

THE MASTER KEY TO PSYCHIC UNFOLDMENT

A Physiological, Psychical
and Philosophical Analysis

By

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Edited by

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...Preface...

These lessons have appeared in the *Spiritualist Monthly* for the last two years, and their present publication in book form is in response to a wide and gratifying demand. Innumerable letters bear witness to the interest with which readers of the magazine have followed the course month by month. This evidence of appreciation has stimulated the author to strive for an even clearer exposition of the principles and technique of psychic unfoldment. Accordingly the earlier installments have been carefully revised, and some sections have been rewritten.

The author has personally tested the theories set forth in these pages. Years of reading and research; of patient practice of the methods herein commended; of hours made unforgettable by the rapture of illumination, when lofty beings on the Spiritual planes spoke from heights of celestial wisdom—all are reflected in the teachings now modestly given to a more permanent public than the magazine could reach.

The privilege of editorship has been a happiness no words can portray. It has been an inspiring service to give the wisdom of Delta Samadhi the popular form that will appeal to modern readers. Our reward will be the joy that comes from helping souls attain the consciousness of their potential divinity.

Felicité O. Crossley.

...Introduction...

SCIENTISTS AND SELF-MASTERY

ON MARCH 2, 1930, in the "American Magazine Section" of the "San Antonio Light," was published a remarkable, full-page, illustrated article on the wonderful powers of the Yogis. The following excerpt should be keenly interesting.

"The distinguished New York nerve specialist, Dr. Frederick Tilney, declared in his recent book on the development of the human brain, that this organ is still used to only a small percentage of its real capacity. Dr. Constantin von Economo, of Vienna, as distinguished a neurologist in Europe as is Dr. Tilney in the United States, has stated this belief even more definitely.

"Both these experts had chiefly in mind, their statements make clear, the intelligence of the human mind and its power to make correct judgments. They might have said virtually the same things, however, about the power of the will to control both mind and body.

"For generations these powers of the will have been well known in special instances, like the fakirs of India or the religious fanatics who lie on beds of sharp spikes, who beat themselves in frenzy and yet feel no pain. Now scientific men are coming to the opinion that all human minds possess much these same powers of developed will. All that is necessary is that the latent power of the mind be appreciated and applied.

"In a recent hospital case the patient, not wishing to take an anesthetic, merely went to sleep by will power, first telling the surgeon to go ahead. Other patients examined scientifically by the doctors turn out to have the ability of stopping the heart beat temporarily or of interrupting the normal pulse in the wrist, all by the power of

the will. Sight, hearing, smell and other senses may be either decreased or increased in sensitivity by will power. Determination, long supposed to be a useful virtue only in some kind of contest, turns out to be as valuable in man's contest with his own body as anywhere else.

"The Indian fakirs, long supposed by many people to be merely cheats and liars, but now recognized by scientific men as possessing unusual powers of mental control of the body, are still perhaps the best examples of what the will can do to bodily machinery. Not long ago one of these fakirs, Tahra Bey, gave in London an exhibition to which numerous medical men were invited. Forty physicians and scientists sat on the stage of the theatre where the exhibition was given. All were permitted to examine the fakir during the demonstrations. Trickery was virtually impossible and experts agree that none was used.

"Some of Tahra Bey's demonstrations were familiar ones of stage hypnotists. Throwing himself into a trance-like state, he made his body quite rigid. The stiff body was then laid on a series of sabres, not fully sharp but still edged enough to be uncomfortable. A large stone was laid on the fakir's rigid chest and was pounded with a sledge.

"Brought out of his rigid condition, the fakir then thrust hat pins through his cheeks, and through folds of flesh on chest and arms. A penknife similarly thrust through a fold of flesh produced a bleeding wound, or a bloodless one, whichever the fakir suggested and announced in advance. Like his predecessors in India, Tahra Bey then lay down on a bed of six-inch nails driven point upward through a wooden door and reclined on this remarkable couch while an assistant weighing about 160 pounds stood for several minutes on the fakir's chest.

"After this demonstration the fakir's back, examined by some of the physicians present, showed distinct marks of the points of the nails, but no blood was shed and the fakir claimed to feel no pain. That the hat points and knives were actually thrust through the flesh and that some of these wounds actually did not bleed as they would have

done in normal bodies, was also attested by the medical committee.

"No claim was made by this particular fakir of anything supernatural in his performance, nor is any such claim in the least justified. That anyone can accomplish very much the same feats with some training and a strong enough will is proved by the fact that many persons have done so; notably a Parisian skeptic named Paul Heuze, who disbelieved the supernatural claims of some of the earlier fakirs and managed, it is said, with but one rehearsal, to duplicate the feats of lying on the bed of nails and of thrusting pins and knives into his flesh without causing pain or drawing blood.

"Last year there was prominent in Berlin a still more remarkable example of this kind of bodily control by will power; a miner named Paul Diebel who similarly was able to thrust knives into his body, to cut himself without bleeding and even to allow arrows to be shot into his chest without apparent harm. One of Diebel's tricks which attracted great attention was an apparent ability to bleed at will from his skin, as well as to prevent bleeding.

"One theory held by physiologists is that the living cells which make up the nerves and which ordinarily are in contact with each other so that nerve messages can pass, withdraw a little at their points of contact so that the nerve path is broken. The diagrams of the Hindu fakir on this page illustrate the process. Apparently an effort of the will sometimes can accomplish this breaking of the nerve circuits, much as can be done by drugs like cocaine, which are used as anesthetics. In both instances the nerve breaks mean, that no messages of pain or other sensations can pass to the brain. Control of the will over the flow of blood is equally well established by scientific evidence. Dr. A. S. Hyman, of New York City, has published accounts of three patients who were able by efforts of their will completely to stop the pulse in the wrist; the pulse which a physician usually feels when he wishes to count the rate of the heartbeat. An East Indian physician, Dr. Vasant G. Rele, has described similarly and at

length the characteristics of an Indian holy man whose abilities in similar directions were examined by a committee of physicians in Bombay.

"This Yogi was able, the physicians found, to stop the pulse beat in either arm for more than two minutes. The pulse in his temple on either side could be stopped similarly. Even the heart of this man stopped beating for six seconds by the physician's watch, when ordered to do so by the owner's will.

"What happens in the case of the Yogis, fakirs and others who can control bleeding or pulse beats is, the scientists believe, that these nerves, not ordinarily subject to control by the mind, are trained by long practice and efforts of the will to respond to voluntary orders. Much the same thing happens when people train the muscles of their scalps to obey orders from nerves now feeble and unused, so that these people can move their ears a little as man's animal ancestors used to do.

"Even life and death may be affected by the will. Major H. E. Smith, Assistant Police Commissioner of the Gold Coast Colony in Africa, recently reported an instance in which the highly intelligent native willed himself to die as a result of a quarrel and supposed witchcraft. Even on his body after death European physicians could discover no reason whatsoever for death or even for illness.

"But if a strong will can stop a fakir's heartbeat at will, make him bleed or not bleed at will, certainly it can keep anybody from yielding to weakness or crime."

To develop will-power; to gain control of the vital forces abundant in nature; to awaken the psychic faculties and to obtain genuine "seership," is the purpose for which these lessons were written. The student who is sincere, patient and persevering shall triumph!

CHAPTER I

MEDIUMSHIP

IN presenting these lessons on the development of the spiritual and psychic faculties that are inherent in every human being, we are doing so to meet the continuing demand for instruction in the home circle where no developed medium is available to teach the aspiring student the things which he should know.

But at the outset we would give an earnest caution. Mediumship, when it is scientifically and spiritually developed, is one of the greatest of blessings. If, however, mediumship is developed in ignorance or disregard of the psychic laws pertaining to the subject, it may cause the one who attempts such development great misery both here and in the astral sphere to follow. To protect the aspirant against the occult perils which attend unworthy or unwise development, is the purpose of these studies.

The very first requisite for a beautiful, spiritual unfoldment is that the aspirant shall have no selfish, mercenary or ulterior motive. To seek clairvoyance for the gratification of an idle curiosity concerning the private affairs of others, or to develop one's psychic powers as a means to monetary ends, is to be animated by unworthy motives. Knowing as we do the perils which beset such a course we sound an emphatic warning. Wait until you are sure that your motives are noble and worthy. The law of magnetic and spiritual attraction prevails in mediumship. We attract spirits like ourselves. The insincere become controlled by untruthful entities. Liars attract liars. Those who are given to deception or avarice, who are mastered by their appetites and passions, should never—for their own sakes—try to develop mediumship. The result can only be disaster and sorrow.

But if you desire mediumship that you may be a help and comfort to others, able to give assurance to the sor-

rowing that their beloved survive; if, as a consecrated instrument of communication, you would contact those high intelligences who have counsels of wisdom to impart to humanity, then know your motives are unselfish and worthy, and that—if you pay the price of patience and perseverance—your aspirations will be rewarded. Aspire for the highest, live in a manner to attract the highest, and in a day when you least expect your eyes shall be opened and your ears shall hear what the spirit world has to reveal through your unfolded capacities.

Mediumship is a sacred gift. Let its coming be in response to the prayer of faith. Guard zealously the gift when it is bestowed, and never desecrate it for unhallowed ends.

There are those who declare that the ability to contact the spirit world brings sufficient wisdom, and therefore that one need not seek learning by personal effort. Be not vain enough to imagine that the highest intelligences will choose you as an instrument if you are too indolent to study and develop to the utmost every natural talent you possess. Those intelligences must use your brain and whatever language channels you have grooved in it. Enrich your vocabulary, develop an instinct for verbal accuracies and felicities, perfect your expression, if you would have them employ the tools which constitute your mental equipment. The master spirits from the higher spheres are continually seeking human instruments for their creative revelations. It is true that sometimes they do impress mortals of little learning, unable to speak the language of their own rank. But such instances are rare—when some special emergency requires it. Even then the message is bereft of the impressiveness which otherwise would attest its high and unmistakable source. At the best the mortal instrument has enough limitations. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed!"

Seek not for great honor and glory among men, for their applause is fickle and their hearts are inconstant. Seek rather the things which are eternal, and serve your fellow-men with humility and love. So shall you build for

yourself a mansion in that world where "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal." May there be added to all your knowledge of earth, the wisdom of heaven!

Mediumship

First we shall define what the term "medium" really means, both in the ancient Sanskrit and in the usage of Modern Spiritualism. In ancient India mediums were known as Yogis, for they were expositors of the original philosophy of Yoga. The derivation of the word "Yoga" is from the Sanskrit "yog," which means to join or unite or weld or bind together. The general sense is a joining of two things which have previously been separate. Is not that what mediumship does? It establishes a union between souls incarnate and discarnate.

The original Yoga philosophy has undergone changes due to the perversions of priestly interpretation—similar to the mutations in other systems of human thought. On this plane of continuous change this is, perhaps, not to be wondered at. Many philosophies have dawned upon the world only to pass into obscurity and eclipse. Their teaching even has been lost. But in more than one instance modern research, lifting the veil from a remote past, has discovered that a philosophy long forgotten contained great truths.

"Nothing was born; nothing will die." History repeats itself. Often what today we hail as new was already old thousands of years ago. We speak of Spiritualism as "modern." In reality it is the oldest of truths. As the psychic faculties are more pronounced in the childhood of an individual, so were they in the childhood of the race—long before Atlantis and Lemuria. The year 1848 of our era marked the return of the cycle in which the mental and the spiritual planes interblend. The veil between the earthly and the astral spheres is becoming thinner, because the surrounding ethers are more highly rarified. Mortals are re-discovering the immortal realms of life.

Spiritualism defines a "medium" as one whose organism

is sensitive to vibrations from the spirit world, and through whose instrumentality intelligences in that world are able to convey messages and produce the phenomena of Spiritualism. Both the Sanskrit and the Spiritualist definitions need to be made clearer to the student, and amplified to include all that falls within the scope of "mediumship." For mediumship is widely varied in its manifestation. It is "mental" when purely mental vibrations are contacted; it is "physical" when tangible phenomena occur; there is a mediumship of the Spirit in which only things of a spiritual nature are received; and there is a transcendental mediumship, in which both time and space are non-existent to the consciousness, and the wisdom of Divine at-one-ment becomes an ineffable possession. The exceptional individuals who have gained this sublimest phase of mediumship rarely ever speak of their experiences, and then only in hushed tones to kindred souls. It is the reward of the Masters—those exalted persons in whom the love and humility, the tolerance and charity of the Christ-Spirit are enshrined anew.

The Lure of Great Names

Before going further we would counsel our students to be wary of great names. Your guides and teachers will best prove their identity by their works and their influence upon your life. A gullible vanity has made too many Spiritualists objects of ridicule among discriminating occultists. The names of your spirit friends matter little—the important question concerns their influence upon your life. If they bring you peace, increase your love and enlarge your understanding, it is well and good. But beware of those who attempt to flatter you by telling how great and famous you are destined to become. The test of greatness is the spirit of humility. The praise of the fickle masses is as fleeting as their breath—those who seek it are doomed to many bitter disillusionings.

Jesus was the supreme example of true greatness and mediumship. He gave all honor to the Father, Who inspires alike mortals and immortals—the same I AM dwelling in you and me. He sought not the applause of

the world, and never was deceived by it. His whole passion was to serve—to make the earth a purer and fairer place for humanity to attain the spiritual state. You cannot follow a better example than Jesus set.

Correlation of Spirit, Mind and Matter

There exist two active principles, from whose correlation and coordination arise all the phenomena of which we are cognizant, as well as the vast amount of which we have no comprehension. One of these principles is the undifferentiated, primordial substance of which all material forms are composed, and physical energies constituted. It is the material element of the universe. Finer than the finest known gas or vapor, subtler and more tenuous than the ether of which scientists postulate so much, in its original form it is inconceivably simple—without the qualities which we know as Matter. It is held to be non-atomic and continuous, without consciousness or will-to-activity of its own. In the vocabulary of Occultism it is called "Prakriti."

The second principle, or "substance," is spiritual. It is the essence of life, and gives rise to all mental activity. The mystery of consciousness is its creation. It is the principle which ensouls and animates. It holds the secret of intelligence. But for the manifestation of these purely spiritual qualities it is dependent upon the first, or material element. The term in Occultism is "Purusha."

Before becoming attracted to and entangled with the material element of the Universe, this spiritual "substance" existed in a state of purity and bliss, unstirred by the emotions of desire or sorrow. But as a fly is attracted by the sweetness of the honey which captivates and enslaves it, so in the eons of cosmic creation was the spiritual substance attracted, empowered and enslaved by the material. As the fly struggles to escape from the honey, so ever the spiritual struggles to escape from the material. This is the strife we see in man when his spirit has awakened to a realization of its former existence in the realm of pure Spirit. This explains, in part, the constant unrest of the soul—why the individual is ever dissatisfied

with his lot, be it riches or poverty. Man is continually discovering that desire leads only to a greater desire, and that disappointment is inescapable. When humanity gets what it thinks it wants, the object loses its value almost in the moment of possession, and the restless soul seeks satisfaction in some fresh quest.

As a result of this enslaving of spirit by the lower material forces, the law of evolution has become a reality. In its passionate search for liberation the spirit is ever evolving new and higher forms of life—of conscious expression. This quenchless, creative impulse destines it eventually to gain the transcendent state of pure Spirit in which originally it existed. But do not be misled by that word "evolution." Though a fact in nature, it is a spiritual process and not a material one—as many scientists would have us believe.

All things owe their physical form to the mutual action and reaction of these two forces, or "principles." Through their correlation the activities of mind originate and continue. One teacher, discussing the interaction of these principles, said: "One was held to act upon the other much as the magnet acts upon the tiny bits of steel, imparting to the latter qualities and properties which they did not formerly possess." The material element is thus given new powers, while the spiritual is deprived of a portion of its original intelligence. But the goal of the process is perfection. Universal peace and absolute harmony are aspects of that perfection. It is the decree of Infinite Intelligence—the Supreme Being, the Hindu mystic's OM of Glory.

In the measure of your devotion to that Supreme Being, as the source of your existence, shall you emerge from the meshes of the material. You shall experience the blessings of hidden wisdom, and freedom from bondage to the lower planes. Knowledge and power shall come to you as you seek to become attuned to the Eternal, Omniscient Force vibrant in the Universe. This is the true aim of all who aspire to unfold their innate, divine powers. It is the secret of mastery, the glory of mediumship. A new and wonderful world awaits your vision. Strange joys

shall thrill your soul, with ecstasies no speech can utter.

Keep inviolate your hours of silence dedicated to this sacred quest. You who would become an illumined minister to men must first become master of yourself. This means not only the mastery of mind and body, but also of the innumerable forces and entities surrounding us. By this path the soul attains to consciousness of its spiritual and psychic powers—the attributes of its essential divinity.

CHAPTER II

MIND-STUFF

AS we proceed our first concern is with the mastery of the "stuff" of which our minds are made. Some famous philosophers contend that this "mind-stuff" is semi-material—something quite apart from, though expressive of, Spirit. Several cults and systems teach that it really constitutes a material body, but of a more subtle nature than any state of matter of which we possess scientific knowledge. Patanjoli, founder of the Yoga philosophy, regarded the various organs of sense as differentiations of this mind-stuff.

The mental body, like the material body, is composed of trillions of particles, corresponding to the electrons, atoms and molecules which form the cells of the material body—each animated by an individual intelligence. In this multitudinous conglomeration of living, conscious "cells" that make up the mental-body of mankind, there often form what may be termed vortices or "whirlpools." These explain the continual turmoil and disorganization the majority of human beings experience in their mental life. But this condition can be controlled and overcome by concentration, a knowledge of the mental and spiritual laws, and the practice of certain mystical methods of unfoldment. Before any high spiritual development is possible—rending the veil between this and the advanced planes of Being—we must master our thought forces, attaining a tranquil and benignant attitude toward all life.

Man's greatest enemy is his own thoughts—when uncontrolled. They give rise to illusions, weird imaginings, ill-temper and disease. How many mortals are cursed by conditions their own thinking has created! Some schools of New Thought and Eastern philosophy have as their sole aim the mastery of the "storms" and confusions that disturb the mind. It is one of the principal things to be

taught in these lessons. The instructions and truths herein contained have been handed down from Master to Master, to Chelas and devotees, for countless centuries. Self-control; spiritual observances; physical methods of opening the psychic centers; regulation of the breath for the purpose of directing the Vital Force, which so often lies dormant throughout an entire life-time; control of the senses; control of the mind; meditation and concentration; "Mystic Contemplation"—these are steps to the attainment of Master Mediumship.

Self-Control. This consists in the cultivation of right habits. Its aim is right conduct in all circumstances. The true student ever strives to lead a moral life, repelling the temptations which evil entities and his own lower nature throw across his path—especially when he has once set out to develop his higher powers. He strives to live up to the highest standards of truthfulness, honesty and industry; shunning deceit, dishonesty and slothfulness. Cruelty, unkindness and greed—in all their forms—he constantly endeavors to suppress. There is no greater joy in life than such mastery of self confers.

Spiritual Observances. The aim is purity of mind—sincere, internal purity; a mental and emotional attitude toward circumstances that is truly spiritual. They foster an appreciation of the best in religious practices and principles—above all, the love of God. This may seem foreign to psychic development, but the Master Key we seek opens the portals that permit contact with the most exalted Masters of Heavenly Wisdom. The world is full of the ordinary, partially-unfolded psychics; but there are few—too few—Adepts, though the "key" is waiting for all who earnestly seek it. Set your aim at Masterhood and be satisfied with nothing less. It is your divine right.

Opening the Psychic Centers. This is accomplished by certain methods and exercises used in the Temples from time immemorial. They conduce to mental poise and lead to the higher steps in development. They afford an effective technique of concentration and meditation.

Regulation of the Breath. This consists in exercises for the control and direction of the Vital Force—very important for perfect health, spiritual and psychic development, and self-realization.

Control of the Senses. Through a developed effort of the Will the sense organs may be completely controlled. Forces wasted wrongfully in sex or other forms of sense gratification can become vitally creative in the mental realm. This secret has been the possession of every Master and Adept, past or present. "Miracles," so-called, are but the manifestation of those sublimated forces. The world knows best the miracles performed by Jesus; but he said, "greater works than these shall ye do also."

Control of the Mind. By the direct action of the Will applied by the indwelling Spirit, every mental faculty can be brought under control. When the mind has become calm and clear, the radiant spirit within—the Real Self—shines forth, reflecting the form and nature of itself, and contacting the invisible planes. Spirit can always reach spirit when the intervening confusions and barriers have been removed. That is the highest form of mediumship, and nothing short of it should satisfy anyone.

Meditation and Concentration. This consists in fixing the mind upon a single object to the exclusion of every other. From material objects the student advances gradually to the most abstract. This is a most important step toward spiritual attainment. It has an immense value for our life, as well, on the material plane. When thought is thus focused in concentration, and then projected by effort of the Will, it has a power and achieves results that the masses—with their vagrant, aimless thinking—cannot conceive possible.

Mystic Contemplation, or Master Mediumship. This marks the attainment and control of those transcendental states of spiritual consciousness experienced by the Mystics, but practically unknown to the average person. It is the reward that awaits the sincere student of Mysticism and the spiritual schools of Occultism. "Spiritual Con-

sciousness," "Cosmic Consciousness," "Mystic Experiences" or "Contacts," and "The Higher Mediumship"—these are some of the terms which designate the transcendental state. Authorities vary in their preferences but whatever terms they use the occult experience is the same. Its attainment is the major purpose of this course of study.

These two chapters are preliminary to the real instruction to follow. One final word about the best daily period for meditation while pursuing this course. It is during the hour of noon, which symbolizes man's conquest of the heavens. The sun, giving light and joy to men, is a symbol of that Love which irradiates all realms and fills the depths of silence with its perpetual benediction. But if your circumstances dictate another hour, choose one while the sun is ascendant.

CHAPTER III

SELF-CONTROL

EVERY true student on the path of attainment strives to lead a moral life, overcoming the multitude of temptations with which every sensitive is met. Control of self—not slavery to self—is our aim. We cannot stress this too often or too much. Avoid unkindness and cruelty, dishonesty and deceit, covetousness and greed. An aura which proclaims these qualities attracts entities of like character, and besets the path with great danger. To adhere to the Golden Rule is the way of safety.

Remember, a Chela on the Path avoids every form of deception. To him a so-called "white lie" is as pernicious as the grosser forms of falsehood. Petty compromises and casuistries have no place in his conception of truth. To him truth is truth—"the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Nothing less will satisfy his austere sense of honesty. And he avoids self-deception as rigorously as he does deception of others. The one who is always true to himself can be counted upon to be true to others. If this lays bare a fault in ourselves, we must purge ourselves of every form of untruthfulness if we would sit at the feet of the Masters and learn the laws of the higher life.

A true student strives to be chaste, both in thought and deed; for it is just as sinful to cherish unchaste thoughts as to commit unchaste deeds. Of the enlightened student one great teacher said: "He does not regard unchaste desires or imaginations as evil in themselves, but merely as natural consequences of material existence; and so they do not horrify or affright him, but rather are pitied by him. He sees them as what they are, not holding them to be alien to his semi-material nature; but he deliberately and determinedly sets them off from himself."

Edward Carpenter, the English poet and mystic, said: "When thy body—as needs must happen at times—is carried along on the wings of passion, say not thou, 'I desire this or that,' for the 'I' neither desires nor fears anything, but is free and in everlasting glory, dwelling in heaven and pouring out joy like the sun on all sides. Let not that precious thing by any confusion be drawn down and entangled in the world of opposites, and of death and suffering. For as a lighthouse beam sweeps with incredible speed over sea and land, yet the lamp moves not at all.

"So while thy body of desire is (and must be by the law of its nature) incessantly in motion in the world of suffering, the 'I' high up is fixed in heaven. Therefore I say, let no confusion cloud thy mind about this matter; but ever when desire knocks at thy door, though thou grant it admission and entreat it hospitably—as in duty bound—*fence it yet truly off from thy true self, lest it should tear and rend thee.*"

As the student advances along the Path he acquires control of both the senses and the mind, and is thereby enabled to inhibit absolutely the entrance of undesired feelings, emotions and thoughts. But until that stage is reached he should proceed along the lines which Carpenter so wisely indicates, and thus separate from his real, inner nature the disturbing elements born of his desires and emotions.

And here we would state one of the most important facts in spiritual development. Habits can be obliterated! They exist in the mind, and mental vibrations produced them. The cultivation of our spiritual nature involves a heightening of our mental vibrations. When sustained long enough this results, first in a weakening then in the complete obliteration, of habits embedded in our coarser nature. We are not conscious of the process. What we do know, is that certain habits seem to leave us and with their going certain desires pass out of our lives. This process is usually very gradual, though it often occurs in such an instantaneous crisis as the theologian knows as "conversion." Thus certain habits and desires leave us forever—in this world and the worlds to come. Ponder

that expression—"the worlds to come." For habits exist in the mind—the part of us that survives the death of the body. We carry our habits with us to the next life. Every occultist knows the unhappiness they may cause.

Play well your part in the world. Be faithful and thorough with regard to your duties. Work that is worth doing, is worth doing well. Do it for the joy of the task and not the hope of reward. This is the spirit of the artist. No task is "menial" to the one who has imagination.

Many have voiced the phrase, "taking life philosophically," but few realize the truth it expresses. The multitude work for rewards. It is the lure of the prize and not the zest of the game that is uppermost in the minds of the majority. The satisfaction of honest accomplishment touches something deeper in the soul. "Fame, position, prestige, the world's cheap favors, are despised by the really strong men—they see such things as the baubles that they are. They leave such things for the grown-up children of the world. They may allow the prize or ribbon to be pinned to their coats, but in their hearts they smile at it. The other players in the game may not detect the inner consciousness, and to all intent and purposes the awakened player may be like those around him; but he knows, and they do not."

This "non-attachment," so to speak, does not mean that one must repress all his normal sentiments of joy. If faithfully followed this principle will greatly increase one's enjoyment, for he will be able to distinguish the real gem from the glittering bauble. The one who is attached to the extrinsic reward believes his enjoyment of life depends upon his material or personal possessions and the pleasures they confer. Certain persons and things—in their external aspects—are his source of happiness. On the other hand the man who is "unattached" or free, knows that happiness is independent of outside objects and things. It is a product of his inner consciousness. Therefore he is able to be happy in the midst of circumstances and conditions where the average person would succumb with misery. He realizes that nothing essen-

tially external to him can have any influence on his "real self," the true "Me," the indwelling Spirit within, unless he abdicates his mastership and surrenders to the power of mere *things*.

So long as a person is dependent for his happiness upon any person or thing, he is to that extent a victim of emotional slavery, and cannot claim to be "free." No person while under such influence can realize the triumphal consciousness of the poet when he sang,

"I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul!"

Such victory can be yours.

Is there any greater lesson to be learned in this present life than self-control? Unless we become masters of ourselves we cannot gain the mastery of circumstances. In the Orient this lesson is learned by acquiring an attitude of *indifference*. In the West this attitude is much misunderstood—often it is ridiculed, or condemned. The principle which underlies the attitude is not perceived. When serious principles are understood, *ridicule* is impossible, whether or not one accepts them personally.

