this process, in the present society of educated persons, has led certain religious teachers, today, to defend their inefficiency in this respect by explaining to the people that there is nothing peculiar about transmission. It generally happens, when you are in the company of a Mahatma or a saint, that you are to some extent relieved of your disturbing thoughts and feel comparatively calm for a

while. This they claim to be due to the effect of transmission by the Mahatma. Those who offer this explanation, mean only to deceive the public with a view to white-wash their incapacity. What they interpret as transmission is really the automatic radiation of the pious pramanus (fine particles) from the Mahatma. It affects all those assembled there with the result that calmness prevails to some extent so long as they are there. It is only a natural process and has nothing to do with transmission. It is not only from a Mahatma or saint that such Pramanus (fine particles) radiate but also from everyone whether pious or wicked, saintly or devilish. If you are for some time with an impious or morally degraded person you find similar impious Pramanus radiating from him and affecting you, with the result that you find your thoughts flowing in the same channel for the time being. The effect of such radiation remains only for a little while and disappears when you are away from it. This is the reason why often religious teachers are found to be making complaints of the indifference of the people to follow what they preach to them. They say that people, when they go back after hearing their Updesh

(sermons), cast off all they have heard then and there retaining nothing of it in their mind. I think it is not the people but the teacher or the Updeshak (preacher) who is really to be blamed for it, for he has not the capacity or power to transmit what he means to preach from the platform. Similar views are expressed in connection with Sankirtan performances. The peaceful atmosphere created on such occasions is claimed to be due to the effect of transmission. It is really the result of vibrations produced by the sound of singing in a chorus. We experience the same thing at all music parties which we attend. On such occasions our mind is mostly focussed on one and the same thing which is in our view, and we are, for the time being; unmindful of other things. In Sankirtan, as our thoughts are located on some pious ideal we begin to feel the same thing in our heart automatically. It has nothing to do with transmission. Power of transmission is a Yogic attainment of a very high order by which a Yogi can infuse by his own will force the Yogic energy or Godly effulgence within anyone and remove anything unwanted in him or detrimental to his spiritual progress. He can exercise this power

not only on those assembled around him but on those, too, who are away from him. The power can be utilized in any way at any time. One who has got command over this power can, at a glance, create temporarily or permanently, a condition of mind which is far ahead of the existing condition of the mind of an Abhyasi and which otherwise will require a lifetime to be achieved. It is not only a vain assertion but a bare fact and may at any time be practically verified by anyone who pleases to do so. Sages have often, through power of transmission changed the entire nature of a man at a mere glance. The wonderful examples of the great sages like my Master, Swami Vivekanand and others offer ample proof of it.

The solution of the problem as to what sort of man should be selected as a guide or Guru is not difficult to seek. When our eyes are fixed on the final goal we can never be satisfied with any one who appears to be short of the mark. Every saint or Yogi has got his own level of attainment and of self-elevation. If we attach ourselves with any one of them with faith and devotion and secure merging with his highest condition, we will ourselves attain correspond-

ing elevation. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to select one of the highest attainments as our Guru. If unfortunately we are somehow or other induced to select one of inferior attainments we will correspondingly be lagging behind in our final approach. Ordinarily a spiritual teacher should never consider himself fit for training others, unless he has secured his approach upto Brahmand Mandal at least (also known as Virät Desh) where everything appears in the subtle form before it actually takes place in this material world. When a teacher has connected himself with that plane or sphere, he is constantly in touch with the inexhaustible storehouse of power. On the other hand if a man takes up the job of training others in spirituality before acquiring this stage he not only begins to lose his own power but is contaminated with the Sanskars and grossness of those under his training, with the result that very soon he himself gets spoiled. In our mission permission to impart training is not generally granted at this stage even. Really a man is fit for the work of training only when he does not entertain in his heart the slightest impression of being a teacher or Guru. I believe that if the idea of being a

Guru crosses his mind even once in life he becomes unworthy of being a Guru for all his life. The very presence of this idea shows that he cherishes in his heart a feeling of self-importance or greatness. The consciousness of being a Master, if maintained, soon develops into pride, the crudest form of Ahankar, and consequently into its resultant defects, which are the worst drawbacks in a Guru. It is, therefore, essential for a man to get rid of these evils before he comes out into the field as a Guru. God is the real Guru or Master and we get ~~light~~ light from Him alone. But as it is extremely difficult for a man of ordinary talents to draw inspiration from God direct, we seek the help of one of our fellow beings who has established his connection with the Almighty. It is thus quite evident that if a man comes out as a Guru or Master he has usurped the position really due to God and as such it is nothing but mere blasphemy. He must, therefore, treat himself as the humblest servant of God, serving humanity in the name of the great Master. There will thus be no room for Ahankar and for its resultant evils which are unfortunately too common nowadays. Reality is totally absent where

these evils prevail. A Guru or teacher must, therefore, banish from his heart even the slightest feeling of greatness and superiority and consider himself as the humblest associate or a servant of humanity. My Master of revered memory was an example. All through his life he treated his associates as brethren. The idea that they were his disciples never once crossed his mind. He was ever ready to offer personal services even to his disciples and very often he did it without letting it come to their knowledge. I think and feel it as an essential thing for a Guru to give up his masterly position and feel himself an ordinary servant of humanity. His claim for personal service from the disciples has no justification except in cases of dire necessity and that too only to an extent to which he himself is prepared to render to his disciples. Most of the so-called Gurus nowadays encourage the practice because it offers them personal comfort and feeds their vanity. They say that by touching the feet of Guru, or by massaging his limbs the magnetic currents pass on from the Guru to the disciple which helps the disciple to form pious Sanskars. Thus by this practice the disciple draws in much of purity

and piety from his master. It may be true, but let me question them for a while whether the same thing is not possible if the Guru renders the same service to his disciple. I think none can dare deny it. Evidently then the motive at the back is nothing but personal comfort and ease. In my humble opinion the process should now be reversed in accordance with the need of the time and the Guru should himself render such services to his disciples. Really the position of Guru is very strange. If he feels himself as a Master and hence far above his associates, it will be an Ahankar of the worst type in a Guru. It is really the look-out of the disciple to devote himself to the service of his Guru with love and devotion and not the right or privilege of the Guru to demand it. I am reminded of an instance. A simpleton once approached one of such prevalent type of Gurus and offered to become his disciple. The Guru, delighted at the prospect of one more addition to his fold of Gurudom, began to teach him the duties of a disciple. "You should", he said, "be in complete submission to your Guru, attending all the time to his personal needs and services. You should prostrate before him every

morning and evening and go to bed after the Guru is asleep and get up before he wakes.” The poor fellow finding himself incapable of doing all this, innocently questioned, “What will be the result if I failed to act in strict accordance?” “You will be turned out and doomed” was the firm reply. “Then, Sir” he added politely, “It shall be very kind of you, if you accept me as a Guru.” We often come across instances of jealousies and frictions between a Guru and his disciple. What is all this due to? It is only on account of selfish interest or personal gain. A Guru must, therefore, necessarily be quite devoid of any personal motive or selfish interest. He must be totally free from all feelings of pride or greatness. He must be a selfless man and a true servant of humanity at large, teaching people out of pure love without any ulterior selfish motive of name, fame or money. He must have his access upto the farthest possible limit and must have the power of Yogic transmission. Such a man we must seek for as our guide if we want complete success. It is better to remain without a Guru all the life than to submit to the guidance of an unworthy Guru,

CHAPTER V

SPIRITUAL TRAINING

Our present moral and religious degradation is due mostly to our environments and to our wrong training. Proper moulding of mind is altogether neglected in all phases of education and training. Every possible effort is made to provide for worldly training of the right type in order to enable a man to secure a decent and comfortable living but the proper training required for the realization of self is totally neglected. Least significance, if at all, is attached to this most vital problem of life. Reciting daily a few verses in praise of a god or goddess or observing certain mechanical formalities by way of worship is all that the masses are taught to do. They do it for their whole life but probably without any gain whatsoever. Internal calmness still remains wanting in them. Activities of mind such as desires, temptations and emotional outbursts remain as they were ever before. The main purpose of training is that a man should begin to imbibe within him as much of godly attributes as possible. If this is not achiev-

ed the system of training is defective and consequently of no avail. Proper making of a man must be the natural result of the right type of training. Proper making comprises of the right moulding of mind with due moderation in the exercise of all our senses and faculties. Thus the right type of training under the guidance of a capable master is by far the most important factor in our proper making' without which higher attainments in spirituality are never possible. Most of the people have, in some way or the other, a natural inclination towards God, yet those who succeed in realizing God are very rare. The cause is defective guidance and wrong training which leads a man away from the real path with the result that he is lost for ever. Now for a man of ordinary capacity it is a pretty hard task to judge whether his training is rightly directed or not. A man tamely and unquestioningly follows the instructions of one whom he has accepted as his Guru and practises as he is required by him to do. It is very difficult for him to ascertain whether he is being guided along the right path or not. This is a great problem before the people who are themselves quite ignorant in matters concerning realization.

