



SREE KRISHNA THE LORD OF LOVE

BABA PREMANANDA BHARATI

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SECTION I. THE CONCRETE AND ABSTRACT GOD.

See you that sun, Beloved Reader, shining radiant in the blue space above? Ancients worshipped it as a god, and the Hindoos, the most ancient of all peoples, worship the sun as a god still. With joined hands filled with flowers and water and trembling with homage, the Hindoos daily pray to this "Outer Eye of the Deity," this parent of all light and Nature. "O Thou Parent of the Three Worlds! I meditate upon thy power divine which directs my intelligence!" prays the Brāhman morning, noon and evening, as he bows in all reverence.

This sun is the physical expression of the Spiritual Sun, Krishna. As the sun (the orb) is the concrete centre of its abstract self, in its diffused manifestation of light and heat which pervades the universe, so this, the Spiritual Sun, Krishna, the Source of the sun, is the concrete centre of the diffused effulgence of His Body which pervades even the sunlight and its heat. Krishna has a Form, a Form of which the most exquisite human form is but a crude counterpart. The effulgence of Krishna's Body is the substance of all space and creation. This Effulgence-Krishna, with Form-Krishna for its centre, from which it radiates—is Love.

As the physical sun's effulgence embodies or is co-existent with heat, so the Spiritual Sun's effulgence embodies and is co-existent with Intelligence. This co-existent Absolute Love and Absolute Intelligence forms the Being of this Creation. Krishna is, therefore, called the embodiment of Being, Intelligence and Bliss, or Life, Truth and Love. Every particle of this radiance of Krishna's Form-Body is not only instinct with these three attributes in one, but has within it the germ of Krishna's Form and Power.

The belief that the First Cause of the universe has no form, is based partly on error of its conception and upon ignorance of the laws of Nature. It is a delusion to think that all forms are human, material, and finite, and that to acknowledge that this Supreme Being has a form is to take away from Him His absolute divinity, spirituality and infinity.

That which is not in the seed cannot appear in the tree which comes out of it, says an aphorism of the Vedānta philosophy. This being an undeniable truth, even from a common sense standpoint, it may be asked: If God is formless, and if that formless, abstract God be the source from which the universe has come, then how can that creation contain any form? If man's creator is formless, to put the question in another way, wherefrom has He His form? If God has no form, then He can have no idea of form, and having no idea of form, how can He then create form, for creation is but expansion of Idea.

Creation has sprung from God's will, says the Holy Bible, as also the Veda. These tell us—and both the Christians and the Hindoos are agreed on this point—that God has a Will. What is will? It is but the function or attribute of the mind. Just as

where there is no fire there can be no smoke, so where there is no mind there can be no will. Once we admit that God has a will, we cannot escape admitting that He has a mind, the function of which—will—He exercised in order to create the universe.

Now then, it being established that God has a mind, the question may be asked: Is that mind encased in a body? If so, what sort of a body is it? Is it physical; that is to say, is it formed of the same material of which the human body is made? Or is it a body made of abstract spirit? This is not possible, for mind is defined by the Vedas to be that principle within us which has the power of willing and non-willing. Scientists and modern philosophers define mind with practically the same purport. This vibration of the mind, willing and non-willing, is brought about or induced by the reflections cast upon it by external or internal objects, through its channels of communication, the five cognizing senses, the physical counterparts of which are the Eye, the Ear, the Nose, the Palate and the Skin, which cognize respectively Form, Sound, Smell, Taste and Touch, under which five heads the Vedas have classified all forms of matter or objects. A mind without these five channels cannot exist, for, having no channels, it receives no impressions of objects, and has therefore no chance of either willing or non-willing, which is its attribute and its only substance and composition.