The ideal of "indifference"—as understood by the Oriental mystic and the masters of Western occultism—involves a swiftness and intensity of thought to which the ordinary mind is unadapted, and a mental poise which circumstances are powerless to disturb. The latter is, perhaps, akin to fatalism. Andrew Jackson Davis was the author of the famous Spiritualist maxim, "Under all circumstances, keep an even mind." It is not a counsel of fatalism.

The Western mind is typically deliberative. Its processes are slow, and we even boast of the time we spend in thinking through to our conclusions. The Eastern mind is alert, penetrative, acute. It revels in subtleties the untrained Western mind cannot follow. It grasps instantaneously, and in their entirety, the things presented to it. With the same instantaneousness it files them in the subconscious, where they can be evoked at will. The next moment it is ready for new impressions,

with which it deals as swiftly and completely as before. There is no agitation or waste of force; all the force is expressed in strictly mental activity. The average, untrained mind simply cannot conceive of such acuteness. It is this keen and instant penetration into the real nature of a thing that explains the habitual tranquility of the Oriental mind.

The developed mind, then, is unaffected by desire, for it recognizes the latter as illusion, and it wants nothing illusory. It only wishes to know, to understand and to experience the divine reality—possession for its own sake it does not seek. This attitude of “indifference” rightly understood, is meant to be maintained equally in every direction. Its attainment is essential to supreme masterhood.

These lessons may seem formidable—or even non-essential—to those who are interested merely in “the phenomenal aspect of the psychic plane.” But we are not trying just to develop the faculty of peering into the future. We are giving the Master Key to Psychic Unfoldment to those who are earnest aspirants for Masterhood—a goal far beyond the objective attained by the average devotee; an experience of Divinity which it is our highest destiny to express.

CHAPTER IV

SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES

IN THIS lesson we should like to impress our students that the first principle of *Spiritual Observance* requires purity of mind, internally as well as externally; purity of mind will create a purity of both soul and body.

In the different religions of the world we are taught various concepts and precepts of what is right and wrong; but if we will observe the best forms of the various religious customs and principles, above all practicing the love of God, we shall all attain a sublime realization of the Infinite in due time, regardless of the route we travel.

Too long humanity has been taught the fear of God—but in these lessons we are going to reverse that teaching to one of “Love of God.” This teaching is not concerned with a heaven, or thoughts of future reward or happiness; the true mystic considers those ideas as a modified form of selfishness.

When we refer to “Love of God” we do not intend to convey the thought of a personal God, for so long as mankind clings to the idea of individuality and personality it cannot attain to a realization of the Absolute or Spiritual Principle of Being.

One writer on the subject says: “The worship of a personal God, whether such worship be that of the God of the savage or the personal God of the educated man, is all a form of ‘personality worship.’ It is only when the individual drops off the ‘personal’ idea of God that he passes into the stage of ‘spiritual understanding of God in His higher, more universal sense.’ Not that God is devoid of personality—He goes beyond personality, not contrary to it. The Absolute may be loved as one loves a father or mother—as one loves a child—as one loves a friend—as one loves a lover. He includes in His being

all the attributes calling for such forms of love, and responds to each demand. In fact, no demand for a return of love is necessary between man and God. Just as a man steps out into the sunshine and opens himself to its rays, so does the man who loves God step out into the rays of the Divine Love and receive its benefits.

"The very act of loving God opens up one to the Divine Love. If one feels the need of the protecting love of the Father, all he need do is to open himself to such love. If one needs the tender and sympathetic love of the Mother, such love comes to him from God if he but open himself to its inflow. If one would love God as one does a child, such love is open to him in the same way; and many who have felt the need of such a bestowal of love, but who have feared the apparent sacrilege of thinking of God as one does a loved child, may find that such a giving of love will ease many a heartache and pain, and will bring to them the comforting response that comes from the answering pressure of the loved child."

There is a fable which is used as an illustration of the true love of God by many teachers, both of the Occident and the East. "Once upon a time, a student of the Higher Life approached a learned teacher and asked to be instructed in the higher forms of Para Bhakta, or perception and realization of the Absolute Spiritual Principle of Being. He stated that he did not require instruction in the elementary branches, for he had already learned how to love God. The old teacher smiled at the youth, for he recognized his ignorance, vain assumption, and absence of real experience in the Love of God. The youth came each day, demanding to be taught that which he desired. Finally he manifested great impatience at the apparent indifference of the old teacher, and demanded to be shown why he was not fit to be accepted as a pupil.

"Then the old teacher took the youth in a boat out to the middle of a great river. Suddenly, he pushed the youth overboard. The young man, not knowing how to swim, sank beneath the surface of the water. Rising and gasping for breath, he was pushed down the second time

by the old man. When he came up again, he was thrust under. But the third time he rose, he was pulled back into the boat in an exhausted condition. When he recovered from his exhaustion, he was asked by the old man: 'Son, what was thy greatest desire when under the water?' The youth replied: 'O, sire, I desired a breath of air more than all the world beside.' Then answered the old teacher: 'Son, when thou hast learned to desire God as much as thou didst desire a breath of air this day, then wilt thou be prepared to learn of the Love of God—then and then only wilt thou know what it is to love God!'

We would add a further thought. When all life becomes a part of our life to the extent that we feel the sorrow, pain and joy of all beings, whether of the human, animal, plant or mineral kingdoms; when we recognize the Spirit of Divinity in all things; when we begin to show reverence and adoration for all things that we can see and feel because we recognize the divinity of each, then we shall begin to know something of the Love of God. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, the Master of Galilee, said: "If a man say, 'I love God,' and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

CHAPTER V

CULTIVATION OF THE BODY

IN THIS part of the course we are going to devote a few words to the cultivation of the body, and the acquiring of postures and approved exercises which are regarded as conducive to mental quietness, concentration and meditation, before going into the deeper lessons.

Postures and exercises have been carried to absurd and fanatical extremes by many devotees, especially in India and in certain sects of our Occidental teachings, so much so that the majority of people greatly undervalue the true significance of this step. However, it matters not what one does, whether it be of material or spiritual nature, the purpose will be lost unless one considers the real essence and spirit of the teachings, ever keeping in view the aim of attainment.

Despite the fanatical and abnormal excesses of the low-class fakirs, fanatics and ascetics, one must remember that originally the most approved postures for psychic and spiritual unfoldment came from India, where for thousands of years the Masters have regarded the study of postures, or body positions, as a science.

It is quite necessary before undertaking any form of psychic unfoldment that one find a posture in which he can remain a long time. The one which is easiest and most comfortable—in other words, the one which enables us completely to forget the body—is the one for us to use. This should be a matter of individual requirements, for where one might be able to sit for an indefinite time in one position in relative ease, the same position might drive another person to distraction because of discomfort.

When we take exercises regulating the vital forces of the body and directing them in the necessary channels, we find that there is a great deal of unusual action going on in the body because the nerve currents are displaced and

given a new channel; this sets up new vibrations and the whole constitution becomes remodeled, as it were, though the most pronounced current vibrations will be felt along the spinal column. Therefore, it is very necessary that whatever posture one selects must be one which holds the spinal column free. One must sit erect, holding the chest, neck and head in a straight line, letting the whole weight of the body be supported by the ribs. In doing this you have an easy, natural posture, with the spine straight and the chest out. Experiment will prove that one cannot think very high, inspirational thoughts with the chest in.

Regardless of the phase of development in view, you should always sit erect, keeping the body upright; for though the spinal column is inside the vertebral column, it is not attached to it. If you sit with the spine crooked or bent you disturb the spinal cord and *it must be left free*. Every real teacher will tell you that you do yourself an injury in trying to meditate with the spine un-erect. Keep them in one line; though at first it may seem difficult, with a little practice you will find it will soon become as easy as the act of breathing.

This portion of our lesson deals entirely with the physical body, our aim being to make the body strong; for unless the physical body is a fitting, perfect instrument, how can we conscientiously aspire to high spiritual development through which the Masters of the higher planes can express their beautiful teachings? Therefore, the object of postures is as much physical as psychological; for unless the body is regarded in psychic unfoldment, too often the incoming forces prove destructive instead of constructive. Everything in the universe has its good and bad aspects, and it is because of this that mediumship and various occult powers so often prove a destructive force instead of building up the body as they should do. The majority of developing classes disregard the physical entirely and concentrate all their efforts on what they "believe" to be the spiritual, when the truth of the matter is, as Paul of the Bible says: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . And there

are diversities of operations, but it is the same God (Law) which worketh in all." All is but a different manifestation of the One.

There is not one muscle of the body over which man cannot establish perfect control if he but wills to do so; the heart can be made to stop or go at his bidding, and, in the same way each and every part of the physical organism can be made to work at his bidding; though we *would not under any circumstances* advise any student who has not fully and completely learned the laws governing the human body, to experiment in any way in concentration on the heart or any other organ by way of stopping or starting them. At the same time we are fully aware that there are few who could really do such a thing; it is folly to try it, just as much as it would be for a child to play with nitro-glycerine.

The result of perfect control of the physical is not only mental and physical poise, but also a lengthened life; therefore health is its chief aim. But that is not all, for a man may live long, yet be only a healthy animal. Our purpose is not to create healthy animals but to create perfect instruments through which the incarnate spirit can perfectly express, thereby bringing peace and joy into its mundane life. The Masters from the higher spheres are, in this psychic cycle, wending their way back toward earth and looking for perfect instruments through which to give the marvelous wisdom that they have learned during untold hundreds of years in the higher life.

In this course we purpose to go a little further in psychic exercises than is generally given to the public, but we know those who are ready for these instructions will study and benefit from them, while others will not be interested enough even to read them. Our next lesson will be on the practice of relaxation and we believe it will prove especially beneficial to all, whether desiring psychic development or not.

CHAPTER VI

POSTURES

IN THIS part of our lessons we shall give the subject of certain postures or positions claimed by Eastern occultists as conducive to psychic development. Some teachers use as many as eighty-four postures, but we shall give only a few which are applicable to our Western mode of living and our none-too-supple bodies. Each is designed for a particular purpose—to induce certain kinds of thoughts, feelings or emotions. Certain Eastern teachers hold that as certain elements of the body, such as muscle, bone, fat, blood, etc., can be developed by special courses of diet and exercise, so can the thought forces be regulated by certain postures which send the life currents into new and diversified channels.

One Western writer says on this subject: "A curious thing about the thinking processes is that bodily posture has a great deal to do with them. You will find that if you close your eyes when you begin to meditate, the stream of consciousness is broken into by all kinds of stimuli or sensations—chief among which are physical sensations—coming from the body. So, the Hindus said, the first thing to do is to put the body into such a state that it will not keep interrupting consciousness. In other words, if you put your body into any ordinary condition, you are, after a time, uncomfortable."

Many have learned that there are some positions which will not keep interrupting meditation, so that one can think or meditate without these breaks or disturbances of consciousness. Occasionally they are painful at first, or difficult to assume, but once you get used to them you will find them restful and conducive to perfect bodily ease—that state which is so necessary for perfect meditation. And certain of them, once you have grown accustomed to them, you can hold for hours without becoming tired; in

fact you will sink into them with the sense that you would into a warm bath.

The object of postures is to obtain mental equilibrium. Therefore, regardless of the posture chosen, perfect relaxation should be sought. By learning mental poise and equilibrium, and how to balance the body forces, extreme opposites, such as heat and cold, etc., do not have such poignant effects.

The following are a few examples of simple postures for relaxation. We merely tell you how they are done, and inform you that certain results can be obtained by the use of one or more of them.

The Mystic Posture: Insert the contracted left foot into the space between the right foot and thigh, inserting the contracted right foot into the space between the left shin and thigh. This is the pose illustrated by the Buddha.

The Bedstead Posture: Lie down with the arms stretched around the knees.

The Even-Peace Posture: Lie flat on the back or stand erect, arms to side but not touching body; both feet contracted and pressed against each other at toes and heels.

The Stable-and-Easy Posture: This brings the quickest relaxation to the student. Most of the great occult teachers approve the so-called stable-and-easy postures or, in other words, that which is easiest. But one must ever keep in mind that this is not the result of artificial physical effort, but rather is secured only by a condition of perfect relaxation. Perfect relaxation, poise, balance, and ease are always accompanied by calmness, comfort and a well-balanced mind, free from physical strain or uneasiness. It is the position most approved by experienced teachers, and is obtained by sitting in a well-balanced position, completely relaxed, with feet and knees together, hands on knees, and with spine, neck and head held in a straight line. This, however, is only stable and easy to one who knows how to attain complete relaxation.

And as one writer said: "The first step is relaxation; the second relaxation; the third relaxation; and the remaining steps are poise, balance, ease, stability or fixed rest."

Few know how to relax; this is especially true of Occidental people. Oriental people are masters of relaxation, for they are taught that it is just as important to learn how to relax and to practice it as it is to learn to perform any other physical exercise; for mastery of relaxation results in mastery over the muscles and limbs of the body. It develops poise. Who has not admired the grace and bodily poise of certain Oriental women who can walk for miles with baskets of produce, or jars of water balanced on their heads? In the ancient harems women were taught to imitate the movements of a cat, the more readily to learn their secret of grace and relaxation. It is well for all to study the movements of the cat tribe, which include the panther, the leopard, tiger, lion, etc. The resting cat is a beautiful study of perfect relaxation; its extreme grace and poise—with no tension, no contraction of muscles—is a picture to behold and worthy of much imitation, especially by moderns whose nerves and muscles are keyed to a high tension all day with the result that nervous disorders are general. The relaxed cat is a picture of strength in repose. Notice the cat as it crouches for a spring upon a mouse; apparently it is almost napping. It is relaxed—but it is power in abeyance.

William Walker Atkinson says: "The Oriental people understand the science of relaxation and employ it in their daily life. They will undertake journeys which would frighten a Western man, and after traveling many miles will make a resting place upon which they will throw themselves down, relaxing every muscle, allowing themselves to remain limp and apparently lifeless, from head to foot. They indulge in a doze at the same time, if practicable, but if not practicable for them to doze they remain wide awake, with senses active and alert, but with mind well-balanced and calm, with the body muscles as above stated. One hour of this kind of rest refreshes

them as much as, or more than, a full night's sleep does the average Western man. They start on their journey again, refreshed and with new life and vigor."

It is only when one is able to relax completely that he is able to find his physical balance and poise. And by sitting erect as mentioned in the last-named posture, keeping the spine, neck and head in line, the rest of the body will instinctively fall into a position of perfect poise and equilibrium, and a mental and physical ease and calmness will steal over one, which is most refreshing to tired nerves and muscles. It will allow one to attain a balance which is most necessary in meditation and concentration. Allow the weight of the trunk to be sustained by the hips and ribs; never the spine. When you have learned to do this and remain well poised and perfectly balanced, you will be able to find a center of gravity in your body and attain a state of as perfect equilibrium as the most skillfully balanced structures designed or built by man.

Moods and emotions can be regulated by postures. This is not a new truth, but one demonstrated and taught by the greatest occult teachers of record. In modern as well as ancient "development" seances people have learned that body positions or postures have a great deal to do with the conditions or vibrations as well as the results of the meeting. Some teachers go so far as to state that every emotion or thought has its own form of physical expression, or its own posture or muscular manifestation.

By careful study and records a complicated system of producing mental and emotional results has been ascertained, to the extent that after much practice and observation one can learn to call forth or reproduce various mental and emotional states. In other words, if one desires to create an inspirational state for writing, singing, painting, etc., certain postures, which he might learn either by instruction or personal experiments, can be assumed to bring about the desired state of consciousness.

To assist in learning these physical attitudes, observation and recognition of the physical reaction to a particu-

lar mental state or the mental reaction to various physical states, will be of prime importance. Sometimes it is necessary by fiat of will to simulate a mental state in order to note physical reactions by watching in a mirror. Then to reproduce the mental state you have but to reverse the action and note the results. By doing this new brain grooves will be formed which will accelerate your mental processes, quicken your memory, and make the brain more alert and generally receptive both in a material and spiritual sense.

During all these exercises do not fail to note the result they have upon breathing, for every mental and emotional state has a decided effect upon the respiration—in fact has its own rate of breathing.

During all the postures, as well as every act of the day, the breath should be regulated for the proper amount of oxygen and vital energy needed at the particular time. Just as expert swimmers, runners and various athletes are trained in different rates of breathing during the particular exercise, so are the students and devotees of the various phases of occult phenomena. As breath control is one of the most essential requirements of a good swimmer, so it is in the development of psychic forces. It will be noticed that the majority of fine sensitives and mediums are possessed of a large chest expansion. This has brought a question to the mind of many, but is in perfect accord with natural law, though many psychics and mediums may not have been conscious of the regulation of breath. In proper and natural development it comes as a consequence of the desire for unfoldment.

A future lesson will deal with Regulation of the Breath, but it is essential before going further into our instruction that each student sincerely interested in attaining a perfect and conscious mediumship shall first study and practice the methods of body-poise and relaxation outlined above. In fact, the student is not honestly prepared to proceed into the more advanced stages of development until he or she has mastered the Stable-and-Easy posture. You may obtain mediumship without these

efforts, but we are seeking the highest phases of psychic unfoldment whereby we may be enabled to contact the spirits from the higher realms. There is no use wasting vital energy reaching out to contact spirit mentalities who know no more than we of the earth plane. Spirit communication should be cultivated to contact loved ones or to obtain knowledge and spiritual wisdom from the Masters and teachers of the higher spheres; and these last named cannot be reached under ordinary conditions.

It is possible to attain a negative state of consciousness whereby one is able to penetrate the veil into the lower astral or desire-plane, but such mediumship is too often of a questionable character and quality. As a result many mediums are accused of being dupes of imagination when as a matter of fact they are dupes of lower spirits. Therefore the admonition of John: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

By our vibrations and life shall the character of our teachers be known, for it is a law that like attracts like. So, if we are desirous of reaching the higher spirits, we must prepare our body and mind by purification, and raising their vibrations, to contact them and bring forth their messages to humankind.

By proper training and preparation mediumship becomes God's finest blessing to His children; it builds the body, exhilarates the mind, and perfects the soul. But when forced or attained by improper or unnatural methods of development, it becomes humanity's curse and causes the downfall of the individual. This explains why so often we meet with mediums enslaved by drink or drugs. Greed, or selfish desire to attain mediumship at any cost, spelled their doom. Though spirits may impersonate pure and holy beings as a means to an end in gaining control of a mortal instrument through which to satisfy their dominant material desires, sooner or later the disguise falls away and the victims see them for what they are—usually when the will power has been so weakened they

have no positive force left with which to combat the unholy invasion of their "Temple not built with hands."

The instructions and practices given in these lessons, together with the noon-hour affirmation given while standing erect and facing the East, ought to bring perfect unfoldment. Completely empty your lungs, then fill them slowly while counting six and facing the East at noon-time, and KNOW, know to the depths of your being while affirming love to THE WHOLE WORLD: "I AM INFINITE LIFE, and nothing but that which is pure and good shall enter or leave my Being. Perfect health, perfect peace and perfect happiness are mine, for I AM ALL—INFINITE and ETERNAL."

Repeat this just before entering the Silence during your sacred development period. Though you may not be able to attend a developing class, a conscientious practice of the exercises given in this course, together with a regular development period once or twice a week, and the spiritual force generated by an honest, eager desire to attain mediumship for the good you can do and the comfort you can give, for the love of serving, will more than compensate you for your apparent loss of a visible instructor.

O, Chela of Truth, somewhere within thy soul is silence! Attain unto it, and may your thoughts be filled with love and peace and perfect harmony unto yourself and all you meet.

CHAPTER VII

PRANA—VITAL FORCES

VIVEKANANDA expressed his interpretation of Prana as follows:

"The universe is manufactured from its subtle material by the power of Prana. Prana is the infinite, omnipresent manifesting power of the universe. It is the Prana that is manifesting as motion, as gravitation, as magnetism, as electricity. It is the Prana that is manifesting as the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought-force. From thought down to the lowest physical force, everything is but a manifestation of Prana. The sum-total of all force in the universe, mental or physical, is but the manifestation of Prana.

"To get the subtle perception of the finer forces which are operating in the physical body, we must first begin with the grosser perceptions; so we must get hold of that which is setting the whole engine in motion—and that is Prana, the most obvious manifestation of which is breath. Then, along with the breath, we slowly enter the body, and are thus enabled to discover the subtle forces, the nerve currents which are moving all over the body. As soon as we discover the latter, and learn to feel them, we begin to get control of them and the body. The mind also is set in motion by these different nerve currents, so, at last, we reach the state where we have perfect control over the body and mind, and both are our servants. Knowledge is power, and we must first get this power; so we must begin at the beginning, i. e., the control of the Prana by means of Pranayama (regulation of the breath). The knowledge and control of Prana is what is meant by Pranayama.

"Pranayama (regulation of the breath) opens to us the door of almost unlimited power. Suppose, for instance, that one understood the Prana perfectly, and

could control it. What power on earth could there be that would not then be his? He would be able to move the suns and stars out of their places, to control everything in the universe, from the atoms to the greatest suns, because he would control the Prana."

When the student has perfected himself in the knowledge of these powers, all things in nature will be under his control, and all forces will serve him. The ignorant see the display of these powers and call them miracles, not realizing all forces are phases of one force, Prana, and he who has grasped the secret of Prana has grasped the secret of all the forces of the universe. "He who has controlled the Prana, has controlled his own mind, and all the minds that exist, because the Prana is the general manifestation of force."

Various philosophies teach a great deal concerning Prana or Vital Force, but few students have any real understanding of what this "Prana or Vital Cosmic-Force" consists. What is commonly termed "Vital Force" in Patanjali's teachings is the "living spirit, electricity or vital magnetism in its most subtle state, and considered as possessed of the attribute of livingness."

Prana is all-pervading. It is the name by which we designate the Universal Principle. It is the essence of all motion, all life, force or energy, whether manifested in electricity, gravitation, magnetism. It is the Active Principle, the Vital Force, the Spirit which abounds in all forms of life "from the amoeba to man—from the most elementary form of plant life to the highest form of animal life, human life and super-human life."

The true occult teaching (contradictory to some forms of New Thought) is that there is life in everything in the universe. "It is," as Ramacharaka says: "in all forms of mind, yet is not mind. It is in the air, yet is not air. It is in every breath, yet it is not breath. It energizes all things, yet it is not those things in themselves. We can best get the idea involved in the concept of Prana by thinking of it as 'living force'—or, more properly still, as the 'essence and principle of living force.'"

Prana is, in a measure, a semi-fluidic force which exists in the atmosphere, and we breathe it into our bodies with the intake of air. It then circulates through the bloodstream and nerve currents, and by certain mystical exercises can be regulated and forced throughout the body, once we get it inside ourselves, to the devitalized organ where it is needed. This is the secret of true "divine healing."

This lesson deals with the control and regulation of the breath for the purpose of experiencing and directing the Prana or Vital Force through rhythmic breathing. All nature is permeated by this Vital Force which we inhale into our bodies by way of the lungs; but unless this great power is controlled, concentrated and directed into useful channels it avails us little.

All things in the universe have an individual rate of vibration. This is also true of the universal Pranic currents. Therefore, the principal reason for regulation of the breath is to harmonize the individual vibrations with the universal vibrations and thereby attain perfect equilibrium and strength and health. Regulation of the breath is a great factor in control of the mind, inducing mental steadiness and greater capacity for forceful concentration.

A Western writer on this subject says: "An ocean of solar Prana surrounds the great orb of day, and sustains and keeps in its orderly rhythmic movements the whole solar system. The varying strength of the solar and lunar currents causes momentary changes in terrestrial Prana which are reflected in our bodies. It is an ebb and flow, as it were; a forward and backward movement; and it is this Great Breath of the Universe that gives the impulse to organic breathing. With its onrush we inhale, and the current of Prana is sent to the farthest ends of the gross vessels—the nerve and blood channels—of the physique. The succeeding moment imparts the backward impulse, and with the receding flow of the vital currents, exhalation takes place. The throbbing of the heart, its expansion—the diastole, and its contraction—systole, correspond with the flow of Prana. But

the rapidity of these inward and outward, forward and backward movements of Prana, varies in different organisms. The influences which establish this individuality, inseparably associated with the correspondences between the macrocosm and the microcosm, determine the circulation of the Prana in our bodies."

We think this a fine illustration of what Prana really is, and though the principle of Prana may not be clearly understood, at least a scientific reason for control and regulation of the breath is revealed. And this is of paramount importance as we proceed with our studies.

It will be remembered that the Prana is circulated throughout the body by way of the nerve currents and blood vessels, and before going further into this study we feel it important at this time to say a few things regarding the nervous system of the human being. It is surprising how few know anything about the mechanism of the body in which they dwell. So in defining the channels of Vital Force we will touch upon the different conceptions held by the Eastern and Western minds on this subject. The Western mind is right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Western science recognizes neural force or neural energy in the body, but it fails to recognize certain centers in the body which serve as points of focal energy. And though Western science recognizes neural energy it fails to associate it as a manifestation of universal Prana.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

ACCORDING to Western science the nervous system of man is divided into two general classes:

- (1) The Cerebro-Spinal Nervous System, and
- (2) The sympathetic Nervous System. The first is concerned with the expression of what are termed the five primary senses, i. e., seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling—in other words the processes of cognition, sensation and volition. The second or Sympathetic Nervous System controls the growth, nutrition and other involuntary processes of the body. This is the system of organic life and is regulated quite independently of the will; as for example, the functions of respiration, digestion and circulation do not command conscious direction.

Some writers call the Sympathetic Nervous System the “vegetative functioning” because it governs the nutrition and growth, in comparison with the Cerebro-Spinal System which governs the distinctly animal faculties. “The Sympathetic System controls the so-called automatic mechanisms of the body, the rhythmical beating of the heart, contraction and dilation of the arteries, the peristaltic motion of the gastro-intestinal tract, the contraction of the smooth muscles wherever found, and the control of the secretions of the various glands.

“The Cerebro-Spinal Nervous System is composed of the brain, the spinal cord, and the nerves which branch off from the latter and extend to all parts of the body.”

Most every common-school student today knows that the brain of man consists of three parts, namely, the Cerebrum, or “great brain,” which occupies the upper, front, and middle portion of the skull; the Cerebellum, or “little brain,” which occupies the lower and back part of the skull; and the Medulla Oblongata, which is the broad-

ened and extended upper portion of the spinal cord, located in front of the Cerebellum.

The Cerebellum is about one-seventh the size of the Cerebrum.

The Cerebrum is composed of two halves which are connected by a broad band of white substance. The Cerebellum or "little brain," is also divided into two hemispheres, which, like the two halves of the "big brain," have a distinct work to do.

In the Medulla Oblongata are located the great ganglionic centers which govern the processes of respiration, swallowing, etc. Some writers declare that in cases where death is caused by hanging it is not strangulation but pressure on the Medulla Oblongata.