You will find numerous teachers of religion who will tell you not to eat garlic, onion or carrot and insist upon you to adopt Sadhanas and practices which have no real significance or a hundred other such triflings which will never lead you even a step nearer to reality. This is no training. Such teachers are really deceiving themselves as well as those whom they teach. You must be sure that unless internal peace, calmness of mind, simplicity and lightness follow as the natural result of your practices, you are proceeding on the wrong lines and that your training is defective.

Methods of spiritual training, commonly adopted by most of the teachers, today, are based on hard and fast rules which often do not correspond with our worldly life. Hence in most cases they prove to be impracticable for those leading a worldly life. Generally teachers induce people to practise restraint by adopting a particular form of living disconnected with worldly concerns and to practise devotion for hours together. Evidently such a type of training is not meant for people in general who cannot dissociate themselves from worldly ties or devote so much time to their devotional exercises. It is

for this reason that their preachings do not produce the desired effect and in spite of their best efforts they fail to mould them accordingly. The fact is that they are more theoretical than practical. Is it ever possible for the masses to renounce the world for the sake of liberation? Certainly not. What good then the common people derive from their teachings? Some of them are even bold enough to proclaim their mistaken notion that higher attainments in spirituality are not possible in a Grahastha Ashram or household life. It really means that they have nothing to impart to the common people except telling them certain superficial things such as frequent bath in the Ganges, feeding the fishes with flour pills or reading the scriptures over and over again. The real problem before us is not to provide means for the spiritual training of a chosen few who have renounced the world but of people in general whose duties in the world besides devotional are manifold and which they cannot safely ignore. They in fact fail in their duty if they neglect any of them. To them it is essential that their spiritual as well as worldly life must go side by side equally resplendent and for this we have to discover the right means.

Proper spiritual training, fitting closely with the present worldly life is, therefore, the only thing required for the spiritual growth of the common people and which has so far been unfortunately neglected. For such a type of training we stand in need of help from outside in most of the cases. This help comes from the Guru or the Master, who is the only person able to shape our destiny. When this help comes, the spiritual life is awakened and the higher powers of soul are roused to help our growth.

Such impulse is to be sought only from one of our own fellow beings of the highest calibre, who may be within our approach ready to solve our difficulties at any time. The practice of seeking inspiration or guidance from gods and demi-gods or from some departed soul treating it as Guru or master is in most cases very dangerous. Similar is the case with those also who seek guidance from their inner voice, as they call it. I have come across people who lay great stress upon their inner voice which they think to be the real guide in all controversial matters arising in the mind. We have concrete examples of people relying on their so-called inner voice who are found to have been misled in the spiri-

tual field. Really what they think to be their inner voice or an impulse from the departed soul is only the play of their undisciplined mind. This undesirable practice, if followed for some time makes the mind so much unduly powerful and over-active that it begins to question and answer by itself. This the people often misunderstand as a stage of Yogic attainment where one acquires the power to intercommune with departed souls. They are really far away from it. The inner voice or the voice of the real self is no doubt never misleading, but how many there are who are advanced enough to catch it. To most of those who profess to follow the inner voice it is quite inaudible. They are merely befooled by the wonder-working tendencies of the mind which can create anything and everything by itself. It can even present fearful ghosts to their view or make them hear strange voices in trees and stones. This is all due to the activities of the mind in its undisciplined and polluted state. Unless the coverings of Mal, Vikshēp and Āvaran are removed and the mind is brought to a state of perfect poise and moderation, inspiration or guidance from the inner voice is meaningless. Most of those

who pose to follow the inner voice or seek guidance from a departed soul are really following the dictates of their own unregulated and undisciplined mind. It is mere hallucination. If we develop this vicious habit we are lost for ever. It leads us to constant mental worry and harassment. I know of a gentleman, prominent among the so-called Bhaktas, who professed that he had secured direct connection with the soul of Tulsidas, the author of the Ramayan, whom he had taken as his Guru. He went on for some time feeling exultant over his supposed achievement. Later on a discord arose between him and his celestial Guru which soon developed into a bitter quarrel on account of which, as he used to say he was constantly belaboured and harassed mentally with the result that his mental equilibrium was almost shattered and he felt extremely miserable. It was after two years of hard labour with him that he was cured of this evil. Then he was able to understand that it was all an illusion or self-deception and what he understood to be the inspiration from the soul of Tulsidas, was really the magic play of his own undisciplined mind. Since he has been relieved of that miserable state he now feels peace and tranquillity

restored to him. The inner voice is in fact the voice of the mind in its perfectly pure state. Unless the mind is cleared of all pollutions and defilements and is brought to a state of perfect peace and moderation, it can never reflect the inner voice. In fact for one whose mind is perfectly pure, it is his inner voice alone that always speaks and the impulse from highly developed liberated souls continues to flow to him continuously. The practice is thus evidently, very dangerous and in most cases leads to disastrous results.

The realization of God which has so far been considered to be extremely difficult, requiring hard labour and persistent efforts for many lives, is not really so. God is simple and can be achieved by equally simple means. The hard and fast rules of life and tiring practices prescribed by teachers for realization have really made matters so complicated that people are led to believe it to be beyond their power and capacity. I may assure you very sincerely that realization is not at all a difficult thing only if you earnestly divert your attention to it. Iron will to achieve the goal together with proper means and guidance is the only thing required

for the complete success. Spiritual training starts with inner cleaning or the purification of 'Chakras' which is the most essential factor in spiritual advancement. Thus the right type of training in spirituality begins with inner cleaning which, if neglected, will lead to abuse of power acquired through Yogic means. Hath Yoga lays down mostly physical practices to effect cleaning, some of which are too hard and tedious for all and sundry ; while under the system of 'Sahaj Marg' it is accomplished by easy mental practices, aided by the power transmitted by the teacher. Some of the teachers of religion often insist upon the people to devote as many as eight hours a day to practise certain mechanical exercises in order to keep their mind occupied in Divine thoughts. I strongly condemn the type of training which enforces practices that tax the brain or overburden the mind. The natural result of such training is that mind finds no scope for expansion and consequently the power of realization grows dull. It is just like thrashing a boy in order to induce him to concentrate. Strenuous labour with long and tedious physical practices as commonly recommended by teachers in order to effect the mould-

ing of mind or the cleaning of the Chakras, is consequently not of much avail. For this purpose we utilize our thought power in a proper way, under the guidance of a powerful Master who is capable of removing complexities and entanglements that hinder our progress and who transmits into us the necessary force for the upkeep of our spiritual life. This simplified course of spiritual training has rendered the highest spiritual flight possible for every one whether man, woman, young or old, Grahastha or Virakta (recluse).