Once we acknowledge that God has a mind, we cannot help acknowledging these channels of that mind, the five senses. God has therefore not only a mind, but the Power of Seeing (eye), the Power of Hearing (ear), the Power of Smelling (nose), the Power of Tasting (palate), and the Power of Feeling (skin). The mind has also five other powers called its working senses; viz., the Power of Speaking, the Power of Holding, the Power of Moving, the Power of Excreting and the Power of Generating, otherwise called the vocal organs, the hands, the feet, the excretory organ and the generating organ. Thus God, possessing a mind, is bound to possess the ten senses, without which the mind cannot act, and inaction of the mind is its destruction or non-existence. God, having a mind, has to have an Ego, too, for mind is but a product or channel of the Ego, which means I-ness or Self-Consciousness. So that God has all the principles of which man is formed, once it is admitted that God has a mind. And there is no sane man who can deny to God the possession of a mind of which the universe is the design and creation of which man is but a tiny part.

The Christian Bible says that God has made man in His own image, which means that man is the reflection, more or less imperfect, of God. Is it then possible that what is not in the original is present in the reflection? If the human soul, according to this scriptural saying, is a reflection (image) of the Deity, has not that Deity a mind and body, as Its reflection, the human soul, has?

The answer is: It has, only the Divine Mind, being consummately pure in its state and perfect in its working, is absolutely powerful to create, preserve and destroy; and the Body in which the Divine Mind is encased is composed of a substance not of any material make.

But what does this Body of God look like? Is it like a human body? The answer is: Yes, but of a perfection of shape, symmetry and beauty, with which no human body can be compared; it is the Original Body, of which the human body is a poor imitation.

The question will be asked: Has God then as good a finite body as any of us? The answer is; NO, in capital letters. God's Body is no more finite than the human body is. There is nothing in Nature which is finite, not even a blade of grass, or the tiniest speck of earth.

All is infinite—all that you see around you, or perceive within you. There is no such word as finite in the dictionary of Nature, in the lexicon of Creation. All, all that looks ever so small and circumscribed to the fleshly eye of ignorance, is vast and endless to the eye of spiritual wisdom. All that to the physical sight is limited in shape and life is before the vision of the soulful student of Creation's mysterious laws limitless beyond grasp.

Take a grain of earth, and try to trace its origin by the light of the discoveries made by sages who probed into the inmost depths of Nature with the needle of pure spiritual concentration, and you will find that that grain of earth has sprung from Water, Water from Fire, Fire from Air, Air from Ether, and Ether from Sound, Sound from Mind in its effort to cognize outside of it objects projecting from within itself, Mind from Ego, Ego from Consciousness, and Consciousness from the Infinite Love-ocean, the basic principle of Creation.

Can you call this grain of earth finite by any means or chance, especially when you come to know the mysterious laws by which that grain of earth develops into a blade of grass, and then, through myriads of reincarnations of different life-forms, goes back and merges into the Ocean of Love, from which it had originally sprung?

From Love to earth and from earth to Love, thus is made up the circle of creation, and every point in its circumference is but a moving phase of the Infinite in manifestation, Man being but a stage in the upward evolution of the atom or a particle of earth, and his soul being a part of the Universal Soul—a wavelet of the Love-Ocean—he is as immense in every way as the universe itself, as infinite as the Essence of Infinity. His form is but the centre of his abstract Self, called Soul. This form is concrete-looking, but it is so only to the circumscribed vision of the fleshly eye of ignorance.

The body of the Supreme Deity, Krishna's Body, is concrete-looking like man's, but infinite in the expansion of its Radiance or Real Self, just as, to repeat the simile, the orb of the sun is the concrete-looking centre of its abstract Self in the manifestation of its light and heat. The orb, its radiance and its heat must altogether be called the sun, and not the orb alone. Krishna, the spiritual Soul of the sun as well as of the Universe, has likewise a Form-centre, from which radiates to limitless Infinity His effulgence called Absolute Love, which pervades all creation and space.

This body of Krishna, the Parent Cause of the universe, is made up of concentrated Absolute Love, and is the Home of the Very Finest Ideas (potencies) of the sense-principles and the Ego, Mind and Intellect, which form the main factors of Creation.

The Beauty of the Body of Krishna changes, like the shifting colors in a kaleidoscope, into more and more soul-entrancing loveliness at every second, for it reflects the concentrated Beauty and Sweetness of the whole universe, charms warring with charms for supremacy—bubbling foam and froth of the Sweetness of the Nectar of Love.