The Spinal Cord, commonly called spinal marrow, fills the channel of the vertebral column (spine). From this long cord of nerve substance branch off at each vertebra what may be called "nerve supply wires," and likewise smaller nerves that reach to all parts of the body and act as sense reporters to the brain, or carry motor-impulses from the brain. Some nerves are sensory nerves and others motor nerves.

The Sympathetic Nervous System is composed of masses of nerve substance containing nerve cells which are distributed to all parts of the body, principally the head, neck, chest and abdomen. The masses or ganglia are connected with each other by nerve filaments, and are also connected with the Cerebro-Spinal System by means of nerve-connected links. At various points these nerves meet and form what is known as a "plexus." Please note that the Sympathetic Nervous System controls practically all of the vital processes. With this in mind we will continue our study by discussing the Solar Plexus, which is so much stressed in occult circles, especially among sensitives.

One of the chief plexi of the Sympathetic Nervous System is the Solar Plexus, which is often called the abdominal brain. It is located in the upper part of the abdomen or "pit of the stomach," just back of the point

where the ribs begin to separate and spread to each side of the body. This important plexus is composed of a mass of nerve substance both white and grey, similar to that of the brain, and constitutes a great network of nerve-fibres. These receive and distribute the nerve currents located in the abdominal cavity and also supply energy to the main organs of nutrition. It is a great power-house of vital force and energy upon which are dependent the elementary vital activities. This great nerve center is very sensitive and any injury to it seriously affects the entire system.

The name "solar" itself implies the importance of this plexus, inasmuch as solar means sun, a central fount of power radiating vital force and activity. These same vital rays and forces permeate the body as the result of solar-plexus activity, supplying vital force and energy to the various nerve centers.

The Solar Plexus has been found to be fully developed and functioning at an early stage of the human embryo, even at the stage where the brain is yet a mass of pulp incapable of functioning. One writer even relates cases where infants have been born without a brain or a developed spinal cord, and yet have had a perfectly developed Solar Plexus normally functioning. In several cases the infant lived several months before delivery, and in one instance for a length of time after delivery.

Of the Solar Plexus it may truly be said it is the seat of life, for one may survive a serious injury to any one of the other three brains; but a serious injury to the Solar Brain strikes right at the seat of life and that life ceases to function. Its ganglia are true nerve centers from which emerge filaments of nerve force which is distributed to the involuntary muscles under their control and to the secreting cells of the various glands which depend upon it for their nerve supply. There is probably nothing more wonderful in the whole human body than this transmission of nerve force or nervous energy, and its effects.

Science seems to have solved many remarkable problems of the human body, but upon recalling a scientist's inter-

view with Thomas Edison we realize how little, after all, it has explained the mysteries of life. The scientist said to Mr. Edison that science had explained practically everything in the universe. In reply Edison extended his hand and wiggled his forefinger, saying: "Explain this!" The scientist could not explain it. Perhaps it was a simple request in comparison with some of the great abstract problems, but to explain how a simple nerve current sent out from any of the great nerve centers of the body could contract and move a finger tip, was beyond his knowledge. Eastern science claims to have solved this mystery.

One Eastern writer referred to this same question in the following manner: "Western science has been unable to explain how it is that a pin prick on the finger is telegraphed to the brain by means of a nerve current of the sensory nerves, and is experienced in the brain as 'pain.' If the nerve is severed, or the nerve current otherwise prevented from passing, no 'pain' is felt. The 'pain' is but the feeling experienced in the brain upon receipt of certain kinds of sensory nerve currents."

In the Eastern teachings concerning the nervous system, in addition to the facts as known to Western science they also recognize an esoteric system which they include in their regular instruction.

The higher Eastern teachings hold that in and surrounding everything is a great universal ocean of Prana, or vital energy. Within the organism of the human being is held to abide a stored-up supply of this Prana; this is as it were an individual inlet of the great universal ocean of Prana. Though in a sense apart from the great universal Pranic supply, it is, nevertheless, always in direct contact with the great ocean of Prana which pervades the universe.

In the exact center of the spinal cord is an invisible channel with well-defined limits and form, which in Eastern philosophy is termed the Sushumna. Flowing on either side of this, traversing the spinal cord, are two distinct currents of Prana. Located at the lower end of

this Sushumna channel is a subtle, invisible substance known as the Kundalini, which is of a triangular form and in which is stored up a vast amount of Prana in its most potent form. This Kundalini is capable of producing many unusual psychic effects in that it opens up channels and fields of psychic activity of which the ordinary persons has not the faintest conception.

This power is often spoken of as the "Serpent Power" and it is a serpent power indeed in many interpretations of the word. Right here is where we wish to give a warning signal to any who are considering or who are attempting to arouse and release the Kundalini. It is one of the gravest dangers with which students of the ordinary Oriental philosophy are met. True, it opens up channels of power which enable one to function on many planes of mental activity that otherwise would be impossible to him except when this force is directed to the brain; but its dangers are ten-fold the total of its blessings. An unwise attempt or instruction as to how to release the Kundalini in the average individual has proven one of the curses which many savants of Oriental philosophies have brought to this country.

To any but a devoutly consecrated student and practitioner of the higher mystic laws, opening the Kundalini is the surest and quickest path to the insane asylum. The sights which meet the vision of one still immersed in materiality when he has, even in a partial degree, prematurely opened the Kundalini, drives him to hopeless and raving madness. It is a pitiful and most deplorable condition which every sincere occultist has armed himself to prevent.

This we shall discuss in our next lesson. We shall preface it by explaining a few of the awful sights which are opened to the undeveloped psychic whose life and daily habits are of the lower, purely physical vibrations. These are vital facts which every student of psychic laws should know and understand before entering the mystic path, which if sincerely lived and diligently sought after, will attain the "Mystic Rose."

CHAPTER IX

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CRIME

STEEPED in religious dogma, repressed by subjection to creeds, the children of the earth are crying for release from the chains of bondage imposed by papal and prelatic "dignitaries" in the sacred name of Truth. Freedom at any cost is now the "battle cry of souls." Breaking the bonds of the cell-house still leaves the prison wall of matter to be scaled—so find the prisoners of life.

Dimly aware of its reality, the soul incarnate in matter is ever seeking evidence of its greater field of expression—is ever striving to cognize something of its natural habitat released from its maze of repressions and limitations. Swept in a flood of attraction, it follows the "current of psychogony" and eventually drifts into the realm of occultism.

Seeking to find in the investigation of occult laws the answer to the question of the ages—"If a man die shall he live again?"—the soul is soon led into channels where the rending of the veil between the visible and the invisible planes becomes the foremost and ultimate object of all physical and mental efforts. There is where the danger lies. That is the great psychological crime.

Exponents of modern science have proven that by specific methods of glandular excitation, physical and mental capacities can be increased or arrested by various stimulative injections and exercises. The treatment by certain "rays or vibrations" has proven immensely effective in producing phenomenal rapidity of growth in many animals. By concentration of specified mental processes and certain exercises which arouse and stimulate the various spiritual centers or chakras, clairvoyance and other phases of so-called "spiritual development" can be ob-

tained. But any unnatural process of forcing these centers open could not other than create dire results, which often lead to physical incarceration of the victim in a psychopathic institution.

However, we shall not dwell on that subject too long. A word to the wise is said to be sufficient. Be that as it may, we must all learn our lessons some time. It is indicative of wisdom when one soul can learn a lesson through the experience of another.

Elementals and Vampires

In the plane interblending with the earth vibrations and in the planes below and immediately above, the cosmic elements are literally swarming with beings, from the lower elementals to the astral vampires and earth-bound souls writhing in the mire of their evil propensities. Mouldering in the effects of lust, their desires and deeds have made of them grotesque monstrosities more gruesome than the wildest visions of a delirium tremens victim. Purely physical lives and selfish, lustful, pernicious habits, have created this "seething hell of sin and dormant consciences." There are tragic thousands in the flesh who are daily creating such a post-earthly existence.

There are other planes where the dwellers are beyond the elemental, higher than the distorted souls mentioned, but nevertheless selfish, evilly-inclined, deceptive, and crazed by desires of earthly passions. Each soul—as is each electron, and so on up the scale of evolution—is subject to certain laws which govern its rate and place of attraction.

As the law of gravitation hastily returns to earth that which is of the earth earthly, so does the law of spiritual attraction draw unto its proper place the souls within and without the physical habitation. All souls, incarnate and discarnate, are responsible to this law. A person with evil habits would naturally vibrate to the plane where such attraction existed. A person who is a slave to desire, inclined to greed, deception and prevarication would

vibrate to, or attract the attention of, spirits of a like nature. Therein lies the danger. Few there are who do not possess such destructive qualities. The great majority have as an active part of their human nature one or more of those negative qualities, the retention of which should warn against the development of psychic powers. Often, karmically or through heredity, the subconscious conceals repressions and desires of which the individual is unaware. Like an apparently dormant volcano they seem to be asleep—but all the while are seething and boiling down in the internal regions, suddenly to burst forth in a glaring eruption, bringing destruction to all within its reach. So it is occasionally with human nature; which accounts for many of our tragic crimes. To such persons the kind and loving justice of an all-wise Divinity shields the eyes from the tragedies of the elemental and lower astral planes which eventually will be their lot, for a time of awakening.

There are many lesser evils and human weaknesses which are sufficient to prevent any wise teacher suggesting psychic unfoldment until such time as proper physical and spiritual preparation shall have “incensed the temple of the living God and made holy preparation for the visit of the angels.” Then the student is completely prepared for true psychic unfoldment of the higher degrees, and the blessings of such an one cannot be described by human tongue or facile pen in the wildest flights of fancy’s dream.

Assuming such preparation to have been made, and assuming that our students are motivated in these studies by the highest principles of love and truth, we shall quickly leave behind us the lurid picture which we deemed needful to paint, and mentally journey into more pleasant fields and spiritual instruction.

CHAPTER X

BUILDING A PROTECTIVE AURA

DUE to the prevalence of greed, selfishness, envy and other unspiritual qualities—even among students and advocates of the esoteric philosophies, where they seem to cause more tragic results—we feel it imperative to give here a few instructions upon “building a protective aura.” That ignorance of the law and the consequences of infraction, is responsible for its violation, seldom occurs to the perpetrators, who often are boastful of the power they possess.

It is necessary to build a protective aura around oneself before entering a seance room, promiscuous crowds, or other places where negative conditions may be present. Disturbing mental and psychic influences and thought waves fill the ethers; these may be of a mundane or an astral origin and may be equally annoying. Rhythmical breathing is very effectively employed in building a protective aura by which one may render himself immune to outside influences of every description.

We again remind that in all these exercises the spinal column must be kept straight. Clear the lungs and breathe rhythmically, as taught in chapter twelve, employing the regular pulse-unit beat, not to exceed seven cycles. (No exercise should be overdone.) Use the imagination to build mentally the “protective aura,” and the attention and will to project it, surrounding your body for several feet in all directions. This forms an oval shield which cannot be penetrated by any psychic or mental currents, and will enable one to gain mental poise, which comes from perfect confidence and faith. However, the most important part of this formula is the accompanying affirmation which will express self-realization of Masterhood and the divine, creative powers of the “I AM.” More than all else mankind needs knowledge of its divin-

ity, of the I AM, the Divine, dwelling within it—the “I AM” which Jesus taught and which the multitudes understood to relate to God, yet could not comprehend. When the disciples asked him, “How shall we know the Father?” he replied, “Ye have seen me, ye have seen the Father also; for I AM in the Father and the Father is in me, even as I AM in you and you are in me.” Could a great truth be more plainly given? It is this indwelling divinity, the realization of which is symbolized in “I AM,” that all should strive to attain—and by which we are protected against all external influences.

When one has thus protected oneself, undesirable psychic and mental vibrations, or thought currents, will rebound to the sender, often with amazing discomfiture. It is a law of natural “action and reaction” that we reap what we sow; consequently, if sowing unpleasant thoughts and conditions, one could not other than reap unpleasantness which inevitably returns as a boomerang to the “creator.” Purity of mind, and realization of at-onement with the Divine-creative forces and their eternal protection, is the most positive safeguard we have against external influences, as well as the internal imaging of our own “mortal mind.”

Selfishness, envy, greed, jealousy—all of which create unkind thoughts—are the surest way to attract lower-astral influences and kindred thought forces which result in sorrow and disillusion. Will humanity never learn that we get out of life exactly in proportion to that which we put into it? To deny this is to deny the wisdom and justice of God, to doubt the efficiency of Divine Law. In the limitations of a finite consciousness we are not able to comprehend a Justice so vast in scope, so eternal and supernal, as that of *Life*. It is impossible for the unawakened soul to associate “life” and “justice.” Few can find a blessing in pain, or feel soul-growth in a heartache, or understand that values can only be realized by comparison. Monotony would be a curse. The sun is only radiant in contrast with darkened skies. Exuberance of health is only realized in the presence of sickness, joy,

in comparison with sorrow; love in contrast with indifference. Life is wonderful only by way of comparisons, which are the result of progressive or retrogressive influences—obedience or disobedience to the laws of life. Life is Law—we cannot escape it. Therefore to gain the most from life we must live in harmony with the laws of life. Selfishness, jealousy, envy, greed, are contrary to spiritual evolution, are destructive, and create sorrow. Therefore, eliminate them from the sanctuary of your mind that your soul may be glorified with the fruits of righteousness. No one can take from you that which is rightfully yours. *Remember that!* If another has success, he has earned it. If another is blessed with love and happiness, he is reaping that which he has sown—though we may wonder how and when. We cannot pretend to understand life; it is enough to know that Infinite Mind must have destined everything to happen for a purpose—and that purpose for the good, the evolution, of our souls. Therefore, at best, we can only strive to adjust ourselves to the circumstances of life and improve them, if possible.

CHAPTER XI

CONTROLLING PSYCHIC FORCES

THE celebrated powers of the Yogis of India, and of other Masters and Mystics, lie in their direction and control of the Kundalini by rhythmic breathing. Through performing certain exercises and scientific breathing the Kundalini is aroused and begins to unfold and rise through the various lotuses associated with the Sushumna.

Concerning the arousing of the Kundalini, Swami Vivekananda says: "In the lotus of the Kundalini there is the power of the Kundalini coiled up. When that Kundalini awakes, it tries to force a passage through the hollow canal running through the spinal cord called the Sushumna. As it ascends through the Sushumna, the Kundalini rises step by step, and, as it were, layer after layer of the mind becomes open, and all the different wonderful powers come. . . .

"In rhythmical breathing comes a tendency of all the molecules of the body to have the same direction. When mind changes into will, the currents change into a motion similar to that of electricity, because the nerves have been proved to show polarity under the action of electrical currents. This shows that when the will evolves into the nerve currents it is changed into something like electricity. When all the motions of the body have become perfectly rhythmical, the body has, as it were, become a gigantic battery of will. This tremendous will is exactly what the student wants. This is, therefore, a physiological explanation of the breathing exercise. It helps to bring a rhythmical action in the body, and helps us, through the respiratory center, to control other centers. The aim of pranayama (regulation of the breath) here is to rouse the coiled-up power in the Muladhara, which is called the Kundalini. . . .

"All the sensations and motions of the body are being sent into the brain, and out of it, through the wires of the nerve fibres. The spinal cord is the Ida and Pingali of the Yogis. They are the main channels through which the afferent and the efferent currents are traveling. But why should not the mind send the news without any wires? Taking the analogy of electricity, we find that man can send a current only along a wire; but nature requires no wires to send her tremendous currents. This proves that the wire is really not necessary, but that only our inability to dispense with it compels us to use it. The Yogi says that if the mind can send the news without the wires of the nerve fibres, then one has gotten rid of the bondage of matter.

"If you can make the current pass through the Sushumna, you have worked the problem. The mind has made this network of the nervous system, and has to break it so that no wires will be required to work through. Then alone will all knowledge come to us—no more bondage of the body; that is why it is so important to get control of the Sushumna. If you can send the mental current through that hollow canal, without any nerve fibres to act as wires, you have solved the problem—and it can be done."

In most cases of supernatural power or wisdom, there is usually evidence that some little current of the Kundalini has found its way into the Sushumna. In many instances the release has been ignorantly stumbled upon through some occult method or accident. Many cases of psychic phenomena can be explained through this conscious or unconscious employment of the Kundalini power. The power used by the majority of incarnate spirits to perform many of the so-called spirit manifestations is derived from the Kundalini force of the incarnate. Most instances of spiritual or psychic unfoldment in a "development class" come as a result of the awakening of these forces, either consciously or unconsciously through meditation and concentration, prompted and in some cases assisted by disembodied spirits. How-

ever, wise and good spirits will never force this development; they know the key to healthful psychism and true mediumship is a slow and continuous growth of the soul and should not be forced by man or spirit. For selfish purposes, or an egotistical desire to perform wonders, evil or ignorant spirits will prematurely rouse the Kundalini before the mind and the body have become spiritualized into a higher rate of vibration strong enough to withstand the powerful currents. Many examples of such mediumship could be cited, where the recipient had experienced a phenomenal development of several phases. Investigators were amazed, more so, to find that as time went on the medium became depleted in body to the extent that opiates or alcoholic stimulants had to be resorted to. This explains why many physical mediums become the victims of false stimulants—their bodies were ravaged and torn by the very power which could have made of them divinities had it been wisely and slowly unfolded together with a spiritualization and development of the physical body. These laws are no plaything for the infant, the moron or the ignorant.

Desiring to drink water from a pure, fresh, sparkling spring, few would defile it with an unclean, broken vessel; yet literally thousands rush headlong into psychic unfoldment, eagerly seeking one or more phases for various selfish or unselfish purposes, without having made the least physical preparation. The result is evident.

Spiritualism especially has been the sufferer because she has not sufficiently warned her people of the impending tragedies of unwise psychism. In her great desire to free humanity from the bonds which have held it in spiritual ignorance, to a great extent she has lost sight of the momentous facts of spirit vampirism and obsession. Time will come when she will have to turn her eyes from the world without to her children within, to save them from the results of promiscuous development, which have instigated criticism from the slow and more conservative occultists. Every true occultist recognizes genuine mediumship, and he knows, *soul discerns*, the wise from

the unwise, the positive from the negative. He honors true spiritual unfoldment, but abhors the too-general abuse of divine powers which is predominant in the world today—close rivalry to the days of Atlantis, which was destroyed through her own misuse of the forces of nature.

There are perhaps less than fifty—if that many—genuinely developed mystics of the higher order in the whole United States—men and women whose lives are completely raised above the vibrations of anything of a material nature; men and women whose days and nights are spent in solemn meditation and contemplation, sending out love and healing vibrations to a sick and sorrowing world; men and women whose physical bodies are of such a fine, etheric nature that they have almost ceased to need physical sustenance; who for days can and do lay aside their physical vehicle, going about in the spirit answering the calls of soul-panic-stricken children of earth. How many have been in the throes of mortal and mental agony, praying for release in death, only to be enveloped suddenly by a wonderful ray of peace and love which stilled the throbbing tendons of the body and enveloped the mind in restful sleep! Awakening brought memory of a horrible nightmare, stilled and extinguished by a beautiful “angel being.” It was an angel indeed, but most often one still in the flesh—for one still incarnate in a human body is more able to combat human vibrations than are the spirits who have laid aside their mortal cloak.

This power to traverse the spheres is given him who through proper and prolonged preparation has gradually released the Kundalini. But mind, we said “prolonged preparation.” The body must be absolutely cleansed of all animal vibrations, and so long as we are a nation of meat-eaters, born of meat-eaters, raised on meat, and surrounded by meat-eaters who are continuously filling the ethers with their animal vibrations, so long will it be positively dangerous to delve too deeply into the secret and mystic Kundalini powers. It takes seven years to absolutely change the bodily vibrations. If one has spent seven years abstaining from meat, all stimulants, drugs,

emotional activities, sex-waste; has purified the body by pure thinking, strengthened it by certain scientific and esoteric exercises, and raised the blood vibration by plenty of sunshine and fresh oxygen; and desires illuminating spiritual gifts for an unselfish purpose—to hasten the “universal at-one-ment of the whole”—then, only under the strict guidance and observance of an advanced teacher, a Master, are you prepared to even think about arousing and releasing the Kundalini. Jesus and Buddha were such ones. To obtain these powers, these realizations, of the purpose of Divine at-one-ment and the salvation of the masses, is to become Christ-ed, be made holy sons and daughters of the great universal Father-Mother Creator.

However, in the human body are seven chakras or lotus centers which are centers of Pranic activity, that can be cultivated and developed, whereby one may obtain unusual psychic powers without the vast danger which accompanies the usual effort to arouse the Kundalini.

Subtle Forces

Traversing the Sushumna canal or channel in the spinal cord are two currents; one positive, called the Pingala, which follows the right side of the Sushumna canal, and the Ida (ee-dah), the negative current, which traverses the left side of the spinal cord or Sushumna canal. Along this canal are seven centers of pranic activity which are called lotuses. The lowest center, or “lotus,” is situated at the base of the spine and in the Oriental phraseology is called the Muladhara. Ascending the spinal column, the next in order is called the second or Svadhisthana center. Then higher up, the Manipura; and so on up the spinal column, or Sushumna canal, till we arrive at the seventh center or lotus, which is located in the brain and is often called the thousand-petalled lotus, or the Sahasrara.

In the lowest center, which is located at the base of the spine, there is an accumulation of stored pranic force, which is called Kundalini. The highest center, Sahasrara, distributes the Kundalini to the brain. In this

same center is also stored a subtle form of pranic energy which is employed in intellectual and certain phases of spiritual activity. It is the creator of personal magnetism, and while not confined alone to the brain centers, it predominates in that portion of the body.

Many teachers concede that the so-called sexual energy can be transformed and transmuted into this intellectual and spiritual fluid by certain forms of psychic exercises and celibacy. But the opposite is also true. When the natural sexual forces are depleted through excessive excitation or unnatural perversion, the precious fluids are drained from the Sahasrara or brain center, and a parched, degenerated condition takes place, which if allowed to continue, eventually leads to insanity and various mental complexes.

The Sushumna is a great battery of psychic force, and when properly directed coordinates perfectly with the various centers, each of which has its specific functions. The object of positive unfoldment is to arouse these centers from their dormancy through proper breathing and physical exercises, and mental concentration. The unfoldment of psychic and spiritual gifts in this way allows the recipient to function consciously on various psychic planes while still in full control of the physical vehicle. This high spiritual unfoldment eliminates all possibility of spiritual obsession or physical degeneration.

CHAPTER XII

RHYTHMIC BREATHING

THE chief concern and purpose of rhythmic breathing is the regulation and control of the Prana and Kundalini. Proper breathing is of great importance to health, and in this modern age is more and more recognized as a most important factor in bodily equilibrium.

When wisely and conscientiously developed, this great mystic dynamo of power, the Kundalini, is awakened; and with the slow, certain, winding movement of "The Serpent" it ascends the Sushumna channel and acts upon center after center, and a tremendous reaction sets in. When the great sensation-metropolis, the brain, is reached the whole three-fold being responds and the student is "heavenized" in a glorious blaze of mystic illumination.

The first step to attain this much-desired experience is through rhythmic breathing, which we will now consider.

Speaking of rhythm, a well-known writer on physical science says: "Rhythm is a necessary characteristic of all motion. Given the co-existence everywhere of antagonistic forces—a postulate which is necessitated by our experience—and rhythm is a necessary corollary. All motion alternates—be it the motion of planets in their orbits, or ethereal corpuscles in their undulations—be it the cadence of speech, or the rise and fall of prices—it becomes manifest that this perpetual reversal of motion between limits is inevitable."

The term rhythm is explained as: "Regularly recurring motion, change, or impulse proceeding in time-measured, alternating sequence." From a full definition of these words we would infer the true meaning to be: "Succeeding, acting or happening in turn; returning repeatedly, occurring at stated intervals, or according to some regular rule." It would generally imply a "regularity of alternating movement proceeding according to some established rule, and manifesting time-measurement." Rhythm is es-

pecially manifested as *beating time*, best illustrated by the measured time observed in poetry and music, the metronome, the pendulum of the clock, the revolution of the earth on its axis and its movement around the sun in "measured time." Measured time is found in all the activities of nature in the universe. There is nothing existent which does not manifest rhythmic movements according to *measured time*.

Rhythm means measured motion. That measured motion is found in all the activities of the universe; and as everything has a rate of vibration it behooves us, in order to "fit" or harmonize perfectly with the great scheme of life, to find our individual rate of vibration, and to equilibrate the various vibrations of our bodily organs. Antagonistic forces tend to destroy. It is their nature; therefore, equilibrium is necessary to attunement.

As there are regular intervals of time and an alternation between two opposite poles of action and motion, so there is ever-recurring motion and activity in all manifestations of rhythm.

As the pendulum of a clock swings in perfect rhythm from one pole to the other, registering measured time and definite action, and there is a regular period of time and space elapsing between each beat, or swing, so it is with the rhythmic activity of nature. The period between the alternating impulses is the degree which constitutes the rhythmic rate.

Everything has its own measure of periodicity, its rhythmic rate; and the difference between all phenomenal things is their individual rate of vibration. From the lowest atoms and molecules and other forms of which we know little if anything, to the highest forms of life known, all manifest and are individualized by their particular rate of vibration. All the stars in the heavens manifest rhythm, and there is no greater example than our little earth. The tides of the sea in their rise and fall are an example. The earth around its so-called axis, and also around the sun—each is completed rhythm, in that the circle is completed. The swing of the pendulum of the

clock is interrupted rhythm because the complete circular movement is broken.

As day follows night, summer follows winter, sleep follows waking, involution follows evolution, and vice versa; as effect follows cause and new causes are set up by certain effects; as fashions, customs, history and politics have their cycles, so do the experiences which measure the quality of the soul in the final (if there be final) inventory.

According to the higher teachings the first preparation for cosmic attunement is the attunement of the physical body. An "ordered" body creates an ordered mind, and allows an "ordered spirit" to express properly and thus fulfill its *obligations* to the train of evolution.

In this course we are going to give nothing but very simple exercises so that none need fear anything that is not beneficial. However, it must be remembered that these are not given for the mere purpose of building up a perfect physique or lung capacity, but to arouse the vital forces of the body, and to direct the Prana and Kundalini in a rhythmic motion throughout the body, thereby stimulating all the higher faculties and creating an equilibrium in the body which will naturally tend to perfect the body by stimulating the lung activity.

Ramacharaka says of rhythmic breathing: "The atoms of the human body are in constant vibration. Unceasing changes are occurring. In a few months there is almost a complete change in the matter composing the body, and scarcely a single atom now composing your body will be found in it a few months hence. Vibration, constant vibration. Change, constant change. All motion is a manifestation of the law of rhythm. Our bodies are as much subject to rhythmic laws as is the planet in its revolution around the Sun. Much of the esoteric side of the Yogi Science of Breath is based upon this known principle of nature. By falling in with the rhythm of the body, the Yogi manages to absorb a great amount of Prana, which he disposes of to bring about the results desired by him.