The preliminary step in the right type of training is that the aspirant's tendencies of mind be directed towards God. For this the learned teachers of religion mostly prescribe physical practices of body and mind, picked up from religious books. People often find it a hard task to follow them and thus they remain lingering on indefinitely in the very beginning with no further progress. A capable teacher should do this by his own effort exercising the power of transmission in order to create a permanent and deep-rooted effect. When our mind is directed towards God we naturally begin to feel ourselves in touch with the Supreme Power in all our

actions and workings. When this state of mind is permanently established within, every act we do, will then seem to be a part of devotion or Divine offering and we shall thereby be in constant remembrance of God all the while. Inner vibrations in the heart soon begin to be felt by the aspirant. This is the beginning of the spiritual state known as Shabda or Ajapa (अजपा). It develops automatically as we proceed along the right path under proper guidance. Certain people who practise Japa outwardly for a long time, sometimes find that even during sleep they go on with Japa as usual. This they misunderstand as Ajapa or Shabda. It is not really so. By constant practice, their heart and tongue become habituated to it and the action continues even when they are in sleep or otherwise unconscious. It, however, stops if they give up the practice for some time. This is only by the force of the habit and is not the actual state of Ajapa. The condition of Ajapa rightly believed to be a high spiritual achievement acquired after years of hard labour, is only a matter of weeks or rather days, through right training by the process of transmission. The vibrations thus created remain for some time

located in the heart after which they gradually develop over to other Chakras and finally to every particle of the body. It is then known as Anhad (अनहद). The method to be pursued as recommended in our Mission is meditation under efficient guidance which is by far the most useful and probably the only means of securing complete success.

Generally people complain of the numerous ideas creeping into their mind at the time of meditation. They think that they have failed in their practice unless they bring their mind to a standstill. But it is not so. We are not practising concentration but only meditation. We must go on with meditation unmindful of the foreign ideas that happen to come to our mind at the time. The flow of ideas is due to the activities of our conscious mind which is never at rest. We are still busy in meditation with our subconscious mind, while our conscious mind is roaming about and forming numerous ideas. Thus we are not the loser in any way. In due course, after sufficient practice, the conscious mind too gets moulded and begins to act in harmony with the subconscious mind. The result thus achieved is deep-rooted and lasting, and finally calmness,

the characteristic of soul becomes predominant. In certain cases I have observed the teachers exercising their will-power to stop the normal functioning of the mind during sittings, creating a temporary state of senselessness or suspension of brain. The condition, no doubt, is most attractive to a beginner, who is ignorant of reality, and he feels greatly impressed by this extraordinary display of power. In my opinion it is only a feat of jugglery practised by those who are eager to attract the largest number of disciples in order to establish their greatness as a Guru. I would call it the greatest misuse of power on the part of a spiritual teacher who has perhaps no other underlying motive than self-predominance. It is a wrong practice and greatly harmful to the spiritual advancement of an aspirant. Ideas thus suppressed or suspended, soon begin to react with greater force, spoiling the entire system. Besides the practice creates internal heaviness and dullness of mind. One who is subject to such a practice for a long time loses sense of discrimination and his power of realization gets blunt. In course of time he gets completely spoiled and quite unfit for the real spiritual training. If a man does not grow

lighter day by day he must conclude that he is receiving a wrong type of spiritual training. Constant growth of lightness of mind and spirit is the surest test of spiritual progress.

Thus the real spiritual training is that which makes our mind disciplined and regulated, restores moderation in senses and faculties and creates lightness of spirit. Then alone internal peace and calmness is ensured and higher approach is possible. For this, the medium of a worthy master of high calibre, having the power of transmission at his command is absolutely essential and to him the aspirant must surrender with full faith and confidence.

Some people think that initiation alone is enough to solve their problem of life. If they are able somehow or other to secure initiation with a Guru, they do not stand in need of any further effort or practice. They think that a push by the Guru will in the end extricate them from the entanglements of Sanskars and Maya and lead them on to liberation. The notion though literally true, may not be very encouraging unless you completely surrender to him and the master too is of a specially high calibre. The thought of the betterment and progress of the disciple is, n o

doubt, the uppermost in the heart of the master for which he exerts himself as far as possible but that does not mean that we may remain idle doing nothing ourselves and leave our share of work too upon him. We must, as our duty, try our utmost to save him from unnecessary exertion on our account in as much as we can do ourselves for our advancement and should in no case neglect our part of the duty.

Most of the teachers of religion have adopted artificial methods for developing certain spiritual conditions in an aspirant but it is a very defective process. For example, in order to practise Gyan (Gnosticism) and create within the aspirant the state of Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahm) they advise him to meditate outwardly, thinking the same thing all the while and repeating the same words every moment. This is a mechanical process and leads to internal grossness. The real state of Aham Brahmasmi is never created by such artificial means. The repetition of the words over and over again helps him to form a habit of tongue and the same words slip out every moment. It is absurd to conclude that thereby he has become Gyani (gnostic) in the real sense. They may repeat the words a hundred times and

force their thoughts every moment to imagine everything as Brahm but still they may be as far away from it as ever. The practice creates an artificial atmosphere around him which helps him to imagine the same thing outwardly. The condition disappears if he gives up the habit of repeating the words again and again. It is, therefore, quite evident that the state of Aham Brahmasmi thus supposed to be created is not really genuine but only false and imaginary. Besides, even the real state of Aham Brahmasmi, which is commonly supposed to be a very high attainment is not really so. At this stage a man, though relieved to some extent of the entanglements of Maya, is not actually beyond its final limits. Consciousness of self still exists at this stage which is nothing but grossness, though in a very subtle form. Those who preach it from the platform as the highest form of Gyan beyond which little remains to be achieved are grossly mistaken. It is not our destination, but we only pass by it to embark upon the next stage. Those who stick to it thinking it to be Reality or the final goal are committing a serious blunder. We have finally to arrive at a point where everything ends, including this idea of Aham or 'I'.

Such is the state of complete negation which we have finally to attain and where the cry of Aham or 'I' will be quite out of tune. The state of Aham-Brahmasmi is originally caused by consciousness (or Chetanyata) which automatically develops within us as we march along the path under proper guidance. It produces vibrations within, with the result that the mind begins to echo the same vibrations. This state of mind appears at every stage of spiritual progress in three forms, 'I am Brahma', 'All is Brahma' and 'All from Brahma'. The entire state in all its three aspects is in fact unity in diversity in different forms. It appears in a crude form in Pind Desh ; in Brahmand Mandal it becomes finer and more subtle ; while in Par Brahma Mandal it becomes extremely subtle. All these conditions end within the first of the sixteen circles as shown by the diagram in Chapter II.

The right course of training for an aspirant of spirituality, therefore, is to proceed along the path of realization under the guidance of a true and worthy master in the most natural way, with due regard to inner cleanliness or purification of Chakras and complete moderation in the exercise of the senses and other faculties.

CHAPTER VI

FAITH

Will, faith and confidence are the elementary factors which contribute to an easy success on the path of realization. Strong will to achieve reality means that we are inwardly awakened to the thought of recognizing self. We proceed on with the idea and select a path. The very first thing to be looked to, seriously, is that the path we select is the right one, leading directly to our goal. It is, therefore, quite essential to have in our mind a clear and definite conception of the final goal. Now the final goal of different people may be different in many respects, and consequently, means to achieve it may also be different. We have thus to select the right path leading directly to the final goal for which we aspire. Hasty judgment in the matter often leads to disappointing results, for it is just possible that the path you have been persuaded to adopt may not be the right one leading to your destination. Often by adopting a wrong course you lose sight of the real thing and are led into false conceptions and illusions.

If you persist on the same course your final approach to reality becomes impossible. This often happens when you unfortunately fall under defective guidance and wrong training. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary at the very outset to try every possible means to judge that the path you have adopted for realization is really the right one. Do not follow a path because it is the oldest, for the oldest one may be most ill-suited to the changed conditions of the world and the society. Do not follow a path because it has been followed by the majority of men, for the majority may not always be right and is more often led by only a chosen few who in all possibility might have been misled. We must be thoroughly considerate in judging the merits of a thing, applying all possible means at our disposal. We should never come to a hasty conclusion without due consideration and trial, through the help of reason and experience. When we are, finally convinced of the merits of the thing we may stick to it with faith and constancy. Faith thus reposed shall be genuine and lasting while faith promoted by inducement offered by outwardly attractive features and display of pretty materialistic achieve-

ments is no faith at all but may rightly be termed as persuasion. It has no stable foundation to rest upon and disappears under ordinary adverse circumstances.

Gross type of worships of idols in the solid material shapes and rigid adherence to forms, symbols and rituals do not actuate real faith. It is pure and simple materialism which promotes prejudice, and not the true faith in the heart of those who pursue it. They believe blindly in what they are induced to, without applying their reason or judgment and are not in the least inclined even to consider any other course. I find people acknowledging the efficacy of certain other means of direct approach to Reality but still they are not prepared to follow them because, as they say, they cannot get away from the path they have already adopted. They have, in fact, no faith in reality but only faith in forms and symbols which may rightly be termed as prejudice. It means that their vision has become limited and they do not want to rise high to seek Reality. Their fate is sealed and they remain in the same confined sphere for ever. In fact, what keeps us down, checking us from rising higher cannot be termed as

faith. It is consequently very essential for every one to fix his eyes on Absolute Reality with faith and confidence and to adopt ways, helpful and conducive to self-realisation. We then march on upto the final point where we assume the same pure form we had at the time of creation. For that we have to renounce necessarily all our belongings of Sanskars, Maya and egoism, and grow lighter and lighter at every step. Heaviness of mind or internal denseness caused by gross forms of worship is thus a great impediment to our spiritual advancement and should be avoided. If they maintain it with ever-increasing intensity they remain entangled in the thorny bushes of grossness and deception far removed from the realm of perpetual bliss.

The other important factor of a spiritual life is faith in the Master, for as I have already said before, the help of a capable master is indispensable for higher spiritual attainments. He is the only medium through whom the divine impulse comes to an aspirant. It is, therefore, but essential that the guide we select should be one of highest capability and practical attainments. To judge the real worth of the guide we must associate with him for some time try-

ing and testing him by all means in our power. When we are thus convinced of his capabilities through reason and experience we may accept him as our master and submit to his guidance. If we disregard this principle we are likely to be deceived in our judgment. We must never follow any one blindly having been attracted towards him by his outward imposition and display of knowledge. For proper judgment of the true merits of a man we must take into account his practical attainments in the spiritual field. We must seek in him the real thing, we crave for. When we are thus convinced we naturally begin to feel an inward attraction for him and think him to be the very person who can shape our destiny. The feeling gradually develops into faith and we begin to love him. We submit to his views with due regard to his personality and proceed along the path under his guidance. The experience of achievements gained during the course convinces us further of the extraordinary capacities of the master and we begin to look upon him as a superhuman being. Our faith now is greatly helpful to us in our spiritual progress. It dispels clouds of doubt and uncertainty and removes

difficulties and obstructions from our path. Faith is really the foundation of the entire structure of spirituality. Faith in reality, faith in the right course you have adopted for realisation, faith in the worthy Master whom you have submitted to ; this is the rock upon which you must build your edifice of spirituality if you really aim at success. You will thereby be possessed of an internal force, strong enough to shatter all the forces of evil that might be surrounding you. It will help you to draw fresh divine impulse whenever you require it.

Some people take a very erroneous view of faith. They believe that faith alone is enough to solve their problem of life no matter what the path they have adopted, or the guide they have submitted to might be. Nothing probably can be more misleading than this absurd belief. Is it ever possible for a man to reach Calcutta by taking up just the opposite direction ? Can a man ever become a selfless saint by submitting himself to the guidance of a self-seeking impostor ? Can a man ever free himself from the bonds of attachment, prejudice and pride by following a self-conceited hypocrite inspired with the feelings of attachment with worldly objects and of self-

aggrandizement. We must never be led away by a mere outward glittering aspect of a thing but should go deep into it to discover reality at the bottom. Inducement based on outward show of knowledge, eloquence or power, promotes blind faith which in most cases leads to disastrous results. A conscientious man will never allow himself to be led away blindly into delusion by such false impositions which have no real significance in the spiritual field. Blind faith is no doubt greatly advantageous only when the path you have adopted is by accident the right one and the guide you have selected is really the proper person of the highest calibre who is devoid of all feelings of attachment and pride. Your unshakable faith in such a Master shall then lead you to the farthest limit of spiritual attainment for you shall then associate yourself with reality.

Faith, in true sense, is a lively link connecting the mortal with the Immortal. It is no doubt effected through the medium of the Master who is himself connected with the Immortal. The link when once connected cannot be broken under any condition and subsists all along during the course of our march upto the final point. It is one of the six sampattis of the third sadhan of yoga. At

this stage, faith is real and genuine and is so firmly established that a man cannot even for a moment get away from it. The reasons for this are, however, beyond his understanding. Before this stage, faith is really artificial and is formed, lost or regained many a time for a variety of reasons. A worthy master shall never rely upon it and shall put up with all the emotional outbursts of love and devotion, of a disciple, looking forward patiently for the time when he comes up to the final stage of Shradha (faith) as depicted in the four Sadhans of yoga when the real faith begins to assume the form of self-surrender. True faith is really an unspeakable virtue which is beyond the scope of religion; it is the dauntless courage which leads us on to success; it is that ubiquitous force which makes our path smooth; it is in fact the only thing that solves our problem of life.

CHAPTER VII

CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE

The hard and miserable life of most of the people, engaged in different worldly pursuits keeps them so much occupied with their problems of life that they are often led to believe that they can hardly spare time for devotion and worship except at the cost of some vital interest or pecuniary gain, which they cannot safely afford to ignore. This notion keeps them away from the path of duty although sometimes they become seemingly conscious of it. Their minds are absorbed every moment in thinking about the various problems of their material life and are seldom directed towards God except when they are in deep distress or misery. The reason is that they attach primary importance to their worldly interest alone which constantly remains in their view. Thus they remain entangled within the Maya without ever thinking of getting out of it at any stage. If we divert our attention towards God and feel realization as the primary object of life, naturally we shall begin to look upon it as the first and the foremost thing in comparison to

everything else in the world. It does not mean that we should become unmindful of our worldly responsibilities and neglect our duty in that respect, causing trouble and misery to those depending upon us for support. We must ever remain alive to our sense of duty to them as much as to God but without any undue attachment. For this we must snatch a few minutes from our hours of rest (preferably at bed-time) and pray to God with a sincere heart for his guidance and support on the path of duty. If we do it regularly with a heart full of love and devotion, the prayer shall never go unheard.

When we thus get awakened to the sense of duty and the idea of God becomes prominent in our hearts, we begin to treat realization as the primary object of life. Naturally our craving for it begins to grow stronger and stronger and we are thus led to frequent remembrance of God during our routine of daily work in spite of all our engagements and worries. Diversion from the path of duty is in fact not due to circumstances or outside engagements, but only to the misdirected activities of the undisciplined mind. Mere consciousness of God cures many of the evils of the mind and removes difficulties from

our path. We have thus to become conscious of God for the most part of the day during all our worldly activities.

Frequent remembrance of God, though greatly helpful, is not all that we need for our final success in realization. We generally begin an important thing in the name of God and it is customary almost in every religion to do so. But that is only a matter of formality and has no real significance. We never dedicate the thing to God in the real sense and at heart we are in fact quite away from the idea of God. Remembrance of God thus is of no avail. The real significance of the custom is that we must remain in touch with the idea of God in all phases of our mental and physical activities. We must feel ourselves connected with the Supreme Power every moment with an unbroken chain of thought during all our activities. It can be easily accomplished if we treat all our actions and work to be a part of Divine duty, entrusted to us by the Great Master whom we are to serve as best as we can. Service and sacrifice are the two main instruments with which we build the temple of spirituality, love of course being the fundamental basis. Any kind of service, if done selflessly,

is helpful. Service carries with it the sense of worship. Service to fellow being is service to God in the real sense, if it is not done out of any selfish motive. Whatever, we do in our daily routine of work, is in relation with some of our fellow beings, be they our children, friends or relations. If we think that while doing a work we are really serving one or the other of the God's creatures and not our own purpose, we are all along following the path of service, although we are outwardly busy with our usual routine of work. Almost all our activities in life are connected with providing means of livelihood for our children and dear ones. So if we treat them as children of God, who are entrusted to our care and whom we have to provide for and look after as if duty bound, we are then serving His children, and thereby God himself. We shall thereby get rid of undue attachment too and shall thus remove one of the greatest obstacles from our path. The process, though easy and simple, will lead you also to constant thought of the Supreme Master in all your activities. If this thing gets rooted deep in your heart, every action of yours will then seem to be a duty merely for duty's sake, in accord-