"The body which you occupy is like a small inlet running into the land from the sea. Although apparently subject only to its own laws, it is really subject to the ebb and flow of the tides of the ocean. The great sea of life is swelling and receding, rising and falling, and we are responding to its vibrations and rhythm. In a normal condition we receive the vibrations and rhythm of the great ocean of life, and respond to it; but at times the mouth of the inlet seems to be choked up with debris, and we fail to receive the impulses from Mother Ocean, and as a consequence, inharmony manifests in us.

"You have heard how a note on a violin, if sounded repeatedly and in measured, regular rhythm, will start into motion certain vibrations which will in time destroy a bridge. The same result occurs when a regiment of soldiers crosses a bridge, the order being always to 'break step' on such an occasion, lest the vibration bring down both bridge and regiment. These manifestations of the effect of rhythmic motion will give you an idea of the effect on the body of rhythmic breathing. The whole system catches the vibration and comes into harmony with the will, which causes the rhythmic motion of the lungs, and while in such complete harmony will respond readily to orders from the will.

"With the body thus attuned, the Yogi finds no difficulty in increasing the circulation in any part of his body by an order from the will, and in the same way he can direct an increased current of nerve force to any part or organ, strengthening and stimulating it. In the same way the Yogi, by rhythmic breathing, 'catches the swing,' as it were, and is able to absorb and control a greatly increased amount of Prana, which is then at the disposal of his will. He can and does use it as a vehicle for sending forth thoughts to others and for attracting to himself all those whose thoughts are keyed to the same vibration. The phenomena of telepathy, thought-transference, mental healing, etc., which are attracting such an interest in the Western world at this time, but which have been known to the Yogis for centuries, can be greatly increased and

augmented if the person sending forth the thoughts will do so after rhythmic breathing. Rhythmic breathing will increase the value of mental healing, etc., several hundred per cent."

To establish the rate of rhythmic measure one must discern one's pulse beat. Each person has his own pulse measure or beat, and that is his standard for rhythmic breathing. Simple? Yes, the simpler the better for the needs of today. It is the simple things of life which deceive the masses, for they comprehend not their value.

As the blood surges through the arteries in what are called blood-waves, it causes a rhythmical expansion; this is caused by successive contractions of the heart. The pulse is taken by placing the forefinger on the thumb side of the wrist, as the artery at this point is comparatively close to the surface and can be easily pressed against the wrist bones, thereby making it a comparatively easy task to take the pulse rate.

Regarding the various rates of human pulse the following statement is taken from an authoritative reference work on the subject: "The pulse varies greatly in health according to the age, sex, temperament, exercise or rest, emotional state, temperature, time of day, posture, atmospheric pressure, and personal idiosyncrasy. Before birth the average number of pulsations each minute is 150; in the newly born, from 140 to 130; during the first year of life, 130 to 115; during the second year, 115 to 100; about the seventh year, 90 to 85; about the fourteenth year, 85 to 80; in adult life, 80 to 70; in old age, 70 to 60; in decrepitude, 75 to 55."

In the female and in persons of sanguine temperament the pulse rate is more rapid by several beats to the minute than in males and individuals of a phlegmatic type. The rate is also higher after a meal and during exercise. The pulse is more rapid in the evening than in the morning, and in the standing than in the sitting or recumbent posture. High temperatures also accelerate it. During sleep the pulse is usually slower than in the waking state. Forty is not an uncommon rate, and instances

have been known in which the pulsations were only thirty, or more rarely twenty to the minute. In disease the pulse presents wide variations in rate, regularity, volume and tension.

Among advanced occultists there is a teaching—many modern physiologists call it a “theory”—that there is a deviation of the blood rhythm in the case of the brain; and many imply that the blood measure of circulation in the brain does not follow the same beat as it does in the rest of the body. They assert that the rate in the brain is determined by the breathing rate of the individual. Western physiologists are somewhat ignorant of these claims, but though many deride them as having no validity in fact, there are others, according to Hereward Carrington, who are disposed to accept and support the Oriental claims.

In support of this claim Mr. Carrington writes: “Here is an interesting physiological fact, very little known—in fact I have rarely spoken to a doctor who knew it—though it seems to bear out strikingly the Eastern philosophies. If you put your hand on your wrist, you can feel the pulsation—or in the upper arm, or in the ankle, or wherever there is a pulse. It simply shows the rate of the heart beat. The pulse varies from seventy to eighty to the minute, or more, according to the degree of excitement, exercise, and so forth. That pulse-rate is the same all over the body—in the neck, the head, even the *coverings* of the brain. But the circulation in the brain itself is synchronous with—or correspondent to—not the *heart* pulsation but to the *breathing* rate—that is, twelve or fourteen to the minute! This is a very striking fact and it seems to show us that there is—in the circulation of the brain itself—a pulsation which is synchronous with, or correspondent to, the breathing rate. This has been demonstrated by a series of very fine anatomical experiments made by an English surgeon, and certainly seems to bear out the Hindu contention that there is a definite connection between consciousness and the breathing rate.”

CHAPTER XIII

OBTAINING PULSE RATE

THE first task is obtaining the pulse rate in order to learn how to breathe rhythmically, and this should be definitely established by the student and fixed in mind. It does not matter how many pulse beats you have a minute; it is the rhythm that you want to catch and to establish in your mind as definitely as you would were you keeping time to music or poetry. In the East they use memorized mantrums, but in the West we are more familiar with the count of one-two-three-four, or better still up to six—the average beats of a proper breath. To better understand what we are trying to convey we will use the illustration of marching soldiers with their “left—right, left—right, left—right, left.”

Sit quietly and relax; then place your forefinger on your wrist on the thumb-side as instructed in the previous lesson. Then count in unison with the pulse-beat “one-two-three-four-five-six” until you have firmly established in your mind your exact rate. It then becomes a subconscious knowledge and no doubt the reaction on the improvement of the health will be a surprise to many. With the majority their “engine is missing,” or in other words their body is not “pulling” together. An illustration to express more simply what we mean would be to refer to a team of horses, one of which is pulling steadily and the other by jerks. A steady momentum is impossible and makes double work for both. The same often applies to our body, and disease results, where perfect health and rhythm should prevail. The greatest secret of good health is good, deep, rhythmic breathing. Few informed will deny this.

Practice this simple method for several minutes every time the opportunity presents itself until you feel you have completely acquired the mental rhythm of your pulse

beats. It is amazing how quickly this exercise becomes a habit. But should you seem a little awkward in obtaining this primary information do not be discouraged; a little perseverance will bring the desired results in due time. After a little practice you will find it just as simple to breathe rhythmically without holding the finger on the pulse. But, in your eagerness to proceed do not make the great mistake of doing this exercise hastily, for it would not be complete, nor could the desired results be obtained. This preliminary step must be complete before the forthcoming exercises will bring the satisfactory results for which we have studied thus far. The final reward will more than compensate the patience and perseverance involved.

Remember—at no time hurry in exercises; take your time. Relaxation is necessary in order to proceed leisurely. It is futile to attempt to practice when hurried.

CHAPTER XIV

ALTERNATE BREATHING

IT is a singular fact that nature causes man to breathe for certain periods first through one nostril and then the other. Investigation and experiment have proven this true. These periods cover a range of from one to several hours according to the requirements of the individual. This alternate breathing is performed instinctively and requires no fiat of consciousness. This may be hard to believe but nevertheless it will be found to be true, though with but few exceptions Western physiology seems totally unaware of this habit of nature. Our students will remember that in a past lesson we said that there were two currents of Prana, traversing each side of the Sushumna channel—one, the Pingala or positive current, which traverses the right-hand channel; the other, the Ida or negative current, which traverses the left-hand channel. Very positive persons will be found to breathe most of the time through the Pingala, and negative persons will be found breathing principally through the Ida. Thus you can see why it is necessary to establish rhythmic, alternate breathing between the positive and negative currents.

Now some of our students may be faced with a denial of this by some doctors—but denial never proved anything untrue; the facts themselves must be tested and they alone refute or confirm. The greatest truths are most often the least understood.

By establishing alternate breathing one obtains a greater poise and harmony between the two pranic currents, and a state of mental and physical poise and strength ensues. Concerning this subject Swami Vivekananda says: "By this process of breathing we can control all the various motions in the body, and the various nerve currents that are running through the body. First we begin by recognizing them, and then we slowly get

control of them. The Yogis consider that there are three main currents of Prana in the human body. One they call Ida, another Pingala, and the third Sushumna. Pingala, according to them, is on the right side of the spinal column, and the Ida is on the left side, and in the middle of this spinal column is the Sushumna, a vacant channel. Ida and Pingala, according to them, are the currents working in every man, and through these currents we are performing all the functions of life. Sushumna is present in all, as a possibility; but it works only in the Yogi. (Ed. Note: i.e., in anyone who by certain practices has changed and equilibrated the body). You must remember that the Yogi changes his body; as you go on practicing your body changes; it is not the same body that you had before the practice."

The practice of alternate breathing is usually employed for two general purposes—one, to rest the mind and body, and second, to obtain manifestation of the higher states of consciousness, i.e., the higher psychic and spiritual unfoldment. But the first must be obtained before the latter can be realized in its higher, truer and more reliable manifestations. Remember there is a great deal of difference between an ordinary psychic and a genuine mystic. The first contacts the lower astral, the latter the cosmic—the First Principle or Cause. Our first purpose through these simple exercises is to obtain *poise* for the mental and physical self—that which so few possess.

On the subject of alternate breathing E. A. Fletcher wrote in one of her manuscripts that she knew of two Buffalo physicians who made this discovery for themselves through certain experiments. She also related how a certain California physician announced a discovery and registered by certain mechanical means "positive and negative electrical currents in the air chambers of the lungs of a living person." She further writes: "Hindu physiology begins its surprises by teaching us that with every inhalation through the right nostril a positive current flows down the right side of the spine, and with every inhalation through the left nostril a negative current

flows down the left side. The lungs are correspondingly charged with positive, or solar, and negative, or lunar, currents. It is by means of the two currents that all the processes of life are performed, and it is an equally imperative condition of health that they be equally balanced. Upon their rhythmic and harmonic flow, fed by the breath of life, depends the measure of health and vitality in the human system."

A simple and invigorating exercise in alternate breathing is as follows: using the tip of the forefinger to close the nostril, place the thumb under the chin as a balance and to direct the forefinger. First completely exhale through the left nostril while the right nostril is closed. Remember, before every breathing exercise the lungs should be as nearly as possible *emptied* so as to relieve the lungs of all the stale air. As a further reminder before proceeding—do not make the mistake of trying to see how much air you can inhale, or practice till tired. The purpose of these lessons is to build up, not to tear down. By filling the lungs to an exerted capacity there would be a strain which could not but be harmful.

After emptying the lungs, and the right nostril is closed, inhale through the left nostril to the length of 6 pulse beats. Hold the breath three pulse beats, thereby allowing free circulation of the air through the lungs. Then exhale (6 pulse beats). Hold out (or do not breathe at all) 3 pulse beats. Inhale and exhale six pulse beats, and "hold in" and "hold out" (or relax) three pulse beats. Then reverse the exercise by holding the left nostril closed. Inhale (6 pulse beats) through the right nostril, hold in 3, exhale 6, hold out (relax) 3, and then repeat by alternating from one nostril to the other. It will be seen that the purpose of "holding in" is to allow free circulation and beneficial distribution of the purifying oxygen before releasing it with the accumulated poisons. The "holding out," or relaxation, is to allow a brief rest to the lungs, as they have the responsibility of purifying our bodies 24 hours a day. Few people are cognizant of the task they constantly impose on their lungs. Continue this exercise

for only a few minutes, and never after you feel the slightest dizziness. You may either lie down or sit up. In either position the spine must be *perfectly straight* and the body relaxed.

The above exercise is a simple one, but it is most imperative that it be mastered before proceeding with the lessons—that is if the student sincerely anticipates results. If you do not follow instructions and consequently fail to derive the desired benefits, please do not blame the lessons; place the blame in its proper place. Do not be like the patient who went to a doctor with a complaint of illness. The doctor prescribed certain things, but they required an effort. She did not follow his instructions and consequently did not get well. For her failure to obtain health she blamed the doctor, and did not stop to consider she had not followed his instructions. Do not blame the doctor; and do not blame this course, if you fail to comply with the instructions.

CHAPTER XV

CONTROLLING THE VITAL FORCES

ALTERNATE breathing is nerve-calming, and equalizes by renewing the human battery which has been depleted by one current having been employed too long. This is because it restores the body to harmonious activity. The exercise we gave in the last lesson assists in distributing the Prana which thus electrifies the nerves of the body and stimulates the various organs.

We are but human batteries built to receive the electrical forces of the cosmic, and thus purify, renew and invigorate the ever-depleting and decomposing atoms which constitute the physical. By *regeneration* of our bodies they become infinitely finer and are thus more receptive to the higher electrical currents of the cosmic.

Do not forget that the Ida is the negative current and the Pingala the positive, and that each can be used for definite purposes through the simple process of proper breathing through closing the opposite nostril. If too negative, tired or disturbed, close the left nostril by holding the forefinger over it and breathe evenly through the right nostril, thereby inhaling the positive Pingala current. If you desire mental calm, poise or peace, close the right nostril and through the left breathe in the negative Ida current.

Please do not be misled as to the value of these lessons because of their simplicity, for this particular lesson contains especially valuable information and should be memorized and thoroughly understood before proceeding further. As one teacher said, "If you grasp its secret, and will apply it according to the simple method pointed out to you, you will have at hand a most valuable remedy and instrument of health, physical and mental. Do not allow its simplicity and lack of pretension to blind you to its real merit."

We have dwelt at length on rhythmic breathing. It is not limited to alternate breathing, which is but a small part of the Yogi science of breathing. Its purpose is not only to alternate the Ida and Pingala currents but to equilibrate the measure of the pulsebeats to the breathing rate.

In the following exercises it is not necessary for you to continue the alternate breathing longer than you feel the need. But do not forget that which is of so much importance—to maintain the rhythmic measure of the pulse beats. We shall not repeat this important instruction upon which depends so much of the future value of these lessons. Also remember the free-and-easy posture we spoke of in a former lesson. Keep the head and spine in a straight line, allowing the weight of the body to rest on the trunk. When you feel perfectly relaxed and at ease, which you will be when you have discovered your exact point of bodily center of gravity, you will be ready to proceed with your unfoldment. There is a secret to real relaxation. This so few Westerners know how to attain.

Psychological Breathing

The Yogis employ the art of rhythmic breathing in connection with the attainment of the well-known phenomena of telepathy, thought-transference, influence, healing, etc. They hold that Prana is the essential principle operative in all such phenomena whether the recipient is conscious or unconscious of its use.

Referring to this the great teacher, Vivekananda, wrote: "We see sects in every country who have attempted this control of Prana. In this country there are Mind-healers, Faith-healers, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Hypnotists, etc., and if we analyze these different groups we find that the background of each is the control of the Prana, whether they know it or not. If you boil down all these theories, the residuum will be the same. It is the one and the same force they are manipulating, only unknowingly. They have stumbled upon the discovery of a force, and do not know its nature, but they are

unconsciously using the same powers the Yogi uses, and which come from Prana. . . . The Faith-healer will cure because he will bring the strength of his mind to bear, and rouses through faith the dormant Prana of the patient. . . . It is by Prana that real curing comes."

This same teacher continues: "The gigantic will-powers of the world, the world-movers, can bring their Prana into a high state of vibration, and it is so great and powerful that it catches others in a moment, and thousands are drawn toward them, and half the world thinks as they do. Great prophets of the world had the most wonderful control of the Prana, which gave them tremendous will-power. They had brought their Prana to the highest state of motion, and this is what gave them power to sway the world. All manifestations of power arise from this control. Men may not know the secret, but this is the one explanation. Sometimes in your own body the supply of Prana gravitates more or less to one part; the balance is disturbed, and when the balance of Prana is disturbed, what we call disease is produced. Take away the superfluous Prana, or supply the Prana that is wanted, and the disease will be cured. The feelings will become so subtle that the mind will feel when there is more or less Prana in any part of the body than there should be; and the mind will possess the power to restore the normal balance. These are among the various functions of Pranayama."

In mental creation through the proper distribution of the Prana, supply the breathing element by the simple rhythmical process of inhaling 6 pulse beats; hold in 3; exhaling 6; holding out 3. Repeat this process in cycles of seven repetitions, each with a brief interval between. This may be done by alternate breathing or through both nostrils, whichever need is manifest at the time. (1) Form the mental image of what is desired; (2) will that it be accomplished; (3) visualize its accomplishment and be grateful. This mental attitude creates and releases all the re-creative powers of the mind and sets the pranic currents flowing in the right channels to produce the

proper results. This was the secret of Jesus' healing and his other phenomena. These powers are not the gifts to one, or a chance production, but are the effect of laws. In the accomplishment of a desired effect the mind should be concentrated upon the result, and the thing or part of the body which is to be subjected to the inflow and influence of Prana.

To quickly recharge the body and invigorate the nervous system, sit or lie in the proper position as outlined before. Place the palms together and lock the fingers so as to form a closed circuit. Then breathe rhythmically and repeat for several cycles, not to exceed seven, all the while employing attention, imagination and will to direct the Prana where it is needed. This is a closed circuit and after a few rhythmical breaths the body will be felt to tingle with the sensation of inpouring power.

You can conquer and control all undesired emotions such as fear, anger, jealousy, depression, hate, worry, etc., by means of rhythmic breathing. Keep attention, imagination and will concentrated upon an inflow of Prana being circulated throughout the body and dissipating the undesired emotions by scattering them throughout the whole nervous system, from whence they are carried off in the exhalation.

The Solar Plexus is the seat of most disturbances and psychic conditions, consequently the quieting and dissipating of undesired conditions should begin from that point as per foregoing exercises.

Sensations—Control of the Senses

The most important step in all spiritual development is "control of the senses." Few teachers realize that the senses must be quieted to the extent that we are not conscious of them, before it is possible to concentrate. Many enter classes of psychic and spiritual unfoldment, and after a few preliminary instructions are told to concentrate, few, if any, knowing the definite meaning of the term in connection with spiritual unfoldment. They are of the opinion that concentration means to keep

con-centered on one subject or object. To a certain extent that is true—but how is one going to keep the mind exclusively on one object or subject when the senses remain persistent in their effort to keep us aware of them? You may succeed in arriving at what seems an eternal silence, then suddenly to the mind comes the thought, “I am concentrating, I am not thinking of anything.” Then comes the amusing realization that, after all, *we were thinking*.

This proves it is imperative that we learn to hold our senses in abeyance to the power of mind—better still, *silence them completely by Will*, if you would gain complete mastery over self. “Sensations are the raw material of thought,” and thought indicates activity of the mind. When we learn to regulate the “raw materials of thought” we shall have learned how to gain mastery over the thoughts themselves by which we gain control of mind.

Advanced teachers are beginning to lay more stress on the subjugation of the senses and the various organs of sensation, i. e., touch, sight, hearing, smelling and taste. From the feelings or sensations which arise from the reports of the five senses is formed the principal basis of our whole mental life. From thirst, hunger, emotional and sexual instincts are derived the raw material, or the basic substance of the “mass thought.” Few realize how dependent thought is upon sensation. Sensation dominates feelings, emotions, desires and thoughts, which in turn result more or less in external activity.

There are extremists in philosophy and psychology who believe that the sum-total of all our expression of consciousness is the product of sense-origin. In Spiritualism and all advanced occult teachings that hypothesis is accepted, but only partially. There are external forces, spiritual and mental, which likewise are responsible for some of our trains of thought—but even these most often reach us through our senses (clairsentience, clairvoyance, clairsaudience and intuition). Even in a deep trance state the spirit, or controlling influence, gains expression

through the sense-impressions of the instrument, thereby gaining the necessary emotional expression to be convincing and interesting.

Concerning sensations, William James wrote: "They are the immediate results upon consciousness of nerve currents as they enter the brain, and before they have awakened any suggestions or associations with past experience." According to his conception the sensations are the elementary steps of knowing. A leading writer on this subject says:

"A sensation is a state of consciousness resulting from a nerve action. No one can tell us why nerve action affects consciousness, but such is the fact. Sensations are not knowledge, any more than wool is cloth. They are the raw material out of which knowledge is slowly spun. . . . Not all nervous action appears in conscious sensation, since a healthy nervous system is fortunately a machine which obtrudes no more of its business on consciousness than is sufficient to furnish the raw materials of knowledge. The capacity for sensation lies at the foundation of all knowledge. *Our interpretation of the world is merely the proper interpretation of the senses. . . .*

"Our senses give us only a section of the world's phenomena. If a visitor from another planet were to come to us with a request to be shown terrestrial animals, and if we admitted to view only such as could pass through a hole three feet square, we should do for him in an analogous way what our senses do for us. The visitor would, of course, not know that we had horses, camels, hippopotami, elephants and whales. In the same way our senses usher only certain phenomena into the presence of our minds. If we had three or four new senses added, this might open a new world to us; we might become conscious of a vast number of phenomena, which at the present never have any effect upon our nervous organism. It is possible to imagine a race of beings whose senses do not resemble ours, inhabiting other worlds."

To see and comprehend these other worlds is the principal motive for spiritual and psychic unfoldment which is attained only through the "quickenings" and use of the

higher senses. This is the purpose of these lessons. The analogy of the "three-foot hole" may well be applied to the instructions and descriptions those of the Spirit World try to bring to us. Many people do not, and cannot, understand what they are trying to bring to us, because we have no comparison, no analogy.

On the subject of the dependence of mind upon sensation we have the following excerpt from the pen of a brilliant American psychologist:

"Marvelous as are the mind's achievements, we must note that it is as completely dependent upon the nervous system as is a plant upon the sun, rain, and air. Suppose a child of intelligent parents were ushered into the world without a nerve leading to his otherwise perfect brain from any portion of his body; with no optic nerve to transmit the glorious sensations to the eye, no auditory nerve to conduct the vibrations of the mother's voice, no tactile nerves to convey the touch of the hand, no olfactory nerve to rouse the brain with the delicate aroma from the orchards and the wild flowers in spring, no gustatory, thermal, or muscular nerves.

"Could such a child live, as the years rolled on the books of Shakespeare and of Milton would be opened in vain before the child's eyes. The wisest men might talk to him with utmost eloquence, all to no purpose. Nature could not whisper one of her inspiring truths into his deaf ears, could not light up the dark mind with a picture of the rainbow or of a human face. No matter how perfect might be the child's brain and his inherited capacity for mental activities, his mental faculties would remain for this life enshrouded in Egyptian darkness. Perception would give memory nothing to retain, and thought could not weave her matchless fabrics without materials.

"The powers of understanding would forever lie dormant were it not for the impress of the sensations and the action of external agencies on the nerves, because these are the carrying agencies which directly supply the mind with its material for knowledge. The highest ideals, ideas and inspirations are gradually developed from the

accumulation of sense experiences, but to guarantee the truth of them we must find concrete examples in what we believe to be 'real existence.'"

Our knowledge is limited by our sensibilities, by that which may be compared with something already in our realm of consciousness. By the avenues of sense we gain knowledge of an external world. Shut out from all communication with the outer world we could know nothing of what exists in the world. According to the acuteness of our sensory organs are the quantity and quality of our knowledge. Were one possessed of but one sense his knowledge would be limited to the revelations of that one sense. Likewise, people destitute of one or more senses are deprived of the knowledge which might be obtained through those avenues of communication. Additional senses would likewise prove new avenues of communication and knowledge no less surprising than the sense of sight would be to one born blind, or the sense of hearing to one born deaf. Avenues of mediumship bring such amazing and surprising revelations that those who have not unfolded the sixth and seventh senses cannot apprehend the wonder of them. There are heights and depths of consciousness which mankind cannot at present reach because of the limitations of its sensoria.

As knowledge is dependent upon consciousness, and consciousness upon the testimony of the senses, is it not important to train them by obedience so that they will not lead us astray into a world of illusion?

CHAPTER XVI

CONCENTRATION AND ATTENTION

THE constitution of the nervous system is an essential factor in determining the quality of sensation. In former centuries it was thought that all objects about us were colored, warm, cold, et cetera. Locke was the first to refute this theory. On this subject one writer says: "As external to our consciousness, we can only assume matter, vibrating with molecular motion and permeated by vibrating particles of ether. The nervous apparatus select only certain motions of matter or of ether, which they transform into that form of nerve excitation with which they are familiar. It is only this nerve excitation that we perceive as red, warm, or hard."

In gaining control of the senses one has taken the first step in controlling the mind. Only through the control and regulation of the attention by means of mastering the will—which must become the obedient servant of the real self—will one be able to gain complete mastery over the mind.

The concentrated application of the mind to any object, sense, or thought, is called *attention*. This word is derived from a Latin root, "attendere," which means to reach out, to extend. Attention might be explained as the focusing of consciousness on some particular object or thing. As one psychologist explains it: "The force with which anything strikes the mind is generally in proportion to the degree of attention bestowed."

Another writer has said: "An act of attention is an act of concentration; and such an act seems thus necessary to every act of consciousness, just as truly as a certain contraction of the eye is necessary to every exercise of vision. Attention is to consciousness what the contraction of the pupil of the eye is to sight, or to the

eye of mind what the microscope or telescope is to the bodily eye."

According to the amount of attention bestowed upon a thing, so is the quality of the sensations of consciousness. By raising the attention to a higher degree or intensity we also raise the degree of our consciousness. By lowering the degree of attention or sensation we lower the quality of consciousness; this can be done even to the degree of inhibition. By learning to withdraw consciousness completely we attain what is often called a trance state.

In this course we have attempted not only to give that which we have proven to be true, but to give the best thoughts of other writers on this important subject. Thus we have made a compilation of excerpts from dozens of books on unfoldment. By this method we are enabled to give a general, but condensed, outline of study for busy students, thus saving them long hours of perusing many books in order to arrive at a direct knowledge of these laws. The following quotations will be invaluable guides in this study which ultimately leads to mastery of self.

"Sensations, feeble or insignificant in themselves, may be raised to even a painful degree of acuteness by having the attention strongly directed to them, and may thus occasion much suffering."

"A painful sensation becomes more intolerable the more the attention is directed to it. A sensation, in itself inconsiderable, as an itching in a very small spot of the skin, is thus rendered very troublesome and enduring."

"If the attention be steadily directed to almost any part of the surface of the body, some feeling of itching, creeping or tickling will soon be experienced. . . . By highly concentrated attention directed to any part of the body, an actual sensation of pain and discomfort may be experienced in that part."

"It is by means of attention that one is able to listen to some one particular voice among others heard at the same time, or to the tone of one voice or instrument in a concert, to the neglect of others."

There is another power of attention pointed out by one of our leading writers on this subject: "Before the introduction of chloroform, patients sometimes went through severe operations without giving any signs of pain, and afterward declared that they felt none; having concentrated their thoughts, by a powerful effort of abstraction, on some other object which held them engaged throughout. The writer frequently has begun a lecture whilst suffering neuralgic pains so severe as to make him apprehend that he would find it impossible to proceed; yet no sooner had he, by a determined effort, fairly launched himself into the stream of thought than he has found himself continuously borne along without the least distraction until the end has come and the attention has been released; when the pain has recurred with a force that has overmastered all resistance, making him wonder how he could ever have ceased to feel it.