ance with the divine dictate without any selfish interest or personal attachment. Universal love, then becomes predominant and we begin to love every being of the God's creation without any feeling of attachment with it. It leads us to devotion and sacrifice. Devotion makes our passage smooth and creates a channel for the Godly current to flow into our heart. It removes dirt and refuse from our way and facilitates our march along the path. The refuse is really the effect of the conflicting ideas which create disturbances and worries in our minds. By meditation we create a temporary lull in our mind and calmness prevails for the time during which we are in touch with the divine force. But meditation only at a certain fixed hour is not enough, for we are thus in touch with the sacred thought only for a while after which we have no idea of God whatsoever and are for the most part of the day away from the path of service and devotion. This is the reason why often after years of practice we still find ourselves at the lowest level of spiritual attainment. What, in fact, we feel during meditation is only simplicity and calmness, if we are rightly guided by a capable master. But an aspirant is generally unable to

understand it, for it is beyond his conception at the early stages. The effect thus being imperceptible he often complains that he feels nothing during meditation. This is chiefly due to the fact that he remains in touch with the divine force only for a few minutes of practice. Thus the real thing gained during meditation remains with him only for a while. On the other hand, there is a man who tries to retain the effect, gained by meditation, for the most part of the day, and abides in the same state for as long as he can. He is, in a way, in constant remembrance of God and his progress is easy and rapid.

Some people think that constant or even frequent remembrance of God is not practicable when a man in life is surrounded by numerous worries and anxieties caused by worldly attachments and responsibilities. But practice and experience will prove to them that it is a very easy process and can be followed by any and every one in spite of all worries and engagements only if they divert their attention towards God in the real sense.

The idea of Guru as the Supreme Divine force is very helpful in spiritual pursuit. You

depend upon his guidance thinking him to be a super-human being. If you go on with your busy routine of life dedicating everything to your Master, imagine what good will it bring to you in the long run. While doing a thing, think that you are not doing it for yourself, but for your Master, rather think that your Master himself is doing it for himself. While at the breakfast table you must think that your Master is breaking his fast. When you go to the office, think that your Master is doing all this. While returning from the office, suppose you see an attractive dance in the way. Your eyes are caught by the charming appearance of the dancer. Your thoughts seem to be diverted for a while. Then also think that your Master and not you is seeing the dance. You will at once lose curiosity for it, because your Master's power will begin to flow in to relieve you of the temptation. When you come back from office your children rejoice to see you after so many hours. You too enjoy their merriments and it is but natural. Your attention is, for a while diverted towards them and you feel a bit away from the sacred thought. What you are to do then is to think that your Master within is him-

self enjoying and you shall be in touch with the same sacred thought again. If you are chatting with your friend, think that your Master, not you, is talking to him. While walking, think that your Master himself is walking. During meditation, if you entertain the idea that not you but your Master himself is meditating on his own form, it shall bring about excellent results. Similarly you can adjust yourself in all your routine of work. If you cultivate this feeling and maintain the outlook that your Master is doing everything in your place, you shall not only be in constant remembrance all the while, but your actions will cause no impression whatsoever and very soon you will cease making further Sanskars.

The process, if earnestly followed, will constantly keep the Master's form in your vision and you will feel his presence within and all about. Though in fact the real Master is not merely his outward physical form, but his inner self, still it is almost impossible to ignore the form altogether. But those who stick to the idea of the physical form alone as the Master create for themselves the grossest entanglements and complications. Kabir Das has rightly

termed such persons as Guru Pashu. But if the Master is a great divine soul who has secured his merger in Absolute Reality, meditation on his form is, by far, of greatest advantage to the disciples. His body, though gross in outward appearance is really as fine and subtle in character as his inner self. If you meditate on the form of such a Master, you not only begin to lose your own grossness but also begin to imbibe within you the finest condition of his inner self. The form taken up in view will after some time disappear from the sight and you will gradually embark on the plane of pure Reality. I have discussed it in my book 'Commentary on the Ten Commandments of Sahaj Marg', how the form disappears from view when you look at a thing constantly for some time. Thus automatically from the outward form, we travel inwards and then to the real point, where everything disappears.

CHAPTER VIII
SELF-SURRENDER

We practise Bhakti or devotion in order to achieve communion with the Supreme Master. We look upon Him with faith and reverence. By degrees we become so closely intimated to Him that every other object loses prominence in our eyes. This is submission to the will of the Master, or in other words the beginning of self-surrender. It goes on developing as our faith grows stronger. It brings us to a stationary condition stopping the oscillations of the mind. In due course we begin to feel ourselves overpowered by some great force which drives our mind away from everything else. We become free of the unwanted activities sticking all the time to the right functioning of the organs (the Indriyas). Self-surrender is nothing but a state of complete resignation to the will of the Master, with total disregard of self. A permanent stay in this condition leads to the beginning of the state of negation. When we surrender ourselves to the great Master we begin to attract a constant flow of highest divine force from Him. In this

state a man thinks or does only that which is his Master's will. He feels nothing in the world to be his belonging but everything as a sacred trust from the Master and he does everything thinking it to be his Master's bidding. His will becomes completely subservient to the will of the Master. A beautiful example of surrender is presented to us by Bharat, the son of Dashrath, when he went to the forest along with the people of Ayodhya to induce his brother Rama to return. In reply to the entreaties of the people Rama gravely replied that he would be quite willing to return to the capital provided Bharat asked him to do so. All eyes were turned towards Bharat, who was himself there to induce him to return. But he calmly replied, "It is not for me to command but only to follow."

The Bhagwat Gita, too, deals with the state of surrender. It is not an ordinary thing to be achieved easily. It begins after complete negation of all senses and faculties for which we proceed by elementary rules of devotion. We submit to our master, thinking him to be a super-human being. We love him with faith and reverence trying by all means to attract his attention and favour. For this purpose we connect

our link with him in the light of the worldly relationship only for the sake of facility. We think of him as father, brother, master or beloved. The process, if taken up in right earnest, is greatly helpful to a disciple. The strong link of attraction thus established leads him to a state of devotion and surrender. The conception of a Guru as a mother is in my opinion by far the most appropriate and advantageous to a disciple. A mother is the very embodiment of love and affection. Only a mother's heart can forbear with patience all the troubles and miseries caused to her by her son, thinking all the while of trying to provide for her son's comfort and happiness. The same is the position of the real Master or Guru who is the spiritual mother of the disciple. As such the Guru is always on the look-out for the spiritual welfare of the child, the disciple. It is due to the affectionate attachment of the Guru with his disciple that the attention of the great Father, with whom his spiritual mother is so closely connected, is directed towards him. A mother's affection is well known but people know but a little of the Guru's affection and still less of God's affection. The functions of a mother and of a true Guru are closely

similar. The mother retains a child within her womb for a certain duration. The Guru, too, retains the spiritual child within his mental sphere for a certain duration. During this period the disciple, like the baby in the womb, sucks his energy and gets nourishment from the spiritual waves of the Guru's thoughts. When the time matures he is born in the brighter world and thence his own spiritual life begins. If the disciple enters the mental sphere of the Guru, surrendering all his belongings to him, it takes only seven months to deliver him into the brighter world. But the process is generally delayed for a considerable time because while in the Guru's mental sphere the disciple retains the consciousness of his own thoughts and feelings. Thus we find that the position of the Guru is much the same as that of a mother. The conception of the Guru as a spiritual mother promotes within us, the feelings of love, reverence and surrender which are the main factors of a spiritual life.

Sages have classified the disciples under two main heads, the Manmat and the Gurumat. The former are those who approach the Guru with some particular worldly end in view such as

relief from worldly misery, desire for wealth, etc. They submit to him only so long as they are hopeful in the achievement of their desires. When they meet disappointment in this respect they are off. For such disciples the question of obedience or submission even does not arise, what to say of surrender. Gurumat disciples are those who obey the commands of the Master in all matters and try to submit to his will in all possible ways. Submission begins with obedience. When we are deeply impressed by the great powers of a Master of higher attainments in spirituality we feel inwardly inclined to follow his biddings. But often the effect remains upon us only when we are in his presence and when we are away we become unmindful of him. Repeated association with him for some time brings us in closer touch with the great soul and his supremacy begins to be established upon our heart. We accept him as our guide in all matters pertaining to our spiritual advancement. The result is that we remember him frequently. When we are perfectly convinced of his superior capabilities only then our submission in true sense begins. We go on with it and practise as we are directed. We think of pleasing him by

our actions. The idea of right or wrong too begins to assume prominence in our heart and we feel inclined to refrain from evil. We consequently adopt the line of virtue so that we might be able to please our great Master. It is our primary motive for we wish to be saved from the miseries of the next life.