"John Ballantyne (whom Sir Walter Scott, while suffering under a prolonged and painful illness, employed as his amanuensis) told me that though Scott often turned himself on his pillow with a groan of torment, he usually continued the sentence in the same breath. But when the dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, spirit seemed to triumph altogether over matter—he arose from his couch and walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice and, as it were, acting the parts. In this way Scott produced the far greater part of his most important works."

All have, in various degrees, experienced something of the power of attention. We may be in the midst of numerous objects, all of which come within the range of our vision, but the things we *see* are those upon which our attention is fixed. Likewise, we may be in the midst of a veritable babel of sounds and yet will hear only those upon which we have concentrated our attention, or which have especially attracted our attention. Our senses report thousands of impressions which we fail to perceive simply because we have not our attention upon them. Often the most insignificant make a greater impact upon

our consciousness simply because we have had our attention more definitely concentrated upon them. By proper control of the will and attention we can bring within the realm of our senoria things of which the average person is unaware; also by control of the will and attention we can inhibit things from our consciousness, and thereby render ourselves practically immune to all sensation, painful or pleasurable. One can direct the attention *away* from the seat of sensations and, consequently, from all feelings derived therefrom—and principally from the ideas aroused by sensations. This last is an important consideration, because sensation is directly responsible for a majority of our thoughts. One can almost anesthetize himself, not only to endure pain, but actually not to feel it. Pleasurable sensations can be governed in the same degree by persistent practice and training. It does not require a superhuman effort or power. It is merely the extension of the power used in every-day life, employed in a higher and more efficient degree. It is learning to conserve our forces, just as our power-plants generate power and then conserve it for later, profitable uses.

In learning to control and direct attention the simplest method is to concentrate entirely, if possible, upon whatever task is at hand. This method does not require that you sit down and direct your attention to a glass ball, a pinhead or some other object. It means merely to do well that which you are doing; i. e., if you are washing dishes, keep your mind concentrated on the dishes, excluding so far as possible all other thoughts which attempt to impinge upon your consciousness. If you are making beds, keep your mind on that alone. If you are eating, keep your mind concentrated upon your eating. This is beneficial in more ways than one. According to the impress our food makes upon consciousness, so is the quality of saliva excreted to masticate each particular article of food. Starches, acids, sugar, et cetera, all seem to require saliva of a different quality. This, consciousness provides. Therefore, food specialists and dieticians

will tell you to *think* of each bite of food that enters the mouth. They will also tell you not to read while eating, as reading diverts the attention and, therefore, the quantity and quality of the saliva is apt to be out of proportion to the food taken in. Indigestion in one or more forms is often the result, especially if the person's stomach is the least bit weakened.

We come to learn our whole mental life is controlled by attention. You may ask: "What is a definite illustration of attention?" In reply we offer you a quotation from a distinguished writer on this subject:

"When you are reading an interesting book, you are scarcely conscious, if at all, of the sensations of pressure produced by your chair. Carriages and wagons are clattering along the street, but you do not note them; various objects are directly before you, but you do not see them. Indeed, you are but dimly conscious of the sensations produced by the very type of book you are reading. But the thoughts called to your mind by your book stand out clearly and conspicuously in your consciousness—every feature, as it were, is sharply outlined. The act of your mind by which certain facts in our experience are thus emphasized and made prominent, is called attention.

"There are two kinds of attention. You are reading a difficult book, when someone in the next room begins to sing your favorite song. You do your best to keep your attention on your book, but your mind wanders to the song in spite of yourself. Or you go to a lecture just after reading a letter that contained some very good news. You try to listen to the lecture, but the thought of the letter persists in dragging your mind away. In both these cases you are conscious of two very different kinds of attention—attention depending upon the will, or voluntary attention, and attention independent of will, or non-voluntary attention. We can see the difference between them more clearly, perhaps, if we bear in mind that, in the case of non-voluntary attention, there is but one thing that influences the mind—the thing attended to—

while in voluntary attention there are two—the thing attended to and some reason for attending to it.

“When you listen to a song simply because you like it, you attend involuntarily; when you keep your mind fixed upon a book by an effort of the will, you attend voluntarily. In the first case, there are but two things concerned—your mind and the song. In the second, there are three—your mind and the book, and some reason for attending to it. In the first case you attend because of the attraction which the song has for your mind directly; in the second, you attend, not because of any attraction which the book has for your mind, but because of its relation to something else that attracts you directly, as the desire to improve. Non-voluntary attention, then, is that attention which results from the attraction exerted upon the mind by the thing attended to, in and of itself. Voluntary attention is that which results from the influence exerted upon the mind, not by the thing attended to, but by the knowledge of its relation to something else that attracts the mind in and of itself.

“There is a constant struggle on the part of the sensations to survive in consciousness. The sensation which we allow to take the most forcible hold on the attention usually wins the day. If we sit by an open window in the country on a summer day, we may have many stimuli knocking at the gate of attention—the ticking of a clock, the sound of the wind, the cackling of fowl, the quacking of ducks, the barking of dogs, the lowing of cows, the cries of children at play, the rustling of leaves, the songs of birds, the rumbling of wagons, etc.

“If attention is centered upon any one of these, that one, for the time, acquires the importance of being a king upon the throne of our mental world. But none of these may sway our thoughts, for our attention may be forcibly directed to some other object, which colors our conscious mental life. Hence it is of the utmost importance to our mental welfare to guard the gates of attention.”

CHAPTER XVII

PRACTICAL CONCENTRATION

SOME people have the power of attention so fully developed that they can easily shut off from consciousness everything which they do not will to register there. Others have the faculty developed to such a slight degree that it may well be said that they belong less to themselves than to any thought or object that strikes their attention.

It is a mark of first-degree mastership when one is able to completely shut off from consciousness reports of sensations and other things which may tend to distract the attention from the more spiritual things. This does not mean that the organs of sense fail to register; it is merely closing the doors of attention to them. This practice tends to increase the efficiency of the sense organs when they are to be used, for one's power of concentration is so much greater it gives them marked efficiency.

A simple example of this power may be noticed among persons working amidst a great roar of machinery, the noise of which would drive the ordinary person to distraction. These people exert their power of concentration, to a greater or less degree, until they are able to lie down and go to sleep amidst the din. This is especially true in a large press-room, a boiler-factory or other places where they have huge machinery. The workers often carry on animated conversation apparently not the least disturbed by the clamor, while those unaccustomed, or with less developed powers of attention, would have to shout loudly to make themselves heard, or to hear—even then finding it distracting. To such persons the noises actually cease to exist because they have not allowed their senses continually to report them. When desiring to do so, they can direct their attention with the same

efficiency as was required formerly to shut them out, and the most minute sounds are easily detected by their keen ears—sounds which the average person could not possibly hear.

In the same way some people are enabled to work around odors which would nauseate the average person—and, perhaps at first offended them. But soon they adjust themselves to their tasks, and by attention are able to divert the report of their sensorium, and what had theretofore been unbearable fails to register.

Some people work amidst a confusion of things which are continually attempting to register on the optic nerves. With a marked power of concentration they learn to shut unwanted sights from the eye. This is true of the wire and tight-rope performers. One diverted glance may be the cause of their death. They see and yet they do not see; it is paradoxical, but true. The fact is they see, but their attention is so concentrated that the sights below or about them fail to register.

The same rule applies to the loud ticking of a clock. It disturbs the person unaccustomed to it, but with controlled attention one fails to notice it—unless the clock should cease to tick, when at once the cessation is noticed.

Little special instruction is needed to apply voluntary attention. Practice and persistence are the only requisites. One must learn how to shut out from consciousness anything not desired. With but little practice the powers of inhibiting develop very rapidly.

First—One must direct the will and refuse to let it fasten its attention upon the invading sensations. This is most difficult at first.

Second—One of the simplest, and yet most exalted methods of developing these powers is to concentrate upon some noble thought or object—some beautiful, abstract Principle which will carry the mind and attention to spiritual heights—such as Infinity, God, Infinite Intelligence, and our relationship to them. These divine inspirations will lift not only the mind but the physical vibrations. With but a little practice the mind begins automatically

to shut out the lower mental states caused by sense perceptions.

Do not exercise over too long a period, particularly at first. Begin with five minutes or so, then gradually increase the time. A wonderful improvement will be noticed almost at once.

Concerning sense perceptions and attention Vivekananda wrote: "The next step is Pratyahara (control of the senses). What is this? You know how perceptions come. First of all there are the external instruments; then the internal organs, acting in the body through the brain centers; and there is the mind. When these come together, and attach themselves to some external thing, then we perceive that thing. At the same time it is a very difficult thing to concentrate the mind and attach it to one organ only; the mind is a slave. . . . All actions, internal and external, occur when the mind joins itself to certain centers, which centers are called the organs. Willingly or unwillingly it is drawn to join itself to the centers, and that is why people do foolish deeds and feel misery, which, if the mind were under control, they would not do. What would be the result of controlling the mind? It then would not join itself to the centers of perception, and, naturally, feeling and willing would be under control. Is it clear so far? Is it possible? It is perfectly possible.

"He who has succeeded in attaching or detaching his mind to or from the centers, at will, has succeeded in Pratyahara, which means 'gathering toward,' checking the outgoing powers of the mind, freeing it from the thrall-dom of the senses . . . The controlling of the mind and not allowing it to join itself to its centers, is Pratyahara. How is this practiced? It is a long work, not to be done in a day. Only by a patient, continuous struggle for years can one really succeed."

We have taken our readers through an extra long preparation; but all great work needs great preparation. The performances of great artists needed long and studious training. Nothing great was accomplished in a day.

Mediumship and seership are genius personified, and in order for the student not to experience any direful results preparation is necessary that the body may be attuned to the new forces; laws of unfoldment must be learned so that one may be able to keep undesired spirits from influencing or taking possession. If our students, combined with their regular "Silence and Meditation," will study and practice this course, amazing gifts will be the reward.

Concentration

Concentration is fixed attention, a most difficult feat for the restless Western mind; therefore, because of the imagined difficulties, this phase of development is never so popular with those who seek easy (but ineffective) methods. But before proceeding with our lesson we wish again to warn the student against some of the popular methods of concentration as taught by many so-called Oriental philosophers and teachers. *Do not* concentrate upon any center in the body such as the heart, the navel, the tip of the nose, the pituitary region, et cetera. These methods are taught and used, but unless under particular conditions and always under wise guidance, they are dangerous because they bind the mind-stuff to these particular regions. Most students interpret concentration on certain objects—external or internal—to signify the objects, and the inner-significance or symbolism is lost sight of, or is not known. There are seven psychic centers or "lotuses" in the body, these being symbolized by certain organs. When the spirit of concentration is lost sight of the result is most often a state of self-hypnosis—this being true of many cases of phenomena designated as mediumship. Mediumship is vastly more than any case of self-hypnosis can demonstrate. Such performances are grossly repulsive and unnatural in comparison with the genuine mediumistic phenomena. The greatest esoteric truths and teachings are clothed in figurative and symbolical terms; the letter thereof is revealed to the curious while the spirit is discerned and revered

by the initiate. As Jesus couched his teachings in parables, so all great truths are protected from the masses of people who are not spiritually evolved to receive them.

Concerning this phase of our study, Annie Besant said in one of her lectures in India a few years ago: "In one of the sutras it says that if you meditate upon a certain part of the tongue you will obtain astral light (clairvoyance). That means if you meditate upon the pituitary body, just over this part of the tongue, astral sight will be opened. The particular word used to refer to a center has a correspondence in the physical body, and the word is often applied to the physical organs when the other is meant. That is what is called a 'blind,' and it is intended to protect immature students from dangerous practices described in some books. People may meditate on that part of their tongues all their lives without anything coming of it; but if they think upon the corresponding center in the body, much harm may come of it.

"It is also said, 'Meditate on the navel.' This means the solar plexus, for there is a close connection between the two. But to meditate on that is to incur the danger of a serious nervous disorder. All who know how many people in India (and elsewhere) suffer from these practices, ill-understood, recognize that it is not wise to plunge into them without someone to tell what they mean, and what may be safely practiced and what not."

In Oriental teaching these names are figurative and really symbolize other centers. It is thus the Masters keep the true teachings from the gross, for whom they were not intended; these terms are esoterically understood by the initiates. Even some of the Hindus use the physical term as the object of concentration. The results are apparent in the sight of many repulsive fakirs that prevail there. Counterfeits and imitations may be seen wherever truth is taught. People must learn that the letter meaneth nought. It is the spirit which leadeth man aright.

Concerning this point Annie Besant has written: "One difficulty is that the Tantras, and the works based upon

them, often use the name of a bodily center to represent an astral or mental center. There is some reason in that, because all the centers are connected with each other from body to body; but no reliable teacher would set his pupil to work on the bodily organs, until he had some control over the higher centers. Knowing the one helps you to know the other, and the teacher who has been through it all can take his pupil on the right path; but if you take up these words, which are all physical, and do not know to what the physical word is applied, then you will only become confused."

It is because of the prevalence of Yogis, Swamis, and the like in America and Europe that we feel it imperative to stress these points. In many "development" circles we find an equal number of harmful methods used. The majority of the latter methods lead but to self-hypnotism, but even this unfortunate stage often carries with it a degree of psychism.

After practicing "attention" for awhile we will advance—most slowly we assure you—to other practices; those of holding the mind to limited or infinitesimal points. For instance, try to feel to the exclusion of all other parts of the body only one certain part—the hand, for instance.

In true concentration the Yogis say that if the mind is centered on the root of the tongue one will begin to hear sounds, and if on the tip of the tongue one will begin to taste wonderful flavors; and if on the middle of the tongue one will feel as though he were coming in contact with strange objects; if on the palate he will begin to see peculiar things. But one must really be concentrating his thoughts on these centers to the exclusion of all else. And if anyone doubts the truth of them he has but to try them. See how many can gain results from these methods. They are each but a stepping stone to the real key. If at first you do not succeed keep on trying; the final results are worth any effort one may put forth.

Remember we are leading you slowly—with wisdom—through a course of scientific development. The end—genuine mediumship and eventually seership—will be the

reward. Seek not for the common gifts when each has the faculty for the best within himself, but awaiting development.

Keep your eyes on heaven centered, and your footsteps on the narrow trail which ultimately will lead you to sublime Peace. Let your hearts be filled with continuous praise and prayer to the universal Forces, that you have been privileged to be born a living soul invested with the creative powers of the Almighty. Look into the depths of human nature, beyond the external into the internal sublime, and there will be revealed to you the mystery of the ages and you will hear the Lost Word and find the Key which unlocks the secret of the Sphinx. We were created divine, and to our divinity we must return before we can be released from the cycles of human existence and soar into the celestial realms of freed souls, "gods of the kindly skies."

CHAPTER XVIII

TELEPATHY

TELEPATHY is not generally conceded to be associated with psychic and spiritual phenomena; nevertheless, it plays no little part in all mental phenomena. In fact, spirit communication must of necessity be telepathic because the organs of sense are absent—the medium acting as the so-called “receiving station.” Telepathy is a familiar phase of phenomena and is generally accepted as an hypothesis of natural, mental science. Though not usually associated with “rhythmic breathing,” much better results will be obtained in telepathic healing and psychic experiments if scientific methods of breathing and distributing the forces are exercised—the value being in the attraction and concentrated direction of the thought, or mental, forces. Use methods already outlined in previous lessons, then visualize the object or result desired, and through will-power, concentration and imagination direct the pranic currents.

Every true scientific student of the occult knows that everything in the known universe can be reduced to one basic substance; and that the apparent difference lies only in the rate of vibration which governs its objective appearance. Rhythmic breathing arouses the pranic currents, and through the will and concentrated direction they are reduced to form, and the desired results begin manifestation.

But let us here *warn* the student, never, under any circumstances—though some subtle pretense may seem to justify it—use these great cosmic Forces for selfish or evil purposes. Everything has its opposite manifested through the same law. The only difference between good and evil is that good is progressive and evil is retrogressive—good is harmonious evolution; evil is retardation. Consequently, “white” and “black” magic are the opera-

tion of the same law—but with different purposes. When one uses these great forces of life for the attainment of desires motivated by the mundane self, such use may safely be placed in the category of black magic. Far better had a soul never been born than to misuse its God-given powers for unworthy purposes. No end is so tragic as that of one who delves into and misuses the “night side of nature.”

Wolves in sheep's clothing abound—white-robed and silvery-tongued orators and prophets also abound, posing in the guise of righteousness. Paul, beloved of occultists, said, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, *and have not love*, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.” Were it not for monetary consideration and desire for power and fame, there would not be the amazing number of religious, psychological and occult teachers and “professors” who literally infest Europe and America—especially the western part of the United States, where the magnetic attraction seems to cooperate with them. In most of these love is absent—they are tinkling cymbals. In Los Angeles there are said to be 104 different cults and religious societies; nowhere in the world does such an amazing variety of both black and white magic abound. But “by their fruits shall ye know them.” Let the student and truth-seeker be thus protected and guarded as he journeys across the burning sands *toward the East*.

CHAPTER XIX

HEALING

HEALING—in its manifold phases—absent, telepathic, spiritual, magnetic, etc.—is the most beneficent phenomenon in the whole category of occult forces.

The blessings and realizations to be derived from a knowledge and wise direction of the occult forces of life could not be comprehended by any but an initiate; words are meaningless in expressing the cosmic.

Concerning the subject of this lesson one of the greatest teachers of the modern age, Yogi Ramacharaka, writes of the value of rhythmic breathing in Absent and Telepathic Healing: "Prana colored by the thought of the sender may be projected to persons at a distance who are willing to receive it, and excellent healing work may be done in this way. This is the secret of the 'absent healing' of which the Western world has heard so much of late years. The thought of the healer sends forth and colors the Prana of the sender, and it flashes across space and finds lodgment in the psychic mechanism of the patient. It is unseen, and *like the Marconi waves*, it passes through intervening obstacles and seeks the person attuned to receive it. In order to treat persons at a distance, you must form a mental image of them until you feel yourself to be en rapport with them. This is a psychic process dependent upon the mental imagery of the healer.

"You can feel the sense of rapport when it is established; it manifests in a sense of nearness. That is about as plain as we can describe it. It may be acquired by a little practice, and some will get it at first trial. When rapport is established, say mentally to the distant patient: 'I am sending you a supply of vital force or power, which will invigorate and heal you.' Then picture the Prana as leaving your mind with each exhalation of rhythmic breath, traveling across space instantaneously, and reaching the patient and healing him. It is not necessary to fix certain hours for treatment, although you may do so

if you wish. The receptive mental condition of the patient, as he is expecting and opening himself up to your psychic force, attunes him to receive your vibrations whenever you may send them. If you agree upon hours, let him place himself in a relaxed physical attitude and a receptive mental condition. The above is the great underlying principle of the 'absent treatment' of the Western world. You may do these things as well as the most noted healers with a little practice. . . .

"Thoughts may be projected by following the above-mentioned method of distant healing. Others will feel the effort of thought so sent forth, it being remembered always that no evil thought can ever injure another person whose thoughts are good. Good thoughts are always positive to bad ones, and bad ones always negative to good ones. One can, however, excite the interest and attention of another by sending him thought waves in this way, charging the Prana with the message he wishes to convey. If you desire another's love and sympathy—and you possess love and sympathy for him—you can send him thoughts of this kind with effect, *if your own motives are pure.*

"Never, however, attempt to influence another to his hurt, or from impure and selfish motives, as such thoughts only recoil upon the sender with redoubled force, and will injure him, while the innocent party is not affected. Psychic force when legitimately used is all right; but beware of 'black magic' or improper or unholy uses of it, as such attempts are like playing with a dynamo, and the person attempting such things will surely be punished by the result of the act itself. However, no person of impure motives ever acquires a great degree of effective occult power, and a pure heart and mind constitute an impregnable shield against improper psychic power. Keep yourself pure and nothing can hurt you."

In Spiritual Healing the same law of concentrated direction prevails with the exception that the director is a spirit decarnate; but incarnate or decarnate, the same law governs. When the physical instrument (the spiritual healer) knows of the methods obtaining and understands

how to direct the forces, he becomes more than just an instrument; he is then a creator manifesting his own God-given powers. Be ye therefore builders of men, not mere marionettes to external forces—rather be intelligent assistants than blind puppets. *All higher spirit forces advise thus.*

In self-healing, employ the regular rhythmical breathing method, being sure to note the proper pulse beat measure. Place your hands upon the affected parts and then use attention, imagination and will-power to visualize the desired results and to direct the Prana to accomplish it. This will stir up the abnormal condition and the outgoing breath will eliminate it from the system.

Another simple method with rhythmical breathing is to visualize oneself breathing in pure, strengthening Prana and new force, and eliminating the old, diseased conditions in the outgoing breath, ever keeping in mind the picture and suggestion of perfect health.

The same methods are employed in healing others through so-called magnetic healing. In treating others, place your hands on the affected parts of the body or where the seat of trouble seems to be located. Then through "proper rhythmical breathing" employ attention, imagination and will-power to direct the inflow of Prana to the affected parts. Visualize the new strength and health conditions being manifest in your patient, suggest perfect health and ease from pain in an effort to assist self-healing, and at the same time visualize the old, poisonous forces being dissipated and eliminated through the outgoing breath.

Every healer and student will find the above-mentioned methods of healing, and projecting thought, effective. However, if one is accustomed to a different method one need not discard the old with which he is familiar, but increase its effectiveness by the addition of new methods. The principle of all is one and the same law—only its operation is different—and the results obtained are measured according to the wisdom and intensity of the direction.

CHAPTER XX

PROCESSES OF DEVELOPMENT

THERE are three processes used in spiritual development, namely: meditation, concentration and devotion. *Meditation* is a steadying of the mind. It is a method that varies with the temperament of the student. One method is to create an idea concerning a certain thing and by ratiocination build from one link of thought to another until a chain is formed. Work up to your *highest* point of reasoning until it is impossible for you to think or imagine anything higher; then cling tenaciously to that thought and keep the mind poised and calm. Keep steady and *quiet* and see what comes. With practice one becomes enabled to hold this mental condition for quite a long period.

Concentration is the method of steadying the mind by centering it upon one thought or object and holding it there to the exclusion of everything else. Concentration is fixed attention. Anything you pay strict attention to is the object of concentration. Concentration should not be a practice for an hour or so a day; it should be an hourly habit throughout the entire working day. Keep your attention *fixed* upon everything you do, and when you have done with it, drop it. It may be difficult at first, but with persistence one soon finds the effort rewarded by a greater mental facility. It is even said, and has been demonstrated, that if one concentrates upon a task, soon he will be able to do it without thought, at the same time doing other things which require mental alertness. It must be remembered we all have the same mental ability. The only apparent difference lies in the fact that some are developed and some are not. Some are born with alert mental faculties; others must develop them. We read of an instance in England where a girl, very fond of knitting, paid a great deal of *attention* to her work so as not

to make a mistake. Through the habit of fixed attention day after day her fingers learned to do the work that she had formerly employed her mind to supervise—and she was free to employ her consciousness for other things. A Japanese performer once demonstrated this power by writing with both hands at the same time two different sentences, and verbally answering questions. The same thing is proven by the person who can read a strange book while engaged in conversation, and later tell the contents of what he has read. The book is more apt to be remembered than the conversation because the sub-conscious is more definitely engaged in recording it.

Another simple method of concentration is to sharpen a lead pencil, slowly bringing it to a perfect point and then when finished continue *concentrating* your mind upon it to the exclusion of everything else. The most tedious method of concentration—but perhaps the best—is to force yourself to concenter your mind on something disagreeable. You are thereby tested because it is a trait of the mind to avoid the unattractive or monotonous. When you have overcome this difficulty you will know that you have made a stride.

Concentration brings the best possible results. When the sun's rays are focused upon an object they produce a heat many times greater than the original direct rays of the same heat and light. So it is with attention. Scatter your thoughts and efforts and the results, if any, will be mediocre. Focusing the attention generates a wonderful amount of energy and the results are equally wonderful. When the mind is concentered, every action, voluntary and involuntary, will tend to be in the direction of the object of concentration.

In order to concentrate perfectly one must shut out every thought, sound or object except the object of concentration. Body, mind and will must be coordinated. Man is the storehouse of indomitable powers and energy if he but learn how to draw them to the surface. Then the greater task is to use them wisely.

One splendid method of concentration, which will be in-

valuable for training one to observe everything in detail, is to take the simple pencil. Look at it carefully and intently. Turn it round and round and observe it from top to point. Think of its use, its benefits, the materials of which it is made, how it is made. Think of everything pertaining to the pencil. Do not let your mind get away from the pencil, as though it were your only interest in life. Use the same method of exercise with any object you select. But remember that the less attractive the object the better discipline it is for your mind. You will be amazed at your increased ability to observe details of objects and people. People in public life will find this development invaluable. Modern detectives of the higher type are trained in this power to observe. It is thus they detect the small effects that betray a criminal.

Another method of concentration is to take a book—a tedious scientific or philosophical book—and center your attention so upon it, in reading it over and over, that everything else is completely shut out. By intently observing the second hand on a watch without becoming impatient, one will also develop quite a marked power of concentration.

You may practice concentration or control of the mind, upon everything or anything. One thing is as good as another provided you keep your mind centered upon it; likewise one thing is as valueless as another if one allows his mind to wander. Exercises have no power or virtue in themselves only insofar as the practitioner's mind, will and attention are focused upon them; they are but the tools of the mind. It is entirely a mental process, but as the mental governs the bodily processes, the results of the mental training will be for the betterment of the body as well as the mind.

Although the student is left free to choose his own methods and objects of concentration, we feel a warning should be broadcast pertaining to this subject. As the objects of concentration are given added power and a greater influence upon the mind that is using them, it is advisable that one use nothing but good thoughts or things upon which to practice; for the evil or bad are, by concentra-

tion, given a greater opportunity to impress or influence the mind, while at the same time it is more difficult for the mind to resist or defeat the object of its own creation.

Devotion is a method of development whereby imagination rather than reasoning is used. Take the object or person to whom you are devoted and picture them definitely in your mind. Then gradually build up around them the picture of their surroundings bit by bit until the picture is completed. Religionists like to take a Master or Saint to concenter their devotion upon. Christians perhaps would choose the Master, Jesus. If so, visualize him before you as distinctly as possible. Imagine him standing there. Then begin to piece together the events of his life, starting from the manger, until you have a perfect chain of events. When you have reached his last appearance, visualize him "going up" in the sky as Luke describes in the Book of Acts. Then when he has vanished into the clouds hold the mind concentered upon those clouds to the exclusion of everything else—even the picture of Jesus. This is a simple method to develop a remarkable control and power of mind. It strengthens the will, and thereby it becomes a great moral protection to the student desiring to live above the sins of the flesh.

One may take a favorite picture with an outstanding central figure. Begin with the central attraction; then, as an artist with his paints, begin to add the scenery bit by bit until every detail is completed. Then by the reverse process one should "concentrate away" the surroundings and other objects until nought remains but the central figure. Drawing your picture to a point this way helps to steady the mind, and gradually brings the powers of visualization and concentration under perfect control. Thus the vagrant mind is made steady.

But the time will come when you must drop even the central figure and keep your mind steady and poised with nothing objective to hold it. Let everything of an objective nature fall from your mind's eye until you are poised in symbolic ethers. By keeping your mind on the highest point of nothingness your true self will begin to manifest, and the mind will become vigorous and alert.

After holding this position for a while—if possible without outside interference—suddenly there will come a change—a change so distinct as to be incredible, unmistakable. The voice of the Silence, and the form of the Formless shall reveal themselves to you. A great ball of fire will soon begin to unfold before you and reveal your own spirit on the threshold of eternity, or the fourth dimension. Music, sights and sounds such as never have been revealed to your physical eye or ear shall delight your spirit in that *Silence*. But let him who has ears to hear, hear the warning: when one has *really* arrived at this superb manifestation of his spiritual powers, *he does not talk about it to a living soul* except to his highest teachers. They will make inquiry of the student. They are seers and easily discern the inner workings of the Chela's (student's) mind. They first approach the student who is prepared to enter the path.

Along the lines suggested the student will find it not difficult to bring the mind under perfect control. He will be benefited thereby in all his mundane activities, because the erstwhile vagrant mind has been disciplined to serve the spirit instead of flying from one thought to another without power or purpose. Thus in time the student reaches illumination—but not to any mortal does he betray the glory of his experience. As Jesus taught: "Throw not your pearls before swine," so the student—when he has reached this stage of development—learns that the phases of higher spiritual experience are indeed as pearls, and that the common world, like swine, knows not the value thereof.

Expose not spiritual things to the mockery of the ignorant. That your vanity impels you to betray the "Secret of the Silence" is proof that you have not attained the heights to which your inner soul aspires. The greatest test given a student is the test of revealing his experiences, when the law of occultism inspires us to keep them hidden within the secret recesses of the soul. When one fails in this test, he must again make spiritual preparation to enter the Holy of Holies. Time will come with

illumination; he will be filled with reverent awe of what has been revealed unto him, and will guard it like a priceless jewel within his bosom.

Before closing this chapter we should like to impress our students that this Silence is not the emptiness of an imminent sleep; it is the emptiness of alert expectation in which all the mental faculties are focused in attention. The student *must* keep his mind alert and attentive. *Mere emptiness of mind is dangerous.* It is the open door that invites a discarnate entity. You can wisely attempt an emptiness of mind only when you have your mind severely disciplined to obey the command of the will, and this is only possible when you have learned to hold the mind for a considerable time to a single point, to the exclusion of all sounds and objects, and yet remain alert and expectant.

CHAPTER XXI

HINDRANCES TO CONCENTRATION

THERE are many hindrances which arise to perplex and annoy the student in search of spiritual unfoldment, but the most harassing of these are related below. Though seemingly insignificant to the beginner, he soon will become convinced that they arise with amazing regularity to disturb spiritual progress. When one has sincerely settled upon a path of spiritual unfoldment these obstacles become persistent in their effort to distract attention and really prove quite annoying. Each time they are overcome they become less effective in their power to disturb one, and in time lose their influence altogether as the will to resist them becomes more powerful.

These disturbances are *nerve sensations* arising from different parts of the body, such as an itching or twitching of the muscles and skin. Sometimes these sensations become so irritating they completely distract the attention, but by a positive application of the will they soon become less effective. Actors and public speakers have been forced to control these disturbances of sensation.

These nerve sensations are quite different from sensations of the senses. At first strange odors, unusual sounds, flickering disturbances of the eyes, cool drafts and waves of heat, and unaccountable tastes force themselves upon the sensoria, but one may learn to inhibit them by practice and determination. One shuts them out with little effort when deeply interested in something objective; the same will may be enforced in concentration or meditation.

External thought-waves also persist in gaining entrance when the student is engaged in meditation, for at that time he is unusually receptive. These thought, or mental, currents often come from great distances, and many of them are directed by discarnate entities—for by this period of our study the student has become exceptionally sensitive if he has followed instructions closely. The more

developed the spiritual faculties become, the more easily external thought-waves intrude themselves upon the mind until the student has learned to inhibit them as he does through his ordinary activities. One does not notice the ticking of the clock during the daytime hours when occupied, but the stillness of night seems to increase the sound and force attention. The same illustration may be given of perfume or other odors of a delicate or pungent nature. When the mind is engaged in other things, unless it is something conspicuously unusual, it is seldom noticed until the senses are quiescent. This is true in meditation or concentration. However, they may easily be inhibited by forced attention of the will.

Under this same category comes *thought-analysis*, which is simply analyzing one's thoughts or "thinking about thoughts." This is one of the most subtle intruders, but once the student is informed of its nature it is not difficult to overcome, though at times it may be most persistent. How many have felt themselves entirely quieted and deep in concentration, and suddenly thought, "Now, I am beginning to learn how," "I wonder if this is the right way?" and other evidence that one is *not* concentrating, but *analyzing* the subject of concentration. Every student has experienced the amusing situation of finding himself thinking about his *thought* of the object of concentration instead of the object itself. The best way to overcome this difficulty is to *will* the subconscious to keep everything out of the mind but the subject of concentration. This method will prove very efficacious, because the subconscious mind is largely responsible for the influx of thoughts.

This is especially true of *intruding memories*. It is strange how it seems impossible to recall certain episodes of the remote past when they are needed, yet when they are not wanted they become as vivid and insistent as though but just experienced. The quiet of mind arrived at in meditation or concentration is conducive to these reports of memory and other mental images, including day dreams and reveries. But a subconscious determination to keep them out will not prove ineffective if practiced

with positive determination. All these experiences, though seeming to be temporary hindrances, are really the means of strengthening the attention and will.

Do not attempt to overdo either concentration or meditation. Use discretion, especially at the beginning. Patience, too, will be a valuable attribute. Learn to proceed slowly. One must also learn to overcome the inclination to drowsiness or semi-consciousness. This occurs when the attention becomes tired or disinterested as a result of "just sitting" without object, as so often occurs, instead of definite concentration or meditation. This the student must learn to distinguish, for it is so easy—such a subtle change—to slip from meditation into cessation of thought through drowsiness.

The greatest reminder of the teacher to his student is the lesson of patience. It is because so many try to obtain spiritual illumination by unnatural methods or violent practices that the Yoga methods of spiritual unfoldment have gained so much disfavor and created so much prejudice. Any system of unfoldment must be practiced sanely and in accordance with reason. One cannot force super-normal powers unnaturally without suffering dire consequences. As one teacher expressed it, "One can only be normal to the limits of normality, and becomes super-normal beyond and above those limits." It is impossible for one to be abnormal in the field of normality. Super-powers are always based upon the firm foundation of natural growth. Abnormality leads to weird mental complexes, and often to insanity. A thing cannot be normal unless it is natural, therefore it is impossible for a thing to be supernormal when the senses are raised to the extent of including it in the realm of normalcy. This is our task, to gain control of the higher powers which are dormant in the majority of persons. The historical miracles of great masters are not myths, but are true demonstrations of their unleashed powers. All have them, but few admit their possession; because of their dormancy they do not recognize them. Through control or mastery of the subtle mind forces all things may be accomplished. Greater things than have ever been accomplished by elec-

tricity can be accomplished by the proper control of attention and the direction of the will, which is control of the mind. To master is man's destiny. The masses question the purpose of their existence, not realizing they are destined to become masters over all things. How few attain!

As we have stated previously in these lessons, the "mind" is a lake of Chitta, with its ripples and surface disturbances. To calm these and make them placid and motionless is the greatest task set for a student on the Path. The "silent Silence" must be gained before one can become a pliable instrument for the use of the "higher teachers."

It is said, "The wise, when their thoughts cease to move, perceive within themselves the absolute consciousness or the witness of all things." In this state the ordinary methods of induction and deduction are inconceivable. In tune with the Infinite the student becomes Godlike in consciousness and cannot be held to have the necessity of thinking or reasoning about anything by logical processes while in this supreme state of mind; it is a state of "knowing."

To arrive at this highest stage of consciousness "abstract meditation" is the method. First think about God. Try to comprehend His nature and employment of Being. This first is a process of logical reasoning. Having arrived at a conclusion thereof, and having formed a definite judgment, simply let go the reasoning processes and hold to the abstract idea of God, holding the mind in consciousness of His Presence; inhaling His Being like the subtle essence of a rare perfume into your soul. Apprehend Him as an Infinity of Space permeating all things; like an Infinity of Ethers—each a part of the other, interblending imperceptibly together in cosmic manifestation. Holding to this thought you enter Dhyana, the highest form of consciousness. It is the highest state of existence. It is the only real state of happiness and contentment, for so long as we cling to "desire" of physical things and *depend* on them for happiness, so long shall we fail to possess it.

When man lives in the animal plane he is dependent upon the senses, the passions, for his happiness. When he unfolds his "free-will consciousness" he is dependent on his intellect for his happiness; but when he has unfolded his higher spiritual faculties, nothing less than consciousness of God, the Infinite, will give him Peace and Happiness. Small wonder that the Mystics spend so much time in meditation. It is the only surcease from worldly strife. But the duties of this life must not be lost sight of, lest the experiences of this plane be in vain. Let man do the work of man, but let his soul attain to the spiritually contemplative state which will open up a new and beautiful world to him. From this world he will receive strength and power to manifest over the elements of matter. He will become a superbly poised being in a world of confusion. He will become master of circumstances. It is said, and rightly: "Circumstances make not a man fail, but they show what is in a man." So spiritual unfoldment shows "what is in a man," and helps him to bring it out. It helps one to be "in the world, but not of the world," while at the same time joyously fulfilling the duties and obligations of the world. Chaos and strife, tears and passion fail to make their impress upon the mind, for in a state of God-consciousness the necessity of induction and deduction is absent and knowledge supersedes "thinking." Things are. That is all—the collective manifestation of individual attainment.

This consciousness is the aim of the *real* student. For the world-old knowledge of its attainment the Occident has been forced to look to the East, where, though the practices have been grossly misunderstood and more grossly abused, the Mystics still have retained the secret key to the Inner Teachings. Of these we shall write in our next lesson.

May the Peace of the Infinite animate and quicken the "consciousness" of every particle of your being. May the eternal Light of Wisdom direct your thoughts and activities. May Love impel your desires; and Silence your soul. May your spirit be filled with Spirit until you become "in tune with the Infinite" and KNOW, I AM GOD!

CHAPTER XXII

CONTROLLING THE MIND

THE primary difference between the teachings of the East and those of the West is marked. The East seeks realization of universal consciousness, the attainment of which soon supplants the individual self and its quest of material satisfaction—these become mere shadows compared with the glories revealed in this “higher consciousness.”

The West, in contradistinction, seeks exaltation of the individual consciousness. It seeks to enrich the mind and quicken the perception, memory, individual ambitions, fears, loves and hopes—in short, the aggrandizement of the individual self in all its forms and phases. Most Westerners dispute the reality of a universal consciousness.

The individual, or self, consciousness is especially related to the body, consequently it is in a perpetual state of unrest, fraught with pain and effort. It manifests through the physical senses. It sees, hears, feels, smells and tastes through the perception of the five senses in a three-dimensional plane. Its chief existence is thought—chains of thought. Existence in the “universal consciousness” is a state of “knowing” without thinking. As stated before, induction and deduction are absent; reasoning processes are extraneous—*things are!* That is all. Many have brief instances of “universal consciousness.” Without experience, without reasoning, without ordinary mental processes, they arrive at definite and correct conclusions—“I don’t know how I know; I just know it, that is all.” A familiar phrase for this transcendent intuitionism.

Thought Suppression

One of the chief difficulties of the Western world is that its people are *thinking* themselves to death, without extraordinary accomplishment. True, great things are done

as the result of great mind-processes; but the greatest discoveries are usually the result of "sudden inspiration"—though this supreme moment may have been preceded by days and months of research which eventually proved of no value to the sum total. After hectic mental efforts, after brain-rackings matched only by the most fanatical asceticism, the great problem is finally solved in a moment of complete mental relaxation.

This knowledge or realization has yet to become the possession of the masses, because they have not realized the great lesson—suppression of thought—so that the "universal consciousness" can manifest. It is not unlikely that within a decade this wisdom will be more thoroughly appreciated by the practical Western minds, and will have a far-reaching influence in gaining dominance over the *tumult of thought* without objective, which is sweeping thousands into mental vacuity, and sending the physical "shells" to psychopathic institutions and sanitariums.

While the ideal of life in the West is an insanely active brain, in direct contrast the ideal of the East is the effacement of objective purposes. Effacement of thought by mandate of the will, and the ability to enter into the divine consciousness, is the desire of all classes in the East—people of culture, learning, and accomplishment, as well as those of the illiterate castes. Subjection of thought is the key to subjection of desire. Desires are "nonentities" in the absence of thought. Fear, hatred, greed, love, passion—all are the result of thought. None are real except thinking makes them so. Irritation is set up on certain nerve tracts, the mind registers them and creates a thought. The thought in turn—if emphasized—excites the vicinity of irritation and various emotional states result, according to the location of the irritant. Whereas, in the East, *where and when these teachings are really lived*—and among certain persons of this Western hemisphere—when the mind registers these desires, or "irritations," the will is immediately brought into play, and acts as a "damper to the threatening fire." Thus, the mind becomes master, and not the body.

If there are desert sands to be crossed, the spirit wan-

dering in the desert of mortal existence—with its temperatures of suspicion and intrigue, jealousy and envy, greed and desire—is crossing *them*. Only the strong souls survive the trials of the Path with a vestige of happiness. Allowed to rule, the body would dig its own grave with its teeth and cremate itself in the “fires of desire.” Control by the mind through dominance of the will is the only solution. Only by mastering self will man find happiness here. Only by realization of our at-one-ment with the Universal Powers shall we gain the calm and poise which make the Eastern Mystics serene amid external confusion.

The most simple and positive method for control of the mind—to prevent its wandering absently and confusedly, to resist division and distraction, to combat attacks of brigand cares and anxieties—giving it a great capacity for work when the task is set, is control over the thoughts by undivided concentration upon the task in hand. Keep your mind unreservedly concentrated upon whatever you are doing—whether it be the simple task of washing dishes or building a radio: *keep your mind on that one thing to the exclusion of everything else*. To be able to concentrate wholly and unreservedly on whatever you are doing is a distinct step toward self-mastery and the attainment of “supernormal” powers.

These practices have a definite spiritual significance—though this instruction may appear veiled, it is thus given to keep “children from playing with fire.” If not sincerely inspired by desire for a more spiritual realization, the student will have lost interest long ago. If urged by the “spirit-within,” a hidden meaning will reveal itself and enthrall the reader. Occult teachings are never interpreted in a literal sense, for if carried out merely as a formula they would partake of a self-mesmeric character, and eventually produce mesmeric states of consciousness. The object is, or should be, to contact the presence of the cosmic consciousness, the “All-knowing,” wherein lies all knowledge. This constitutes the object of the Mystic.

But in learning the effacement of thought—the most difficult process—the student may be seated in one of the postures heretofore mentioned, or in a straight-back

chair with spine erect, touching nothing, so that no pressure may lead to distraction of purpose. See that you are first perfectly motionless, and in a calm and quiet condition, free from possible disturbances. Do not mistake an attitude of ease or slumber, but keep the muscles tense in an attitude of forceful composure, using the will-power with the greatest vigilance. The instant a thought appears on the surface of the "mental lake," sink it. Though the enemy of interference—the sense perceptions—is subtle and persistent in its effort to distract you and create doubt and failure; though the period to acquire mastership be long, success is inevitable if one is persistent and faithful. It is worth while! Oh beloved students, trust these simple instructions and follow them—they will unfold in you powers which will bring you great gifts and happiness.

Time and again you will be tempted to give up. Time and again the subtle influence of sleep will attempt to steal over you, deceiving you into the belief that you are approaching the sublime state; but if thought merely gives way to sleep, nought is gained. With months, or perhaps years, of intermittent practice this power of control will grow, bringing distinct physiological changes. Remember, the key to all—to life, to happiness eternal—is the control of our thoughts. Our thoughts make for us a happiness or hell. Our only hope, our only peace, comes by way of our thought processes. Riches or poverty, sickness or health, are only the means to happiness or unhappiness as our thinking makes it so. In the same household may be found two or more persons, with the same environment, the same health, the same comforts, the same opportunities, but each existing in different states of happiness and contentment. Few know the power of thought. Like the knights of old seeking the Holy Grail, so many search for the chalice of happiness, only to find in the end that it is an unsuspected inner possession.

After these profound realizations and the wisdom that comes with attainment, the student will one day find that thought has gone and apparently he is left in an ocean of oblivion; the veil lifts and there streams through his

consciousness a vast and illuminating vision of incomparable glories. Divine knowledge sweeps over him and he knows "I Am that I Am!" It is Samadhi to the East; Heaven to the West. Death brings it not, for spirits dwell in different stages of existence—heavens, hells and intermediary planes—as *their thinking makes it so*. The greatest key to all attainments—spiritual and material—was given to mankind in the three words, "*Thoughts are things*," with the final admonition, "Know thyself!"

Be reminded that all benefits of life are derived from our thinking. Mastery of self and the elements can only be obtained through control of our mind and its processes through dominance of the will. Do not believe yourself ready for further instruction until you have mastered thought—until you have further learned complete effacement of thought, and have experienced the illumination which accompanies "existence without thought," objective oblivion and spiritual realization. These will lead you through the phases of mediumship; they will lead you *beyond* ordinary clairvoyance, clairsentience, clairaudience, and ectoplasmic and telekinetic phenomena. They will lead to seership; to the Mysticism that is conscious of all and master of all.

Jesus, and other Masters, walked on the waters; raised the dead; quickened the living; turned water into wine; fed a multitude by materializing bread and fishes; prophesied; and rent the veil of the past through control of their "forces." Jesus said: "Greater things than these shall ye do, for I go unto my Father." It is so written. He said: "It is the Father within me that doeth the works." He also said: "I am in the Father and the Father is in me, even as I am in you and you are in me." Jesus spent the years between twelve and thirty studying with the Masters of the Far East, in Thibet, and later in Egypt. Tablets and papyri have proven this. In an ancient Biblical prophecy it is written: "Out of Egypt I will call my son." And the consciousness of the "Christ" within us promises: "Out of darkness I will call my own." Faithful study and strict adherence to the instruction and philosophy of this book will lead the way.

CHAPTER XXIII

PHENOMENAL AND NOUMENAL ASPECTS

THE naive minds of the masses of people know only the phenomenal aspect of the external world around them. They take it for granted that we perceive and know objective things and forms as they really are. This is erroneous. The only fact we can possibly know concerning anything is merely the aggregate of our sensations.

We do not see anything directly; we merely see the stimulated nerve substance of our eyes, arising from the stimulating effect of the light-rays that impinge upon the nerve substance of our optical organism. According to the same principle do we hear, hearing being the result of a stimulation of certain nerves caused by vibration of air reaching the ear. All that we know of the outside world are the reactions, or sensations, reaching us by such nerve stimuli. A common illustration of this subject is to liken ourselves to a man locked up in a dark room, dependent for his knowledge of the outside world on telegraphic communications by means of wires. All he would know of that outside world would be the information conveyed by those wires. So is our "spirit" locked in the dark room of human embodiment, depending entirely for its information of the outside world on the communication of the sense reports. So is our knowledge dependent on the quality of our sense perceptions, or receiving stations. This is a staggering thought, but there is a universal agreement on the matter among physiologists, psychologists and philosophers, who confirm the statement.

All sense perceptions are dependent on the stimuli to the nerve substance of the sense organs. Let all the sensory nerves recording sight, hearing, feeling, tasting or smelling be destroyed, severed or paralyzed, and the result would be the impossibility of knowledge through the

nerve channels of that person; hence no knowledge of the outside world. Therefore our sensory nerves govern all that we know of the outside world. We do not know the outside world directly; we only know the report, or registration, of it made by our sensory nerves, which set up purely mental images or pictures of that world. Thereby, that world becomes to us what our picturization of it is; a picture made up of the forms of our sensations. In this light we begin to understand why occultists declare that the only direct and immediate knowledge of the world we possess is the duplicate, "counterfeit" or "imitation" which is represented in our minds.

Our truest knowledge of the outside world comes to us through our intuitive faculties. This immediate world in which we manifest is the phenomenal, or sensational, world. That world which lies beyond our direct and immediate knowing is the noumenal world, to which we seek entrance through the development of psychic and mediumistic faculties.

Notwithstanding these facts it is most difficult to shake the ordinary person's belief in his own conceptions of reality and self-importance. His process of thought begins with the "I," the ego, and ends with the "I," the ego. We are positively certain that it is the "I" which is writing or reading. Not until we begin to reach beyond the possibility of self and ask, "what else?" do we begin to experience uncertainties. Hume, the philosopher, wrote: "Reality consists in impressions and ideas."

On this subject, Evelyn Underhill, a brilliant writer on modern science and philosophy, wrote: "It is immediately apparent, however, that this sense-world, this seemingly external universe—though it may be useful and valid in other respects—cannot be the external world, but only the self's projected picture of it. It is a work of art, not a scientific fact; and whilst it may well possess the profound significance proper to all great works of art, it is dangerous if treated as a subject of analysis. Very slight investigation will be enough to suggest that it is a picture whose relation to reality is at best symbolic and

approximate, and which would have no meaning for selves whose senses, or channels of communication, happened to be arranged upon a different plan. The evidence of the senses, then, cannot safely be accepted as evidence of the nature of ultimate reality; useful servants, they are dangerous guides. Nor can their testimony disconcert those seekers whose reports they appear to contradict.

"The sphere of our possible intellectual knowledge is thus strictly conditioned by the limits of our own personality. On this basis, not 'the ends of the earth,' but the ends of our own sensory nerves, are the termini of our explorations. We are locked up with our receiving instruments; we cannot get up and walk away in the hope of seeing whither the lines lead. Eckhart's words are still final to us: 'The soul can only approach created things by the voluntary reception of our senses.' Did some mischievous Demiurge choose to tickle our sensory apparatus in a new way, we should receive by this act a new universe.

"You are not asked, as a result of these antique and elementary propositions, to wipe clean the slate of normal human experience, and cast in your lot with intellectual nihilism. You are only asked to acknowledge that it is but a slate, and that the white scratches upon it, which the ordinary man calls 'facts,' and the scientific realist calls 'knowledge,' are at best relative and conventionalized symbols of that aspect of the unknowable reality at which they hint. This being so, whilst we must all draw a picture of some kind on our slate and act in relation therewith, we cannot deny the validity—though we may deny the usefulness—of the pictures which others draw, however impossible they may seem, since these are sketching an aspect of reality which has not come within our sensory field, and so does not and cannot form part of our world."

All competent authorities have now accepted the fact that all we know of the nature of external things is comprised of the mental states arising from experience of such things, reported by the senses and translated into

terms of mental experience. Instead of really knowing external things, we only know our ideas about them and these are derivatives of sensations. Therefore, form, color, hardness or softness, heat or cold, are not essential, or inherent, facts of the external objects themselves, but are just the effects registered as facts in our own mentality. Such knowledge is the phenomenal aspect of a thing. Spiritual development concerns only the noumenal, or inner, meaning of a thing. It is not concerned with form so much as the "meaning." The phenomenal is the thing as it appears. The noumenal is the thing as it really is. The noumenal aspect of a thing is the very essence of a thing, and is not dependent on sense perception for the communication or registration of knowledge. Thus our only true and direct knowledge must essentially come from the noumenal, which is independent of sensory nerves. It is the aspect of knowing without reasoning, and is free from the limitations and imperfections of sense-knowledge.

It is this method of "knowing" that the mystic seeks to develop, so that he may not be hampered by the untruthfulness of sense perceptions and will be capable of knowing a thing in itself, absolutely and perfectly, without limitation. It is in the noumenal that we transcend the sphere of limitations and perceive as "All-seeing and All-knowing."

Some philosophical doctrines contend that all material objects are only ideas of some mind; that no reality is independent of consciousness. Berkeley's school of philosophy held that each soul or spirit has a world of its own ideas; of these ideas some constitute a "world of reality" and others a "world of imagination" to it. Berkeley held that "God, the Supreme Spirit, has a special, separate and distinct set of ideas, and the world of ideas is the real world for other spirits only in the sense that it is the prototype of the real ideas in finite spirits—God causing the finite spirits to have some ideas which correspond in the way of likeness to the contents of His own mind."

The post-Kantian Idealists held that the world is contained as an idea, or ideas, in the conscious experience of an all-inclusive Spirit—the Absolute God, Infinite Intelligence—of which all finite spirits are a part. The conscious experience of Infinite Intelligence, so far as it transcends finite experience or consciousness, is the objective world of these finite spirits.

CHAPTER XXIV

MYSTIC CONTEMPLATION

IN THE philosophy of Mysticism it is held that there is a Spiritual Principle of the universe which is the life-giving, will-creating, consciousness-producing element. It is the Cause of all things. It is Pure Spirit—the very Essence of life and intelligence. Although it is held to be one, indivisible, non-atomic, it is said to be composed of an infinity of atomic “souls” or “spirit atoms.” This is called Purusha by Orientalists, but in the later cults is designated as “Spirit.”

There is also—as announced in an early lesson of this course—what is termed the material substance, which is called Prakriti. In its original form it is undifferentiated, simple, and without the qualities of its manifested and derivative forms, which is popularly called Matter. Prakriti is finer and more subtle than the finest known vapor or gas, and is even more tenuous than the universal ether postulated by modern scientists.

When caught in the mesh of “attraction” that prevails throughout the universe, Purusha becomes entangled with Prakriti, and thereupon becomes involved in the folds of what is known as material substance. Here it is that the Spiritual Principle, or Purusha, loses its original freedom, like a fly that has become enmeshed in honey. Not only the physical form of all things, but also the evolution of the mind itself, are created and maintained by this “cosmic union.”

The action of Purusha—or Pure Spirit—upon Prakriti gives rise to what is known as the Mind-stuff Principle, or the Universal Intelligence. In this Universal Intelligence all material forms are held as ideas or mental images—just as all our ideas of material things are derived from sensations materialized in our own consciousness.

In terms of cosmic evolution, the "infinite world of ideas" is called the Macrocosm, while the finite world of ideas is the Microcosm. The thing "as it is" is the noumenal aspect, or noumenon, of everything. The imperfect and distorted sense-perception constitutes the phenomenon which exists in the individual's finite world of ideas, and which he mistakes for the true idea of the thing itself. The thing as it really is exists only in the Universal Mind; the thing as it appears to be exists in the finite, or individual, mind. Thus are explained the continual changes and evolving world of finite ideas. Because of this man is ever a creature of restlessness and change—it is the law that governs the material world. It is the urge that makes mankind aspire toward something higher and finer—the consciousness that quickens him to a realization of a world of freedom from those illusions which haunt him in the mundane sphere.