But, so far, we reserve to ourselves the right of discretion and are, therefore, responsible for all our actions whether good or bad. At a higher stage of self-surrender such a discretionary power becomes almost extinct and a man does everything thinking it to be his Master's will. The question of right or wrong does not at all arise in his mind for it becomes absolutely certain that by following his Master's will, he is doing the only right thing and he does nothing but the right, feeling it to be his Master's will.

CHAPTER IX REALISATION

We hear almost everybody talking in some way or the other about God, the soul and the mystery of the Universe. But if we are in quest of one who has realized God or is acquainted with Him we will probably find none such among them. This is the reason why there is constant feud among the representatives of different religions. They talk a good deal about God but inwardly they might be no better than a down-right atheist. They acknowledge His existence in words but at heart they seem to be totally unmindful of His existence. To them the only utility of God is when they are in distress or misery. They expect Him on such occasions to attend to their call to remove their troubles. They pray to Him chiefly for the supply of their wants. It is really far from the idea of true love and devotion. A true devotee is one who loves Him not for any favour or worldly interest but merely for love's sake. He always remains in a state of complete resignation to His will. He is perfectly contented with

all that is bestowed upon him whether good or bad, joyful or unpleasant. Joy or sorrow is meaningless to him. Everything is a boon to him from his Beloved. Such complete resignation and unquestioning attitude in all matters is the highest form of devotion. Resignation does not, however, mean that he should remain idle, doing nothing himself and depending all the time upon God, thinking that God will send to him all that he requires if He so wills. God helps those who help themselves is a common saying which is literally true. We are failing in our sacred duty if we do not exert ourselves for the discharge of our responsibilities pertaining either to this or to the next world. The only thing which should be borne in mind is that we work in accordance with the will of God and feel contented with the result whatever it might be. When we come upto this level we may rightly think ourselves to be true devotees of the Supreme Master, and hence on the right path leading to Reality. Reality is not a thing to be perceived through physical organs of sense but it can only be realized in the innermost core of the heart. We have, therefore, to go deep into it to solve our problem of life.

We have in our mind an idea of this great Universe which is, as we all know, the material manifestation of God. Generally we look upon it as Maya or illusion to distinguish it from the unchanging absolute Reality. People have tried to define Maya in numerous different ways, not perhaps without some reasonable basis. It is really a Godly power which has brought into existence the entire creation in its different forms and shapes and which regulates its entire working. We are all the while surrounded by this great power and its effect is visible in all phases of our activity. We are whirling round within the glossy sphere of Maya, clinging at times to one or the other of the objects in view thinking it to be Reality. Our senses, feelings and emotions give it a new colouring and mould our actions accordingly. We remain entangled within the snare of Maya, without any hope of emancipation until we divert our attention towards the unchanging Reality at the root. This vast circle of material manifestation, the direct result of Maya, is unlimited. In it we go round and round with ceaseless motion like the rim of a wheel, ever farther and farther away from the pivot. Just as every circle must

have a centre, so must this vast circle of manifestation have a centre or base. If we are able to discover it we may possibly find a clue for the solution of our problem. The whole of the science of mathematics rests upon the little base, the zero. Now for this limitless Universe we have to trace out a zero or base from which all planes of existence have started. Again the centre of a circle, if observed minutely, is in itself another smaller or finer circle. As such it must have another still finer centre for it. The same process continues up to infinity. In other words each of the finer or smaller circles serves as a centre of a bigger external circle. Reason or imagination fails to trace out an origin or end. Thus behind this solid material Universe there is another finer or more subtle Universe which is the cause or the centre of this outer universe. Again for that finer circle there must be another centre, represented by a still finer circle and so on. Putting it the other way, there may thus be innumerable circles one after the other, round the unimaginable finest point, the centre within, each circle in turn serving as the centre of the next outer circle, till we come to the present.

solid form of existence. What we have to do now is to trace our steps back from the present gross form of existence to the previous finer and still finer form up to the farthest possible limit of human approach. In our present state of existence we are revolving round and round within the sphere of grossness. Our only hope lies in pushing our way right across towards the centre or the root cause crossing the finer regions one after the other. That is the essence of the spiritual science. The root cause of the entire universe from the finest to the grossest is the innermost centre, the base or zero. We may call it as God or Brahm.

The composition of a man also is exactly the same as that of the universe. Just as behind this solid external universe there are innumerable others of the finer and still finer type, so behind this gross physical form of a man there are numerous finer and still finer forms of existence. The outermost form is the gross body (or Sthool Sharir) behind which there exist the astral body (Sookshm Sharir) and the causal body (Karan Sharir). Besides these three outer forms there are innumerable other ones which are so fine and subtle that thinkers do not call

them as bodies but only as fine coverings round the soul. It is really very difficult to put a name for each one of them which may be countless. With all these innumerable forms, from the finest to the grossest, the man is in existence in the material world as a true copy of the universe or the entire manifestation of God represented by a complete circle from the outermost circumference to the innermost centre or zero. Now the innermost centre or zero of a man's existence and that of God's manifestation is really the same. Realisation of God means the same as the realization of Self and *vice versa*. All the universe came into existence from the same point, the zero, through the process of evolution. Similarly man's existence too developed from the same point.

Before the time of creation the only thing in existence was the root cause and the whole universe as we see it today was merged in it in the most subtle form, everything losing its individual identity. Now the centre, like the tiny seed of the tree included within itself the whole of the universe, in the most subtle form. It was thus the extremely abridged form of the same expanded manifestation as we see today.

Thus the centre, the latent motions and the entire creation in the most subtle form all combined together as one unit, led to be the cause of creation when time came. At the time of creation everything began to assume a form of existence. Man also assumed his individual existence. The consciousness of individuality was the first covering in the composition of the man. Further additions continued one after the other. Egoism began to develop and ultimately assumed a grosser form. The working of mind, senses and faculties began to contribute their share towards grossness. Actions of the body and mind led to the formation of Sanskars. Finally now the man exists in the grossest form, consisting of the outer gross body and inner finer bodies and coverings. Now from this outer solid state of existence we march right towards the centre passing through finer states one after the other. From gross body we come to the mind body and then to the causal body growing finer or more subtle at every step and proceed on further, dealing with other coverings.

The process generally adopted for it is classified under three heads, Karma (action) Upasna (devotion) and Gyan (knowledge) which

offer common basis for all the different religions and creeds. The four elementary means (Chausadhān) adopted for the purpose are almost the same everywhere.

The first of these Sadhans is Vivek (discrimination). We see many things in the world but when we think of their existence we find that they are changeable, *i.e.*, they are the different forms of Maya, as we generally call them. We are thus inwardly induced to go deeper in order to trace out the cause. Our attention is thus diverted from transitory things to that which is unchanging or eternal. Worldly objects thus begin to lose their charm and we feel in a way unattached with them. This brings us to the state of Vairagya (renunciation) which is known as the second of the four Sadhans. The state of Vairagya is also brought about by certain other causes too. For example, when we are fed up with worldly objects after indulging in them to our heart's content we sometimes begin to feel an inward repulsion towards them. In such cases our attention is naturally diverted towards some nobler ideal and we feel a bit awakened to Godly thought. Secondly when we have been deeply pricked by the treachery

and faithlessness of the world we feel disgusted and inwardly averse to worldly things. Feeling of dissatisfaction and detachment also develops when we are in a state of bereavement on account of the death of some of our dear ones. But Vairagya created under such circumstances is seldom genuine or lasting. It soon disappears with the change of adverse circumstances. There is a story which relates that a certain man wanted to see Kabirdas. When he reached his house he was informed that Kabirdas had gone with a funeral party to the cremation ground to burn the dead body of one of his deceased relations. The man proceeded to the cremation ground to see him there. But as he had never seen him before he thought it might be difficult for him to recognise Kabirdas among the party. For the purpose, he was told that he should look to the halo round everybody's face. The halo round the face of each one of the party would be found glowing as they proceeded towards the cremation ground, but would grow dimmer and dimmer and finally disappear as they returned. Only the halo round Kabir's face would remain glowing all through with equal lustre. Thus the feeling of Vairagya

actuated by such sudden causes is generally short-lived and changes with the change of circumstances. For though the sudden shock temporarily creates a feeling of Vairagya the seed of desires and enjoyments still lies buried deep within the heart and may sprout forth immediately when it finds a congenial atmosphere. The feeling of Vairagya in the real sense and with the lasting results can only be developed after thorough cleaning and due moderation.