It is the aspiration to overcome the ordinary sense-consciousness and to rise into the world of reality through super-consciousness—to cognize and know immediately and directly the noumenon, or the thing in itself that inspires "concentrated meditation." In this high plane of consciousness the apparent form or appearance gives way to knowledge. Because the person manifesting only in the world of sense-perception has no possible means of spiritual perception concerning the experiences of this super-world, those who possess this mystic faculty are often thought to be eccentric, if not insane. The experience is beyond sense-perception and the terms of sense-perception are inadequate to express it. When it is remembered that all the knowledge we have comes to us by comparison with previously acquired knowledge, and is so analyzed and catalogued in the archives of memory, it is not strange that those who have arrived at the consciousness of Noumenal Reality should be so pitifully misunderstood.

It is beyond the scope of ordinary terms of speech to express the noumenal experience. And there is no objective set of rules by which such experience may be at-

tained—it is a spiritual development that requires time and the sincerest patience. That is the object of this whole course—to stimulate patience and persistence, and to instruct the Chela, or student, in “the way.” Many have dropped “by the side of the road” because this course was a lengthy and methodical one—but they were not seriously interested in the higher development. Things eternal are not created in a single day, a single month or year—they are a process of steady growth, and time is the requisite. There is one thing which will be a constant source of provocation to the student—the interference of sense reports. In developing the higher faculties with the idea of arriving at the inner meaning, or the noumenal reality, the student must not lose sight of the object in view, and must refuse to identify it with the ordinary sense reports concerning the thing. He must refuse to yield to the temptation to heed the report of the senses concerning the object of his mystic meditation. He must ever keep in mind the ancient aphorism: “It is, in essence, without outward attributes; formless, devoid of outward distinctions. It is not gross and not subtle, not short and not long, not hard and not soft, not colored and not colorless, not large and not small. It is not to be touched, not to be seen, not to be tasted, not to be smelled, not to be heard. It is ‘not such, and not so.’ It has no form, and no representation of form can express its essence and real nature. It is different from that which we know by sensation. Words and thought based on sense-experience turn back from it without finding it. To the senses it is non-existent; and from its own viewpoint all sense-experience is non-existent.”

Concentration, meditation and contemplation, in time, cause it to evolve and manifest. When it finally comes, there is a peculiar “click” of the mind, a sudden change in one’s whole mental world. The old sense ideas vanish and are replaced by the super-sense ideas. At first this superb consciousness may be momentary—it may appear for a flashing instant, only to disappear again. But it will return if one continues to meditate and follow instructions.

Each time it appears it will remain longer, and the mind will become stronger and more accurate in its perceptioning. It will have a new power of insight—a knowledge of things as they really are. Once experienced, it will never be forgotten.

But do not attempt to force the “bud” open. In nothing is the old proverb more to be remembered than in spiritual and psychical development—“Make haste slowly.” Let this supreme faculty unfold gradually—this is the only sure way.

After having attained the higher consciousness, the next step is to learn to control it. Students of occultism—in all its different phases—seek the attainment of this consciousness, though calling it by different names: Spiritual Consciousness, Cosmic Consciousness, and Mystic Consciousness.

As to this supreme state of “knowing” many have questioned its reality—some extremists have even called it a lower state of consciousness than the normal. Concerning this attitude, Vivekananda wrote: “How do we know that a man in Samadhi (Mystic Contemplation) has not gone below his consciousness, has not degenerated, instead of going higher? In both cases the works are unaccompanied by egoism. The answer is, by the effects, by the results of the work, we know that which is below, and that which is above. When a man enters into a plane below consciousness he is unconscious, and when he returns to consciousness he is the same man. The sum-total of the knowledge he had before he went into unconsciousness remains the same; it has not increased at all. No enlightenment has come. But when a man goes into Samadhi (the Supreme Consciousness), if he goes in a fool, he comes out a sage. What makes this difference? There are two effects; now the effects being different, the causes must be different. As this illumination, with which a man comes back from Samadhi, is much higher than he got from consciousness, or much higher than he got from reasoning in a conscious state, it must be super-consciousness; and Samadhi is called the super-conscious state.”

This perfect state of consciousness transcends reason and brings one face to face with facts which no amount of reasoning can ever know. It is the highest state of consciousness that can be attained by a human being. It is the state which achieves Masterhood—which differentiates from the common mortal such souls as Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, Krishna, Hermes and others to whom the world looks with reverence and awe. In this state of profound contemplation, the soul becomes enlightened, the being divine.

Concerning his experience in Samadhi, Emerson wrote in the following celebrated lines: "Words from a man who speaks from that life must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part. I dare not speak for it; my words do not carry its august sense; they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and behold! their speech shall be lyrical and sweet, and universal as the rising of the winds. Yet I desire, even by profane words, if sacred I may not use, to indicate the heaven of this deity, and to report what hints I have collected of the transcendent simplicity and energy of the Highest Law."

CHAPTER XXV

A SCIENTIFIC ANALOGY OF KUNDALINI

QUOTED often is the masterly and scientific explanation by Prof. P. Mukhyopadhyaya. As he is an accepted authority in this field, it is hoped his explanation may help to enlighten the reader.

"Cosmic energy in its physical aspect may be considered either as static or as dynamic, the former being a condition of equilibrium—the latter a condition of motion or change of relative position. Thus, a material thing apparently at rest—there being no absolute rest except in the pure Consciousness or 'Chit' (Spirit)—should be regarded as energy or 'Shakti' (Force) equilibrated, the various elements of it holding one another in check—or, as the mathematicians will say, the algebraic sum of the forces being zero. Of course, in any given case the equilibrium is relative rather than absolute. The important thing to note is the polarization of 'Shakti' into two forms—static and dynamic.

"In the tissues of the living body, again, the operative energy—whatever the nature of that may be, whether we believe in special 'vital force' or not—polarizes itself into two similar forms—anabolic and katabolic—one tending to change and the other to conserve the tissues; the actual condition of the tissues being simply the resultant of these two coexistent or concurrent activities.

"In the mind or experience also this polarization or polarity is patent to reflection. . . . This analysis therefore exhibits the primordial 'Shakti' in the same two polar forms as before—static and dynamic—and here the polarity is most fundamental and approaches absoluteness.

"Lastly, let us consider for one moment the atom of modern science. The chemical atom has *ceased* to be an atom (indivisible unit of matter). We have instead the electron theory. According to this, the so-called atom is

a miniature universe very much like our own solar system. At the center of this atomic system we have a charge of positive electricity round which a cloud of negative charges (called electrons) is supposed to revolve, just as millions of planets and smaller bodies revolve around the sun. The positive and negative charges hold each other in check, so that the atom is a condition of equilibrated energy, and does not therefore ordinarily break up; though it may possibly break up and set free its equilibrated store of energy, as probably it does in the emanations of radium. What do we notice here? The same polarity of 'Shakti' into a static and dynamic partner, viz., the positive charge at rest at the center, and the negative charges in motion about the center. This is a most suggestive analogy or illustration, perhaps, of a cosmic fact. The illustration may be carried into other domains of science and philosophy... For the present we may, I think, draw this important conclusion:

"'Shakti,' as manifesting itself in the universe, divides itself into two polar aspects—static and dynamic—which implies that you cannot have a dynamic form without at the same time having it in a corresponding static form, much like the poles of a magnet. In any sphere of activity of force we must have, according to this cosmic principle, a static background—'Shakti' at rest or 'coiled,' as the Tantras say."

This splendidly illustrates the principle of Kundalini which is "cosmic force" at rest or "coiled" at the Muladhara in the human being.

"This cosmic Shakti is the Samashti (collectivity) in relation to which the Kundalini in the bodies is only the Vyashi (individual); it is an illustration, a reproduction on a miniature scale, a microcosmic plan of the whole. The law or principle of the whole — that of the macrocosmic Shakti—should therefore be found in the Kundalini. That law we have seen to be the law of polarization into static-dynamic or potential-kinetic aspects. *In the living body, therefore, there must be such polarization.* Now, the Kundalini coiled three and a half times at the Muladhara is the

indispensable and unfailing static background of the dynamic Shakti (force) operative in the whole body, carrying on processes and working out changes. The body, therefore, may be compared to a magnet with two poles. The *Muladhara* is the static pole in relation to the rest of the body, which is dynamic; the working the body necessarily presupposes and finds such a static support, hence the name *Muladhara*, the fundamental support. In one sense, the static 'Shakti' at the *Muladhara* is necessarily coexistent with the creative and evolving 'Shakti' of the body, because the dynamic aspect or pole can never be without its static counterpart. In another sense, it is the 'Shakti' *left over*....after the *Prithi*—the last of the *Bhutas*—has been created, a magazine of power to be drawn upon and utilized for further activity, if there should arise any need for such. Taking the two senses together....'Shakti' at the *Muladhara* is both coexistent with every act of creation or manifestation and is the residual effect of such act—both cause and effect, in fact—an idea which, deeply looked into, shows no real contradiction. There is, in fact, what the physicist will describe as a cycle or circuit in action.

"Let us take the impregnated ovum—the earliest embryological stage of the living body. In it the *Kundalini* is already presented in its two polar aspects: the ovum, which is the mother element, represents one pole (possibly the static), and the *spermatazoon*, which is the father-element, represents the other (possibly the dynamic). From their fusion proceed those processes which the biologist calls differentiation and integration; but in all this process of creation the cycle can be fairly easily traced. *Shakti* flows out of the germinal cell (fertilized ovum), seizes upon foreign matter, and assimilates it and thereby grows in bulk; divides and subdivides itself, and then again coordinates all its divided parts into one organic whole. Now in all this we have the cycle. Seizing upon foreign matter is an outwardly directed activity, assimilation is an inwardly directed activity or return current. Cell division and multiplication is an outwardly

directed operation, coordination is inwardly directed; and so on. This outflow and inflow is a common Tantrik notion. The force in the germ-cell is overflowing, but also continuously it is flowing back into itself, the two operations presupposing and sustaining each other, as in every circuit." (This is the same law governing Kundalini). "The given stock of force in the germ-cell, which is static so long as the fusion of the male and female elements does not take place in the womb, is the necessary starting-point of all creative activity; it is the primordial cause, therefore, in relation to the body—primordial as well as constantly given, unceasing. On the other hand, the reaction of every creative action, the return current or flowing back of every unfolding over flow, constantly renews this starting force, changes it without changing its general condition of relative equilibrium (and this is quite possible, as is the case of any material system); the force in the germ-cell may therefore be also regarded as a perpetual effect, something left over and set against the working forces of the body. Many apparently inconsistent ideas enter into this conception, and they have to be reconciled.

"1. We start with the germ-cell which is statical at first (though, like a dicotyledon seed, or even a modern atom, it evolves within itself both a statical and a dynamical pole; otherwise, from pure rest, involving no possibility of motion, no motion could ever arise). Let this be Kundalini.

"2. Then there is creative impulse arising out of it; this is a motion out of rest. By this the Kundalini becomes partly static and partly dynamic, or ejects, so to say, a dynamic pole out of it in order to evolve the body, but remaining a static pole or background itself all along. In no part of the process has the Kundalini really uncoiled itself altogether, or even curtailed its three coils and a half. Without this Muladhara Shakti remaining intact no evolution could be possible at all. It is the hinge upon which everything else turns.

"3. Each creative act again reacts on the Muladhara

Shakti, so that such reaction, without disturbing the relative rest of the coiled Shakti, changes its volume or intensity, but does not curtail or add to the number of coils. For instance, every natural act of respiration reacts on the coiled Shakti at the Muladhara, but it does not commonly make any difference. But Pranayama powerfully reacts on it, so much so that it awakens the dormant power and sends it piercing through the centers. Now, the common description that the Kundalini uncoils herself then and goes up the Sushumna, leaving the Muladhara, should, I think, be admitted with caution. That static background can never be absolutely dispensed with. As you have yourself rightly observed, 'Shakti can never be depleted, but this is how to look at it.' Precisely, the Kundalini, when powerfully worked upon by Yoga, sends forth an emanation or ejection in the likeness of her own self (like the ethereal double) which pierces through the various centers until it becomes blended, as you point out, with the Mahakundali of Shiva at the highest or seventh center. Thus, while this 'ethereal double' or self-ejection of the coiled power at the Muladhara ascends the Sushumna, the coiled power itself does not and need not stir from its place. It is like a spark given over from an over-saturated (overcharged) electro-magnetic machine; or, rather, it is like the emanations of radium which do not sensibly detract from the energy contained in it. This last, perhaps, is the closest physical parallel of the case that we are trying to understand.... The Kundalini at the Muladhara is the whole primordial Shakti in monad or germ of latency; that is why it is coiled. The Kundalini that mounts up the Nadi (current) is also the whole Shakti in a specially dynamic form—an ejected likeness of the Eternal Serpent. The result of the last fusion (there are successive fusions in the various centers also) in the Sahasrara (the highest center) is also the whole or Purna.... In this conception the permanent static background is not really depleted, much less is it dispensed with.

"4. When again I say that the volume or intensity of

the 'coiled power' can be affected (though not its configuration and relative equilibrium), I do not mean to throw up the principle of conservation of energy in relation to the Kundalini which is the embodiment of all energy. It is merely the conversion of static (potential) energy into dynamic (kinetic) energy in part, the sum remaining constant. As we have to deal with infinities here, an exact physical rendering of this principle is not to be expected. The Yogi therefore simply '*awakens*,' and never creates Shakti. By the way, the germ-cell which evolves the body does not, according to modern biology, cease to be a germ-cell in any stage of complicated process. The original germ-cell develops itself into two; one-half gradually develops itself into the body of a plant or animal—this is the somatic cell; the other half remains encased within the body practically unchanged, and it is transmitted in the process of reproduction to the offspring—that is the germ-plasm. Now, this germ-plasm is unbroken through the whole line of propagation. This is Weissmann's doctrine of 'continuity of the germ-plasm,' which has been widely accepted, though it is but an hypothesis."

In a subsequent postscript, Prof. Mukhyopadhyaya wrote in the same analytical style: "The constitution of the atom reveals the static-dynamic polarization of Shakti; other and more complex forms of existence also do the same. In the living body this necessary static background is Muladhara, where Shakti is coiled. All the functional activity of the body, starting from the development of the germ-cell, is correlated to, and sustained by, the Shakti concentrated at the Muladhara. Cosmic creation, too, ending with the evolution of Prithivi Tatva also presupposes a cosmic static background. It is an unending process....

"An electro-magnetic machine, if a suitable substance be placed near it, will induce in it an equivalent and opposite kind of electro-magnetism without losing its own stock of energy. In *conduction*, energy flows over into another thing, so that the source loses and the other

thing gains what it has lost, and its gain is similar in kind to the loss. Not so *induction*. There the source does not lose, and the induced energy is equivalent and opposite in kind to the inducing energy. Thus a positive charge will induce an equivalent negative charge in a neighboring object. Now, shall we suppose that the Muladhara, when it becomes over-saturated (overcharged), induces in the neighboring center (say, Svaohishthana, the first moving center above the Muladhara) a dynamic (not static) equivalent? Is this what the rise of the Serpent Power really means? The explanation, I am tempted to think, is not altogether fantastic."

CHAPTER XXVI

KUNDALINI

KUNDALINI is the secret form of creative energy in bodies. It is the source of all energies, including Prana. It is a subtle, invisible substance which gathers in triangular form—when dormant—at the base of the spine, the Muladhara center. It is the most powerful form of energy known. It is the life principle. In some terminologies it is called "The Serpent Power."

When released and raised up through the seven Chakras or centers, the Kundalini power opens up incomparable worlds to the Chela. As has been previously explained, these Chakras are all vortices of etheric matter, apparently of the same kind and subject to the same external influence of the intruding "force."

According to the Yoga doctrine, the Chakras are different centers of "consciousness," vitality and energy. They are located at intervals from the base of the spine up to the brain. By the practice of Pranayama the *dynamic* energy of the Kundalini can be quickened, and with persistent practice it will awaken the *static* energy of the Kundalini which is sleeping in the Muladhara. H. P. Blavatsky encouraged the practice of Pranayama, control of the breath, to stimulate the Kundalini. Control of the breath is also control of the Prana, Apana, and each of the five vital breaths necessary to sustain health and harmony in the body—and between the "bodies." Few persons know how to breathe. This fact we reiterate—lest the student forget.

"When Prana and Apana are mixed," writes H. P. B., "it will naturally cause heat in the body; then the body becomes light and powerful. This *extreme* heat, when felt by the Kundalini, causes her to awaken from sleep."

This is brought about by rhythmical breathing as taught in Pranayama. As steam is converted into water by

heat and again returns to it, so rises the dynamic energy of the Kundalini up through the Chakras. In reality, the Kundalini does not actually leave her place in the Muladhara, but through the action of extreme heat an "etheric double" is formed, and as a key, opens the "door" to the Sushumna, and the Kundalini Force is liberated. The Kundalini Force is, by the action of will-power, raised from Chakra to Chakra—each of which produces different psychic manifestations and effects, returning again and again for revitalization from the Mother-force. However, the Kundalini—Her Majesty, the Mother of the Universe, of all Life—lies ever, apportioned in each individual, at the Muladhara, generating new force, awaiting the command of the individual who has mastered her secrets.

Mastery of the forces of the body, as heretofore explained, consists in control of the will, which in turn gains control—through prescribed exercises given earlier in this course—over every function of the body. Will is power. A Master once said: "By will man may become a Deva (like God), or the opposite." The Bible says: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Doubt is the opposite of will—the enemy. When one has determined with the full force of his will to do a thing, it is already half done. When the student has determined to master this course—intricate though it may seem—it literally is half mastered. Through the will Pranayama becomes a reality—a stepping stone. Through the regulation of the breath Prana is taken into the body. Prana, the vital force, or life force, then becomes subservient to him who has mastered its regulation through rhythmic breathing, Pranayama. He who breathes rhythmically thinks rhythmically. Rhythmical thinking creates rhythm in all bodily functions. When the breath is irregular the mind wanders; when the breath is under control, the mind is also under control. Man lives as long as he has breath in his body. When the breath goes out, life is said to have gone out. Man lives as harmoniously, as rhythmically, as he breathes. An im-

properly oxidized body is an impure body. When the body is impure, the nerve channels become clogged with these impurities, and the Prana cannot go through the Sushumna. Therefore, concentration is futile unless the body first be purified. Pranayama is the key.

Trying to force the Chakras open is often a painful process and even disease is not unlikely to follow—unless the body first be purified. The possession of health, strength and morality are consequently necessities. The thoughts and will are more easily and naturally intensified, if first purified. The vivifying influence of the aroused Kundalini is then free to pierce through the Chakras, opening new visions. But “the mere dabbler in the pseudo-occult will only degrade his intellect with the puerilities of psychism, become the prey of the evil influence of the phantasmal world, or ruin his soul by the foul practices of phallic sorcery—as thousands of misguided people are doing even in this age. Is this so? It is possible that perverse or misguided concentration on sexual and connected centers may have the effect alluded to.” To arouse the Kundalini purely for psychic powers and worldly enjoyment is to court the gravest dangers. To avoid the pitfalls then, purify the body through exercises and rhythmic breathing. These will tend to purify the thoughts. Master the will, and by it lead the released Kundalini power up, up, up, through the Chakras to the highest center, the Sahasrara, where is bliss untasted by those who stop at the lower centers. A true, spiritual “attitude” is first, last and always self-mastery; liberation from slavery to the desires of the body.

The mere rousing of the Serpent Power does not, from the spiritual standpoint, amount to much. At-one-ment with the Universal Mind is the ultimate achievement to be desired. It is the goal that distinguished such Masters as Jesus of Nazareth, and many East Indian Adepts revered in that great land. “I and the Father are One,” was the constant realization of Jesus, a realization which gave him superb poise. It was the knowledge and mastery of the Kundalini force that enabled him to achieve

the so-called miracles that distinguished him from all other persons of his time. Yet he said: "Greater things than I do ye shall do also."

Resting in your body at the Muladhara—in the region of the coccyx—is the Kundalini, a dynamo of cosmic energy. Freedom from the limitations of time and space can be yours for the seeking. All things are possible when Kundalini force is released . . . levitation, materialization, transfiguration, dematerialization, perfect, unlimited clairvoyance, clairauidence, et cetera. Emancipation!

Thus if we desire unlimited power within, we must first learn to contact and use the "omnipotent power" without—yet constantly available. Prana is that power. Therefore, it is Prana that we must learn to direct if we would arouse the Kundalini and attain Seership.

Our bodies are as much subject to rhythmic law as are the planets in their course through space. The secret of the equilibrium of the universe is the rhythm of the cosmos. Rhythmic motion prevents confusion. It is the secret of life, of longevity, of power.

When we learn to breathe rhythmically we create harmony in the body. It functions in unison. A rhythmical body easily learns to attune to the forces of nature, and learns to absorb more Prana. A conscious absorption of Prana is the first step in the conscious direction of Prana. The primary step in awakening the Kundalini is to establish a rhythmic motion of Prana in the body, applying it in the direction of the Kundalini, to arouse it from its sleep. If the student will review and *study* the chapters on rhythmic breathing—will diligently practice the exercises—he will be amazed at the results. Like the knights of old, most of us run around the world searching for the Holy Grail, only to return, weary and disillusioned, and find it within ourselves. So in rhythmical breathing shall we find the true "Master Key to Psychic Unfoldment."

Study the lessons on rhythmical breathing; practice the exercises as religiously as though your whole future depended on your mastery of them, and wonderful will be the revelations unfolded to you.

If the Chela faithfully follows all the instructions of this course, then he is ready to go into the Silence and worship at the shrine of Kundalini, the Mother-power of the universe. After sitting quietly for a few moments chanting softly and rhythmically some Mantram that appeals, chant it over and over till you feel soothed and completely relaxed. If you do not care for the Indian Mantrums, there is one particularly adapted to the Occidental ideas of music:

“Oh Love that knoweth of no fear,
A love that sheds a joyous tear;
Oh Love that makes me whole and free;
Such love shall keep and hallow me.”

After chanting it three times and having performed your rhythmical breathing, or Pranayama, visualize—with all your powers of concentration—the cosmic powers of the universe flowing into your body as you breathe. A simple method which assists in concentrating your thought is to visualize an attenuated blue thread of light, electricity or power, streaming into you in the breath you intake. Direct it by the will and visualization, into the lungs and down to the region of the Muladhara where the Kundalini lies sleeping. Continuing Prana-yama, after a period you will begin to feel a warmth around the Muladhara. This is caused by a magnetic disturbance of the atoms. This heat becomes more intense as the concentration is improved and steadied.

In this condition the student begins to become aware of things his senses could not grasp. He perceives with an intelligence that does not need to reason. Through sustained meditation and concentration he feels the quickening force of Kundalini Power stirring within. The body is thrilled with the ecstasy of awakening Divinity. When the Prana is controlled the student moves its volume at will, up through the Sushumna, clearing the course, purifying it for the Kundalini Power.

The Chakras represent forces of nature; beginning with the next above the Muladhara—earth, water, fire, air, ether. When the student, through Pranayama, learns to control

and direct the Prana through the Sushumna, the day is not afar when the Kundalini will be affected by the heat that arises as the Prana is forced up through the Chakras. Each Chakra holds the key to wonderful powers over the element it represents. When the Apana mixes with the Prana in the "Fire Chakra" the heat becomes so intense the body seems to be on fire. It is not only a physical heat, but a spiritual glow that is bright and powerful, and can be seen and felt by those en rapport.

When one has learned to lift the Prana up through the five physical Chakras, the first awakening of Kundalini is felt and the spiritual body is released and is free to travel where it will without the incumbrances of the flesh—can travel to and from the astral world as swiftly as the wind.

There are certain "Mudras" practiced only under the direction of a kind teacher, or Guru, that assist the student in the awakening of these mighty powers—which, like electricity, may destroy if improperly directed. Therein, lies the danger. Thus we advise our students not to concentrate on the Sahasrara, or Thousand-Petaled Lotus Chakra. The Visuddha or heart center governs the origin of sounds (astral). Without a teacher to personally assist and protect, the higher Chakras—i. e., the Ajna and Sahasrara which control the astral and spiritual faculties—should be left to awaken as a natural process or result of the activity of the others.

There is a law which governs the universe: "What is mine will come to me." Remarkable instances of teachers coming unbidden—appearing and disappearing mysteriously as though materialized—are not infrequent among students of occultism. There is a saying in the East: "When the Chela (student) is ready, the Guru (teacher) will appear." So mote it be! Yet one must be developed to recognize the true teacher, who is as simple, as humble as the Nazarene, who walked beside his disciples after his resurrection, and they knew him not."

How many of us, looking for pomp and power—as were the Jews when they denied the Christ—fail to recognize the Master among men! How often, intrigued by glamor

and ritual, do we lose sight of the most important things along our path. Not as an oriental potentate, robed in all the splendors of the East, nor as a clerical-vested man of letters, "letter-bound," shall come the Prince of Peace to liberate the struggling Chela from his bondage; but as an illumination to inspire a lofty sentiment and stir the soul.

And so, to the Chela who has progressed as far as these lessons can materially or spiritually take him, we whisper the hope that a teacher surprising as a fairy dream—will appear to you and lead you further on the way. Side by side the Master walks with his Chela on the difficult stages of the Path. We are never alone, and "never less alone than when alone."

"Lo, in the East this Wisdom's showering Light,
Adorable, hath sprung from out the night;
Now may the dawns, heaven daughters, spread
Shining afar, a path for man to tread."

CHAPTER XXVII

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

CONSCIOUSNESS evolves, we are told, from the lowliest cell-intelligence up through all phases of mental evolution until we reach the state of divine consciousness—Samadhi. Samadhi is the stage of consciousness higher than the highest stage of self-consciousness. Occidental occultists call it the cosmic-consciousness, which is described as an awareness of the One-ness of all life; a consciousness that all is life, force and motion—nothing is dead or lost. All is animate with infinite intelligence. Mystics, saints and inspired souls down through the ages have had fleeting glimpses of this higher consciousness, which left them stricken with awe, completely dazed and bewildered by the splendor and grandeur of the Absolute. No mortal words can convey the experience of the awful realization that they have been in the presence of Something—and they called it God, or an equivalent name representing deity in their particular religion or creed.

Concerning this consciousness, Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke wrote: "I have, during the last three years, collected twenty-three cases of this so-called cosmic-consciousness. In each case the onset, or incoming, of the new faculty is always sudden, instantaneous. Among the unusual feelings the mind experiences is a sudden sense of being immersed in flame or in a brilliant light. This occurs entirely without worrying or outward cause, and may happen at noonday or in the middle of the night . . .

"Along with these feelings comes a sense of immortality, not merely a feeling of certainty that there is a future life—that would be small matter—but a pronounced consciousness that the life now being lived is eternal, death being seen as a trivial incident that does not affect its continuity. Further, there is annihilation of the sense of

sin, and an intellectual competency, not simply surpassing the old plane, but on an entirely new and higher plane."

Words fail the person to whom this experience has come. It is a transcendental state of illuminated consciousness. This sublime experience is followed by a peace that truly passeth understanding—a calm as universal as the ethers. Out of the "silent Silence" a Voice will speak and reveal the mysteries of life.

Underlying the multitudinous and varied experiences of those who have attained the revelation of Samadhi—though but for a fleeting moment—there are certain fundamental and essential characteristics which identify the experience as real, not merely an illusion. Though these general characteristics may vary, there are certain details that distinguish the real.

Concerning his experience Dr. Bucke wrote: "My mind, deeply under the influence of the ideas, images and emotions called up by the reading and talk, was calm and peaceful. I was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment, not actually thinking, but letting ideas, images and emotions flow of themselves, as it were, in my mind. All at once, without warning of any kind, I found myself wrapped in a flame-colored cloud. For an instant I thought of fire, an immense conflagration somewhere close by in that great city. The next moment, I knew that the fire was in myself."

Most reports of this experience allude to a great Inner Light, as the reflection of a distant fire—a great conflagration.

A beautiful experience was reported by an English Chela. "I felt a kind of soothing slumber stealing over me. I became aware that I was floating in a vast ocean of light and joy. I was here, there, and everywhere. I was everybody, and everybody was I. I knew I was I, and yet I knew I was much more than myself. Indeed, it seemed to me there was no division; that all the universe was in me, and I in it, yet nothing was lost or swallowed up. Everything was alive with a joy that would never diminish."

Another truth-seeker relates her experience: "Thinking

of spiritual things, as was my wont in meditation, feeling a strong presence of God, I suddenly had a consciousness of being surrounded by a brilliant white light which continued for several minutes, and, at the same time, I felt a great spiritual uplifting, and an enlargement of my mental powers, as if the limitations of the body were transcended, and my soul's capacities were in a measure set free for a moment. The experience was unique and beyond the current of everyday human life, and while the vision or impression passed away, a permanent effect was produced upon my mind which I shall never, never forget."

Sri Ramachrishna, the renowned Hindu sage and teacher, spoke of this mystic illumination as "a torrent of spiritual light, deluging the mind and giving the soul peace. This living light does not harm. It is like the light coming from a gem, shining yet soft, cool and soothing. It burneth not; it giveth peace and joy."

Saint Paul, while still known as Saul of Tarsus, had a notable experience which is historical: "As he journeyed, he came near unto Damascus, and suddenly there shone around him a light from heaven." The experience of this "Light" or "Fire" from heaven is typical of this divine illumination, though in some cases it is more pronounced than others. It seems as if the mind were flooded with wisdom from a supernal source—it may be justly called a mental incandescence. But Illumination is the word, for it means: "The act of supplying light, or of brightening; or the act of enlightenment or enlightening; also, that which illuminates or gives light; brightness, splendor, especially intellectual light or knowledge; spiritual illumination or enlightenment; brightening of the intellect which arises by reason of the radiation of the power of the intuitive or superconscious faculties or planes of mind." Hence the term "Illumination" is a fitting appellation for this sublime experience.

It should be noted that those who seek a physical explanation of spiritual phenomena—those of a scientific trend—suggest that this experience of "illumination" may be accounted for by a presumed increase in the rate

of vibration, or an intensified vibration of the brain cells. This increased, or heightened, vibration of the brain cells produces the sensation of light. The basis of this argument is that ordinary light is produced by the vibration of the ether waves. This is an interesting explanation, but does not explain the cause of the intensified or increased vibration, when the effect of the passivity which usually precedes these experiences would naturally be a decreased vibration.

The most impressive and awesome consciousness, and by far the most distinct and definite, experienced by those in Samadhi is that of the immanent and abiding presence of the Infinite Being, All-Power, God—the description of which finds words inadequate. It is an awareness of the Great Ocean of Life of which each and everything is a part, radiating in and from the Central Fire—Divinity Manifest.

It is a vivid experience of absolute freedom and security of being; an intuitive certainty that there is no power existent which can in any way limit one's own essential being and entity, or in any way affect or destroy his own essential security of being. It is a knowledge of immortality undemonstrable. Objective proof becomes inconsequential in comparison with infinite realization. The limitations of time and space seem to fade into unreality—as unreal as they are to spiritual beings. All inharmony seems to disappear, leaving the universe a vast space of peace and understanding.

The illuminated one realizes the superb truth embodied in the Sanskrit poem:

“The spirit never was born;
The spirit shall cease to be, never;
Never the time it was not;
End and beginning are dreams.”

The initiate experiences a profound assurance of life eternal; of the invulnerability of spirit; that neither sword nor spear can kill it; nor fire or air or water harm it. It cannot be wounded; it cannot die. He obtains a lasting and certain intuition of essential immortality and eternal existence.

"Birthless and deathless and changeless, remaineth the spirit forever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems."

When all humanity shall have reached this sublime consciousness of Samadhi, demonstrability of survival shall not be needed—nor will it be desired. In this mighty experience of illumination the individual does not merely believe that he is immortal; *he knows it!* The facts of immortal existence are just as evidential, as real, as true to him, as are the facts assuring him of present mortality. The knowledge and realization of both are absolute in this certainty and truth.

When attaining Samadhi, even for a brief instant, one finds his consciousness raised to a degree akin to infinity—though the realization may be only for the time being. But in that brief instant the riddle of the Universe and the mystery of Being become comprehensible fully and without apparent effort. The entire field of knowledge becomes known during the instant of the "scintillating flash of Light"—the Light of knowing without reasoning, the presence of All-knowledge, encompassing all. One writer compared the "flash" of infinite wisdom obtained during this experience of illumination: "One may see the entire landscape during the period of a vivid lightning flash."

The mind may be unable to remember the details, but it remembers the fact that there has really been such a knowing, and is comforted thereby. It urges him on to greater spiritual attainment. To know with certainty that such knowledge is attainable is comforting—a knowledge that can give to every question an absolute and infallible answer. With increased spiritual development the experience will return again and again to remain for longer intervals, becoming stronger and more permanent until at last the soul will dwell continuously in this Ocean of Truth.

Many persons of doubting mind believe this state of consciousness to be destructive to the brain cells. Contrariwise, it is beyond the capacity of brain-cell registration. It is found that the intellectual capacity of the

individual increases and is strengthened by the experience of Samadhi. The greatest poets, sages, artists and musicians will be found to have experienced Samadhi, or Divine Illumination—if only in a small measure. In many cases their greatest intellectual work has been performed after the time of such an experience. The experience of Samadhi plainly marks the dividing line between ordinary accomplishment and “inspiration.”

With the increased peace, poise and knowledge, comes increased joy and capacity for happiness. Emerson says at times he experienced or “enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. . . . I am glad to the brink of fear. All mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.” He also refers to “that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the Universal Soul.” In his inimitable essays he makes reference to the “ecstasy” and the “ravishment” attending his spiritual experiences.

Celibacy or some form of asceticism seems imperative in order to reach these sublime heights of mystic illumination. But those who have experienced it say the “subliminal sensation of inexplicable joy” far surpasses any physical sensation which may require to be sacrificed—it is ineffable ecstasy in a higher and more enduring consciousness.

Seeking to emphasize this element of joyous mystic experience, the Sufi poets have often employed terms which have been grossly misunderstood by the uninitiated, who consequently regarded them as erotic, because spiritual experiences have been interpreted as physical. It is, in reality, higher than anything man knows as either physical or spiritual joy. The Orientals call it Bliss-Absolute. Whether Christian or Pagan, Oriental or Occidental Mystics, the note of sublime joy runs through all the records. It is universal and ever-present, untouched by worldly sorrow or cares: in truth a conscious union with God; a union between Creator and created—joy ineffable.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ILLUMINATION

IN explaining the external effect of "Samadhi," the sublime consciousness, Edward Carpenter, in his book, "Visit to a Gnani," says of his Yogi friend: "Finally, his face, while showing the attributes of a seer, the externally penetrating eye, and expression of illumination—the deep mystic light within—showed also the prevailing sentiment of *happiness* behind it. His own expression, oft repeated, was 'Sandosham, Sandosham eppotham'—'joy, always joy!'"

In one of his superb passages, Edward Carpenter refers to his own experience in *illumination*, a newly-awakened consciousness of "joy transcendent:" "I arise out of the dewy night and shake my wings! Tears and lamentations are no more! Life and Death lie stretched before me! I breathe the sweet ether blowing of the breath of God!

"Deep as the universe is my life—and *I know it; nothing can dislodge the knowledge of it; nothing can destroy, nothing can harm me!*

"Joy, joy arises—I arise! The sun darts overpowering rays of joy through me, the night radiates it from me. I take wings through the night and pass through all the wilderness of the worlds, and the old, dark holds of tears and death—and return with laughter, laughter! Sailing through the starlit spaces on outspread wings—O laughter, laughter, laughter!"

The most interesting characteristic of the experience is that of joy ineffable—the freedom from a consciousness of the tragedies that fill this world. Yet it cannot be said that these great souls—who have attained a development of consciousness that transcends anything the average person *knows as consciousness*—are immune to, or without sympathy for, the sorrows of the world. It is

that they have reached a stage of *knowing* that all is with purpose; that the experiences given us are those which are needed to create character—hence soul-growth. They have attained a God-consciousness by which they discern the “interblending” and “interdependence” of all things that exist.

Whereas, the world at large specializes on theorizing—which often assumes elaborate proportions—the mystic *knows*. It is the knowledge of a consciousness coordinating with the Infinite Intelligence of creation—“in Whom we all live, move and have our being.”

The exaltation of the true Mystic—who has attained Samadhi—is that which is the inheritance of all; though the masses ignore it as a filament of illusion, because they fail to attain it through the testimony of the five senses. Of necessity, there must be some surcease from the strenuous problems of the world; some haven in which to revitalize a body and soul torn midst the vibrations of mental and spiritual discord.

The materialist smiles at what he believes to be the credulity of the truth-seeker “developing” a path to Samadhi. It is the same smile that denied the possibility of our greatest mechanical and electrical achievements. It is not that humanity possesses an innate spirit of retrogression or lethargy—for the urge of evolution permeates every living thing. It is that the people have been so enslaved by the five senses, and have become so pessimistic through adversities brought about by their own law-breaking, that they do not easily emerge from their mental lethargy and grasp new ideas with any reality of understanding. This attitude also has its redeeming feature—it tends to make the development more steadfast. It further proves the natural inclination of all worthwhile species—excepting mushrooms and their class—toward slow and persistent growth. That which is eternal is the result of steady evolution, and in this category is included the soul of man in its journey through the spheres.

The Mystic *knows* he was not hurled as dust from off some great Over-Soul—as dust is whirled from off a planet into the interstices of space—but that he is a part and

particle of the whole cosmic scheme, animated and motivated by an Infinite Intelligence, Whom we call God. Whereas popular religious conceptions have pictured God as an individual, the Mystic *knows* that God is the Principle of Life animating Nature and Man.

Ridiculing this sublime conception, which brings God so near to each of us, the skeptic—in a desperate attempt to vindicate his interpretation of Deity—cynically declares that “if God is manifesting in each and everything that exists, then certainly He must be back-sliding.” The reaction of religionists is one of horror at what they believe to be sacrilege. But, admitting the possibility of a personal Deity, is it not probable that He would have such vast understanding of the creatures beneath him, that He would smile at their credulity? To us, the most grotesque sacrilege is to suppose that God created beings capable of falling so low as apparently the human race has done.

Concepts of God

Col. Robert G. Ingersoll once cleverly stated that “an honest God is the noblest work of man.” But he spoke a profound truth, for the reason that a man’s conception of God corresponds to his highest powers of idealization. It is mentally impossible to conceive of anything higher than one’s highest ideals. When we lack the capacity for comparing ideas, we cannot comprehend them. For this reason it is impossible for those who have not developed a magnanimous, spiritual conception of life to comprehend the Mystic’s realization of God. It is almost as impossible for the cannibals or the Australian Bushmen to comprehend the Christian’s conception of God. Man’s only proof of spiritual growth is found in his conception of Deity. The person still possessed of secret fears, hates, desires of revenge, covetousness and vanity, instinctively endows his God with such attributes. Thus we are certain of a people’s mental and spiritual development by the manner of God or gods they worship. The God of Moses displayed very unspiritual attributes as witnessed by the first of the Ten Commandments: “Thou shalt have no

other gods before me, for I, thy God, am a *jealous God*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto them that love me."

If a mundane individual were to make such threats to coerce obedience there is little doubt but that he would be haled before a court of "justice."

That we are a part of God is becoming a principal teaching of the leading Spiritualists, metaphysicians and occultists. That we shall eventually attain the God-consciousness is the hope of every quickened soul—and is the realization of those who have attained Samadhi.

On earth advanced souls proclaim that God is "omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient." These significant terms embody a vast scope—but the earthly concept of such superb adjectives is very limited because, as we have before stated, "conceptions can never rise higher than their source." God is not nearly so great to us as He is to Hesperus, the Venus plane of the heaven-world.

Though "conceptions can rise to the level of their source," yet one cannot doubt but that Infinite Intelligence sometimes limits the height of the source. Every person with knowledge of "after-death conditions and planes" affirms this to be true. Human consciousness is limited in its faculty of attainment. Were it not for the development of higher consciousness—by the few, with the possibility for the many—humanity would forever be lost in a maze of darkness and superstition.

God—Infinite Intelligence—"speaks" to the partially developed human souls from the level of "human principle in Himself." Hence, man's varied interpretations of the Will of Deity. The general terrene conception of Him is that of a perfect Person who is all-powerful, ubiquitous, eternal. To the Mystic, the Hesperian and all those of the higher, spiritual planes, God is ever impersonal and "speaks" of Himself from the level of "Spirit." To each of us "He speaks" of Himself and His works from the standpoint of our conception of Him. Thus, to those who have experienced "illumination" He is known to be omni-

present, but speaks as Spirit—which is above Soul; it is the “Over-Soul” of which Emerson wrote.

In the “Life and Teachings of the Masters of the Far East” (though an infamous fraud is hinted with reference to the authorship, the beautiful teachings and revelations embodied therein remain unsullied) we read: “The god that judges, destroys, or withholds any good thing from his children or creations is but a god that is conjured by man’s ignorant thinking, and you need not fear that god unless you wish to do so. . . .

“God is the principle behind everything that exists today. The Principle behind a thing is Spirit, and Spirit is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient. God is the one *Mind* that is both the direct and the directing cause of all the good that we see about us. God is the source of all the life we see about us. God is the source of all the true Love that holds or binds all forms together. God is *Impersonal Principle*. God is never personal except as He becomes to each individual a personal, loving Father. To the individual He can be a personal, loving, all-giving Father-Mother. But God never becomes a great being located somewhere in the skies in a place called heaven, where He has a throne which He sits upon and judges people after they die, for God is Life itself and that Life never dies. That is but a misconception brought about by man’s ignorant thinking, just as so many malformations have been brought about and you see them in the world around you. . . .

“When man forms an alliance with God through spiritual understanding, the boundary line between God and man will disappear. When this point is reached man will know what Jesus meant when he said, ‘I and my Father are one.’

“It is said that man shall not only give ear, but he shall become that which he claims to be, and *sinking self* he shall be immersed in the Brotherhood of Man. It is deeds, not fine words, that endure. The way of progress is not only barred by the creeds of others, but by those of ourselves. Each is claiming the graces of the Most High; each attempting to build his own by dismantling and

tearing down others. Instead of using energy to tear down, that energy should go to consolidate the whole.

"The Most High not only made one nation of one blood, but of one blood all the nations of the earth. The time has now come when we must choose between creeds and the Brotherhood of Man. Creeds are but the conjuring of man. The faith that moves mountains still slumbers in the seed of the plant. The heights and grandeur are still there for man to attain. The law of enlightenment has preceded that of miracle. This law of enlightenment is the highest law of Love, and Love is the Universal Brotherhood—that which every true Mystic and truth-seeker is striving to realize."

There is a way—a law divine—that shall eventually lead humanity out of the web of Karma, or the destiny of cause and effect. It is the effort to attain freedom from terrene sorrow that inspires many great souls to forsake the baubles of the world in the development of the Samadhi Consciousness wherein the key reposes.

CHAPTER XXIX

A PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

IF WE cannot put the teachings of occultism, in its various interpretations, on a practical basis and in our present every-day lives realize the truth of them—then primarily they have little value to us, and remain but mere words. Self-realization has been the watchword of every progressive person; upon its results are based the present triumphs called civilization. If there is a God or a Supreme Self we must have some measure of definite comprehension, or God or our Supreme Self have little or no existence in our gross thoughts. Conscious realization is the only thing that seems to satisfy the majority—a thing which no amount of theorizing can do.

Too long has humanity been engrossed in a "sense" world to appreciate the abstract realms. No amount of theorizing seems to bring ultimate satisfaction concerning them. Every man has sought satisfaction, only to be lost in the maze of delusion. People sit in beautiful churches seeking this satisfaction and the solution to their problems, and by beautiful combinations of words, cleverly expounded by religious teachers, experience a sensation defined as "spiritual ecstasy." But "emotional ecstasy" never leads to spiritual realization—nor to freedom. Even the Scriptures are inconsequential when they fail to inspire spiritual wisdom. Some spend a whole life time diligently studying the Scriptures; foundering in Biblical lore, they starve for spiritual realization. Others spend life-times searching every nook and corner of science and philosophy, only in the end to wonder "what it is all about." Without form or continuity, extended research is valueless.

"As a donkey carries loads of sandalwood on his back," says an Indian proverb, "only feeling the weight of the burden without getting the benefit of the sweet perfume,

so it is with those who study innumerable Scriptures without knowledge of the essence—the truth—of them.”

Experience is the real method of acquiring knowledge and strength—a strength of self-realization by which we can declare truth with conviction. There is a great deal of difference between a man of book-learning and one who has experienced and knows through self-realization. Though the works of the great teachers and philosophers might be quoted completely from memory, till a person appeared profoundly learned, he would merely be repeating, “parroting,” the words of another. He who has *experienced, knows*. Therein lies the difference. Deny it though the world may, once we have experienced a thing, we know it to be true. Thus the Seer *knows* that immortality is a reality because he has experienced communication and has seen those who have passed through “death.” In his knowledge he is bold because he knows.

Philosophers and religious teachers have, for thousands of years, preached the immortality of the soul, yet humanity is still afraid of dying; and death throws a mantle of grief over most hearts. If humanity understood its true nature this universal fear would be dispelled. Because we have no conception of what self-realization is, we limit our knowledge, and thus we limit our capacity to receive inspirations from the higher planes. Talk though we may, however glibly, most of us are in complete ignorance of the nature of our real self—however we may talk about the immortal nature of the soul. It is the soul-realization that gives us the capacity to comprehend its immortal nature. When we realize our true self, and perceive its nature as we perceive those who are about us in an objective world, then fear of death will cease to exist and disease will become an obsolete experience.

As the parrot repeats the things which it is taught so long as it remains undisturbed, but reverts back to its natural screech when molested by an enemy, so humanity, parrot-like, repeats and chants the things which are taught it as infallible truths, only—in the time of sorrow

or distress—to revert back to its natural cry of wonderment and doubt. Like parrots, that repeat words without comprehension of their meaning, so those ambitious for knowledge cram their heads full of “words” without understanding them. Because so few have any understanding of their real nature, we find the masses weak and miserable when trouble or death approaches. But when man realizes that his supreme Self is in reality one and the same with God; and that he cannot be separated from God—because the two are inseparable—then shall he begin to unfold the mighty powers lying dormant within, awaiting manifestation. It was the Nazarene’s comprehension of his at-one-ment with the “Father” that gave him the power to perform seemingly miraculous feats—yet he promised we should do greater things. Why have we failed to do so? Simply because we have failed to realize the vast significance of his most important message—at-one-ment with the Father. “It is the Father in me that doeth the works,” he said. There is but One in whom all abide and by whom everything is pervaded—this One whom the wise man worships in the knowledge that it is his real Self.

Neither by vain words, nor mantrums, nor learning, is the real self quickened except when they are accompanied by spiritual realization. Then as the artist beautifies his penciled sketches by brilliant colors in oil, so the devotee beautifies his “interpretations of illumination” by euphonious expressions.

Realization of our Supreme Self is unattainable unless we feel intense love for this Self, which is God. Only through love can man reach God. Love is the uniting force of the universe. As families are bound through love, so beautifully is symbolized the love that unites mankind to its God—or its Supreme Self. When touched by this Supreme Love the heart is purified; the emotional body is released from unholy attachments; and all selfish desires vanish. Without understanding of the fundamentals of Being, man’s search for knowledge and power will result in nothing but disillusion. The mere re-

ligionist gropes in a maze of theories, only to be lost in vague and blasted hopes. The scientist gropes in the material realms of physics and chemistry, only to find himself stranded on the borderland of the spiritual world. Each has taken a different route—one through emotional observance, and the other by the exacting methods of mathematical calculation—only to find themselves arrived at the same place: the borderland, which together they must enter before terrene knowledge can be harmonized.

All efforts of man toward knowledge must eventually lead to but one place—the door of self-realization—where “God” awaits. Then realization that we are an eternal, indestructible soul will give us strength to solve the problems of life—a strength which makes us fearless of the future and what it holds. When we *know* death is logically impossible, then we cease to fear it, and look upon it as a great adventure. In us abides the eternal—God lives and moves and manifests in us—we cannot die; for God could not destroy Himself. He who has attained this understanding is richer far than he whose wealth is measured in gold. It is the truth supporting our knowledge that makes us rich—the practical application of it that makes us valuable. Those of great philosophical learning confuse us by their technical discourses—in which they often fill a volume expounding a simple theory. The man who has attained illumination—consequently understanding—of his Real Self and his mission, gives his message in simple, dignified words, that all may understand. Today humanity’s brain is confused by the elaborate systems of philosophy. It were better for it to revert to simple, childlike principles of learning. The Masters use few words. One’s illumination speaks for itself. The possession of this great Truth makes all other truths appear insignificant.

Those whose lives have always been governed entirely by sense perceptions, find it difficult to realize a Self which is beyond all limitations—beyond body, mind, senses, and all human perceptions. Too many are in

bondage to the body, and thus their spiritual growth is obstructed. Bodily sensations confuse the mind and divert the thoughts from spiritual channels. Engrossed in material things, spiritual growth is impossible, and self-realization is retarded. Yet too much asceticism can bring about a similar result. The body should be neither a slave nor a martyr to "desire," but an instrument through which we can work out our salvation by gaining mastery of self. To keep our bodies well and strong should then become our purpose. A stringed instrument properly tuned vibrates to glorious harmonies. But when taxed by too much tension, the strings loosen or break, and jangling discord results. Moderation in all things should be our law. Too much tautness on a violin destroys its tone-beauty. No usage at all depletes its vibrancy. So with the human body.

Right discrimination must govern us that we may not—in our eager search for peace and happiness—be led into the extremes of either excessive asceticism or radical materialism. To gain spiritual freedom is to gain happiness—which lies within ourselves, a temple of bliss and peace. It is the but partially-developed realization of our self that inspires the desire to perpetuate it in immortality. Where that self dwells we find our interests attached. When in the body, we love the body; but once the spirit has flown, we lose interest in the body—it is an empty tenement.

True, moral strength will come only when we learn to depend on our real self. Never remind one of his weaker attributes—be he child, or invalid, or criminal. Inspire all with the highest, the best that is in them. Encourage recognition of their divine powers, not only through religious rituals, but through a genuinely spiritual understanding. Call out all that is good in those you meet; only thus can you help them to awaken their higher selves.

Primarily, the road to self-realization is one which each must tread alone—but peace awaits each traveler. There are different paths we may travel to attain the desired

end—but the goal is one and the same—God, heaven, self-realization. Some earn their way by experiences and work; others by faith; others by rigid self-control and self-denial. Their destiny is the same—realization of the true self. Yet attainment of it is but to lose it in the realization that it dwells in everything and is everywhere. Knowing the one-ness of all, one realizes the futility of envy and injury to others—the injury is, after all, to the inflictor. With illumination the power to hate ceases to exist. Love alone is the cohesive force—this is the goal of all our struggles, though we may not know it. Cling though some may to transitory things, as a magnet eventually ceases to attract the iron, so the objects of sense will ultimately cease to lure us from the realm of “permanency.” Sooner or later all arrive—though eternities intervene.

In complete realization of the supremacy of the self, the windows of the soul are opened and upon our vision bursts the splendor of a spiritual world. We then shall see and hear and feel the things of that world; the things lost to those bound to sense perceptions. Then you shall never more be separated from those you love—though death may appear to divide you. No longer shall you be deceived by mischievous astral entities, for clear vision shall expose their true identity. No more shall “phenomenal appearances” blind you to the truths of “noumenal reality.” The prophetic gifts shall then be yours, for at-one-ment with the Universal Consciousness eliminates the mysteries of life and parts the curtains of the future. As one tunes a radio to different stations, receiving the thing he desires, so through spiritual realization and the attainment of the Samadhi consciousness, shall we attune our minds to the Universal, and receive the wisdom thereof. Each finite mind is but a spark of the Infinite. From this, wisdom is relayed from sphere to sphere in the spirit world, and through the medium relayed to earth people. By the same power as astral spirits gain their knowledge, can we gain what knowledge we desire,

if we but learn to "tune in" on our Real Self—in which alone lies the key to the problems of life.

But with all your seeking and striving for this superior consciousness—this self-realization—let it be with faith and trust in that higher Self. Be not anxious about results. Anxiety is a deterrent to spiritual unfoldment. So long as anxiety controls you, so long shall you be bound to the personality of the finite self—and your efforts will lead but to disappointment and failure.

Surrender completely to the faith in your divinity—to the I AM, the omnipotent life-force within you, where you shall find "God." Know that you are that which is indestructible; a Sovereign Power unto yourself, and through you flows the Essence of all Life. Then shall your passions vanish in the wake of Perfected Understanding, and you shall be possessed of such tranquility men will wonder concerning your state. But delighting in your "world of blissful realization" you shall yet keep a sustaining sympathy for those whose path of attainment is the longer route. Let your light shine forth upon all beings great and small. Let your great wisdom be manifest in a discreet silence. Let truthfulness and meditation be a discipline to your greater self, and firmly establish the dignity of the spiritual world in the hearts of men. *Be wise in the dissemination of the things you see in the astral plane and in the hearts of men. Silence is often the greatest teacher.* To some the truth is dangerous and brings only confusion in the mind. Each must learn his own lessons and thus shall the Supreme Self be realized. Arise, then, O Soul! Awaken from thy spiritual lethargy. Stop not till the goal is reached! Then, in thy Immortal Bliss, return and help the laggards on the way. So have the Masters attained, and having gained a consciousness of Self and the at-one-ment of all things, returned to light the paths of men. Let their example be thine, and thou too shalt rest in the abode of Peace forever. Amen.