Vedantists practise Vairagya in a different way. They force their imagination to believe that everything they see is Maya, hence transitory or false and conclude that reality at the bottom is Brahm. They apply their power of will to strengthen the thought so much so that they get habituated to it, causing modification in outward actions and habits only. Hence the effect is mostly mere external. It may, however, after long and continued practice possibly reflect somewhat inward. Similarly Viveka actuated by mere forcing of imagination without a touch of practicality has no sound basis. A close study of the subject will show that really Viveka and Vairagya are not the means (Sadhan)

but only the result of some means (Sadhan). Viveka or Vairagya is a state of mind developed at different stages by constant practice of certain Yogic Sadhans, e.g., remembrance, devotion or love, etc. Viveka in true sense never develops unless the senses are thoroughly purified. This happens only when mind gets properly regulated and disciplined and egoism (or Ahankar) assumes a purified state. Thus it is that Viveka is in fact the result of practices followed in order to bring about the desired results. Now Vairagya, the second Sadhan of the Vedantists is likewise the result of Viveka. They are thus the stages of elementary attainments in Yoga and not the Sadhans or means of attainment of the stages. In Sahaj Marg system of Yoga, Viveka and Vairagya are not treated as Sadhans but are left aside to be developed automatically by an aspirant during his progress. It starts from what is known as the third Sadhan of the Vedantists which consists of six forms of spiritual attainments known as Khat-Sampatti. The first of these Sampattis is Sham which pertains to the peaceful condition of mind leading to a state of calmness and tranquillity. When we practise it Viveka and Vairagya follow auto-

matically. Vairagya, in the sense of non-existence of things is in my opinion a very difficult process, for in it you have to take up the negative course and discard or reject everything that comes to your view. But if you take up the positive view and accept one thing only as real, sticking to it wholeheartedly, other things will naturally fall in the background and by and by you will become unmindful of them. Consequently your attachment with them will gradually begin to disappear and you will gain Vairagya by easiest means. Thus the primary thing in Yoga is the proper regulation of mind which is ever restless. It creates numerous ideas and thoughts, imparts stimulus to the senses and faculties and sets the body into action. Everything good or evil originates from the mind and it is the mind alone that governs all our feelings, emotions and impulses. Thinkers have classified the tendencies of mind under five heads. The first of these known as Kshipta is the disturbed condition of mind including all feelings such as hunger, thirst, anger, sorrow and desires for wealth, fame, etc. The second Mudha includes tendencies which promote sluggishness, indolence or sloth. The third Vikshipta

pertains to the tendency which drives the mind away from sacred thoughts and brings about the haunting of numerous irrelevant ideas at the time of meditation. The fourth Ekagra Virti is the tendency which makes our attention fixed on one thing only. The last one Nirodh is the tendency which brings the mind to a perfectly self-contained state free from complexities and disturbances. To achieve this last state sages have generally advised the well-known Ashtang-Yoga (*i.e.*, Yam, Niyam, Asan, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharna, Dhyam and Samadhi). Under the Sahaj-Marg system of training we start from Dhyam the sixth step of Yoga fixing our mind on one point in order to practise meditation. The previous steps are not taken up separately but they automatically come into practice as we proceed on with meditation. Thus much of our time and labour is saved by this means.

In short we start our practice from Sham, the first of the six Sampattis of the third Sadhan of the Vedantists and devote all our attention to the proper moulding and regulation of mind which is easily accomplished by the help of the transmitted power of a worthy Master. Control

of senses and Indriyas (or Dam) follows automatically when we fix our mind on one thing and one alone which is the Reality, ignoring all others. Generally most of the sages follow this course. A few of the sects attempt an approach to Sham through the practice of Karma (action) others through devotion or Bhakti. There are still others who set aside both of these and proceed on through the medium of Gyan (knowledge). In fact the stages of Karma, Upasna and Gyan are not different from each other but are closely inter-related and exist all together in one and the same state. For example, in Upasna, controlling of the mind is Karma, the controlled state of mind is Upasna and its consciousness is Gyan; in Gyan the process of thinking is Karma, stay on the thought out object is Upasna and the resultant state is Gyan; while in Karma the resolve to act is Karma, process of bringing it into practice is Upasna and consciousness of the achievement is Gyan. Thus it is that in our system of training they are taken up all together most efficiently creating automatically the state of Viveka and Vairagya in true sense. No practice is really of any avail if it does not naturally result in Viveka

and Vairagya. The real form of Viveka is that when a man begins to realize his own defects and shortcomings and at the bottom of his heart feels repentant for them.

We have dealt with the first two Sampattis. We now come to the third known as Uprati which means self-withdrawal. In this state a man is free of all desires, even those pertaining to the next world. He is not charmed or attracted by anything in the world. His mind is all the time centred in one—the Real. It differs from the state of Vairagya in the sense that Vairagya produces a feeling of aversion for worldly objects while Uprati is a state in which both the feelings of attraction and repulsion are absent. Vairagya is really the incomplete form of this nobler and higher state. At this stage our mind, senses and Indrias are completely purified. We begin to feel fed up with all external things and dissociate from them thinking them not to be worthwhile paying any attention to. We are free from the effect of attachment with the world. Even the comforts of paradise have no charm to such a man, nor does he feel any attraction for salvation, liberation or other higher ideals.

The fourth Sampatti is Titiksha or the state of fortitude. At this stage a man is perfectly satisfied with what is allotted to him by God. He has no feeling for injury, insult, condemnation or appreciation.

The fifth is Shraddha or faith which is a very high attainment. It is very different from the preliminary state of artificial faith as discussed in the chapter entitled 'Faith'.

The last one is Samadhan which is a state of self-settledness to the will of the Master, without even the consciousness of it. At this stage a man is perfectly devoted to the great Master without any thought beside.

We have thus dealt with the various attainments of the third Sadhan. We now come to the last of the four Sadhans known as Mumukshu. Little remains now to be accomplished when a man comes to this stage except to develop close association with Absolute Reality or actual merging in the state of non-entity. It is the practical phase of realization and could be achieved after earnest practice of the elementary Sadhans under the old system of Yoga. The modern system of Sahaj Marg makes a diversion from the set old path in the respect that it does

not take up the different steps of Ashtang Yoga one by one separately. Under this system Asan, Pranayam, Dharna, Dhyān and Samadhi are all taken up simultaneously during the course of meditation. Meditation in due course leads us to concentration or the state of Samadhi. Thus we naturally proceed to Samadhi which is the final step of Yoga.

There are three forms of Samadhi or the stages of concentration. The first of these is wherein a man feels lost or drowned. His senses, feelings and emotions are temporarily suspended in a way that they seem apparently dead for the time being. He resembles a man in a dead slumber, unconscious of everything. The second form is, in which a man though deeply concentrated on a point, does not feel actually drowned in it. It may be described as a state of consciousness within an unconscious state. Apparently he is not conscious of anything but still consciousness is present within, though only in a shadowy form. A man walks along a road thinking deeply over some problem. He is so absorbed in it that he is unconscious of anything else nor does he see anything in the way, nor hear the sounds or voices near about.

He goes on in an unconscious state of mind. But still he does not collide with a tree by the roadside, nor is he knocked down by a car coming that way. In his state of unconsciousness he unknowingly attends to these necessities and acts as occasion demands. He has no consciousness of these actions. It is consciousness in an unconscious state. In this state of mind the consciousness of other things appears to be in a sleeping state and creates little impression. The third form is the Sahaj Samadhi. This is the finest type of concentration. In this state a man is busy with his work, his mind being absorbed in it, but in the innermost core of his heart he is still settled on the real thing. With his conscious mind he is busy with the external work while at the same time his subconscious mind is busy with Divine thoughts. He is all the while in a state of Samadhi although apparently he is busy with worldly work. This is the highest form of Samadhi and little remains to be done after a man has entered this state permanently.

The various spiritual stages acquired during the march are characterised with special power and capacity for nature's work. The lowest

region known as Pind-Desh comprises of various sub-points located within the chest. It is the centre of Panch Agni Vidya, so commonly spoken of in ancient religious literature of the Hindus. When a man gains mastery over this region, he automatically develops within him an intuitional knowledge of science pertaining to matter which he can utilise anyway he likes after sufficient practice and experience. But as this achievement does not suit his purpose, so far as spirituality is concerned, under efficient system of training an aspirant is kept unmindful of all those material powers and is helped to cross over by the reflected power of the Guru, so that his attention may not be attracted by anything other than purely of spiritual nature. He is then in a position to conduct petty godly work entrusted to him. His sphere of work at this stage is a small locality, *e.g.*, a town, a district or some bigger division. The nature of work he does is the proper adjustment of everything in action within his jurisdiction in perfect accordance with the demand of nature. He introduces the required elements within his sphere and removes the unwanted ones. He is known as a Rishi

and his designation is Vasu.

The next higher in rank and position is a Dhrua. He enjoys mastery over Brahmand Mandal and falls under the category of Muni. His sphere of work is much larger and he exercises authority over the Vasus. His duty is to look to the cleaning of the atmosphere of all unwanted thoughts and ideas prevailing within. Besides his routine work he has also to look to numerous other duties entrusted to him for the time being. The state is acquired after the thorough illumining of the region located in the human frame within the hylem shadow.

Higher above is the position of Dhruadhupa who directs the work of the Dhruas. The state is acquired after gaining mastery over the point of Naval (नाभी). His sphere of work extends to the whole world but his work is similar in nature to that of a Dhrua. Besides his routine work in connection with the cleaning of the atmosphere, he too has to look to casual events and incidents happening at different times. These godly functionaries are highly developed souls of great calibre who work strictly in accordance with the will of Nature in utter disregard of the feeling of individuality or self.

Their working is automatic and mechanical and they have no personal choice or discretion in any matter.

The position of Parishad, who is above Dhruvadhīpati is bestowed under rare circumstances when nature stands in dire need of it. He regulates and directs the activities of the various subordinate functionaries mentioned above and imparts various duties to them, reserving for himself only the most important ones. His will works in all important matters, *e.g.*, great enterprises or wars, in order to bring out the destined result. He works all the destructive and constructive plans of nature. His sphere of work is confined to this world only. The state is acquired when a man gains complete mastery over the central point of Sahasra Dal Kamal.

The position of a Maha Parishad is the highest in rank. It is the last godly post and is very rarely bestowed except when nature stands in urgent need of drastic change or an overhauling of the world. He enjoys the highest power.

Such are the marvellous attainments of Raj-yoga which a man can achieve if he is really earnest about it and proceeds along the right path under proper guidance.

CHAPTER X

MY VISION

The world these days is passing through a critical stage. The political situation is growing extremely intricate day by day. The economic condition has become very depressing. Moral, religious and social degradation has almost reached its final limit. An atmosphere of rivalry, unrest and insecurity prevails everywhere. Every nation looks with jealous eyes upon her neighbour and utilises all her resources in finding out means of exploiting it. The statesmen of the world are not quite ignorant of these facts. They are trying every means to reach a satisfactory solution of the various problems confronting the world. But the efforts of all the organisations set up for this purpose do not appear to bring forth encouraging results on the whole. The problem of world peace so prominent in the minds of the greatest politicians and statesmen is a mere illusion or a mirage.

The state of affairs in India does not hold out any bright prospect. Dissensions and party feelings are prevalent everywhere in the country.

Self-interest is predominant. Moral principles are neglected. Problem of bread and butter is acute. But in spite of all these, some of us think that the country is progressing. The sign of progress they take to be the gradual drifting of the country towards the western type of civilization which is based on pure materialism. But now the age of materialism must come to an end. The old order must change yielding place to new. The present structure of world civilization based upon electricity and atomic energy shall not remain in existence for long. It is destined to fall soon. The whole atmosphere is so much charged with the poisonous effect of absolute materialism that it is almost beyond human control to clear it. Time has almost matured for a change which is imminent and inevitable and for which the Godly energy in human form is already at work, as referred to in my book 'Efficacy of Raj Yoga'. It may not at present seem convincing to some of us but it is a fact beyond doubt. The world shall know of him and his work in this respect after some time when events have sufficiently come to light. Godly work is always accomplished through the agency of some human being of high calibre and

not direct. The reason is that God does not possess mind (मनस्) which is the only instrument to bring things into action. Man possesses mind which can be utilized for the purpose, but only when he has lost his feeling of individuality in toto. What remains in him after he has achieved complete negation of self, is not the human mind but only the Godly mind in pure and absolute state. Now Nature works through this Godly mind although apparently it exists within the frame of a human being.

I present before the readers a glimpse of the world that is to be, as I see it in my vision. Believe it or not, but that is my reading of nature in the clairvoyant state. Signs are evident that the destruction of the undesirable elements in the world has already commenced. Such examples have occurred many a time before, during the period of the existence of this world. Rama's war against Rawan, Noah's flood, and the battle of Mahabharat are some of the many instances. Such a destruction is accomplished through various means. It may be through war or internal feud, through heavenly calamity such as volcanic upheaval or through similar other causes. The time is now ripe for its final phase

and the world is rushing towards it with headlong speed. The action may come into full swing by the close of the present century but some of the events enumerated below may take a longer time to come into effect.

The heat of the sun has been gradually diminishing for some time past and it may be a baffling problem for the scientists to tackle as after some time life on the surface of the earth may become quite impossible owing to insufficient heat in the sun. No solution of it is within their mental approach in spite of all the material powers at their command. I may assure them that it will not at present diminish to that extent. The present decrease in the sun's heat is meant only to expedite nature's process of change and the personality deputed for that work is utilizing it for the purpose. It is an unfailing sign of the imminent upheaval in the entire structure of the world and after it the sun will again resume its full glow. The same sign will appear again at the time of Mahapralaya (complete dissolution) but as it is a far-off thing. I do not like to dwell upon it here. One thing I may disclose in this connection for the interest of the readers. At the time of Mahapralaya the pole

star will deviate a few degrees from its position and will grow a bit hotter. A powerful energy in the form of a gas will begin to gush out from it and will ultimately destroy the world and everything else in existence. The action of destruction will start from the North pole.

In consequence of the present upheaval, drastic changes will come into effect and the new structure of the world will be quite different from the one we see today. The fate of Great Britain will be sad. A part of it, *i.e.*, its southern portion will sink into the sea. A volcanic energy in the latent state is at work in the heart of London and in course of time it will burst forth in the form of a volcanic eruption. The Gulf Stream will change its course and the country will become extremely cold. The fate of Europe too will be similar. Smaller countries will lose their existence. The future of Russia is in darkness. She cannot survive. The very weapon of Russia will serve as a pistol on her own head. Communism shall have its grave in its own homeland. As for America she is in imminent danger of losing her wealth and in course of time she may almost be reduced to paupery. Her power and greatness too will sink

along with it. India shall regain her pristine glory and she will rise to prominence under her own government. Her suzerainty will extend far and wide and the world will look up to her for a beacon-light. But she too shall have her share in the world upheaval. The germs of rebellion are developing in the country. A part of the country, *i.e.*, eastern portion of Bengal shall sink into the sea. The volcanic energy is also active and may seriously affect some parts of it especially the State of Bihar. The Deccan plateau may in the remote future turn into an island. There shall be enormous bloodshed all over the world and the loss of life through various causes shall be so great that the world population shall be considerably reduced. The new structure of the coming world will stand on bones and ashes. A type of civilization based on spiritualism will spring forth in India and it shall in due course become the world civilization. No country or nation shall survive without spirituality as its base, and every nation must sooner or later adopt the same course if it wants to maintain her very existence.