SECTION II. THE SCIENCE OF CREATION.

It is an intelligent conclusion to draw that the imperfect form-creations of the Creator reach a perfect stage, or centre, towards which all imperfections converge in order to reach perfection. That centre *does* exist, that stage is the stage by the standard of which all imperfections of things and phases in Nature are known and judged. That centre is the Supreme God Himself—Krishna.

Krishna, both Concrete and Abstract, has three main spiritual attributes: Love, Intelligence and Life. Love is the first attribute and the cause of the two others. As the sun (the orb) and its effulgence, to once more repeat the analogy, are one and the same thing, as the flame and its light are one and the same thing, as without the sun there can be no sunshine, as without the flame there can be no light; in other words, as light is inseparable from both the sun and the flame, so Krishna, though He has a form as finite-looking as a human form, is not only infinite in His All-pervading Radiance, but that Radiance is inseparable from his finite-looking Form-Centre. As sunshine, again, is inseparable from heat, so the effulgence of Krishna's Central Self is inseparable from Intelligence. This Universal All-pervading Intelligence, again, is inseparable from Existence or Being, otherwise called Life. These three Absolute Spiritual Attributes form Krishna's body, both Concrete and Abstract.

Thus both the Concrete and the Abstract Krishna are the embodiment of Bliss, Intelligence and Being, which are co-existent and inter-penetrating. Before Creation, then, there was nothing but this Krishna—the three Absolute Spiritual Attributes in one substance, so to speak; for Krishna or Para-Brahm cannot be called substance, and yet there is no word to indicate it. As mosses formed out of water float on the surface of that water, soaking in it, so does Creation, springing out of this Bliss, Intelligence and Being (the All-pervading Abstract Self of Krishna), float, soaking in it.

Let us try to understand the mystery of the birth of this ever-changeful, material Creation from its eternally Unchangeable Parent, the Concrete and Infinite Krishna. I have already said how every atom of this Creation is composed of all the twenty-four principles, and how in its backward motion to return to the First or Primal Principle—that atom opens one by one the passages of these principles; and how, when it develops into man-stage after passing through innumerable life-forms in the course of its evolution, it opens the passages of all the principles more or less. It is the opening of these passages of all of its composing principles, in the man-stage of the atom, that makes it fit to be called a miniature universe; for through these openings it communicates more or less freely with the all-pervading principles of the universe. The more developed this man-stage becomes (that is to say, the clearer the openings of these passages), the more correct an index it is of the inner laws and workings of the great universe.

Because man has the whole universe within himself just as an acorn has the whole oak tree in potency dwelling within it, therefore he can, by diving deep within himself, find out the mysteries of the producing Source, Being and Processes of working of the universe.

If we think on the process of the development of a tree from a seed, we will find that process as marvelous as the most marvelous phenomena of nature. Indeed, this process of the birth of a tree out of a seed is the process, in miniature, of the birth of the universe out of Krishna-Love. This process of Creation is being repeated every moment throughout Creation itself. The laws of production and destruction, formation and disintegration are the same in scientific exactitude as those which produce and form, and destroy and disintegrate the universe. The operation of these laws is going on as much in the inner as in this outer world of ours—as constantly on the mental plane as on the physical. The law which brings forth a tree out of a seed is exactly the same as that which, in a finer manifestation, operates through the birth of a thought in our mind. The rooting, the shooting, the growing, the flowering and the fruiting of a tree is but a gross reproduction of the process by which a thought awakes, develops and takes shape and action within us. The stages of a thought's birth can be clearly perceived when the mind is calm; at first there is an Unknown Feeling, then an Indefinite Vibration, which develops into Abstract Idea. Idea develops into Thought, and Thought becomes action.

Out of Krishna (Love) Creation springs into existence like a thought. Thought exists in our mind like a seed, in the shape of previous impressions of objects and ideas; so the seed of creation lies in the bosom of Krishna, in the shape of impressions of ideas of previous Creations. This seed or germ is made up of three attributes, called Sattwa (Illumination), Rāja (Activity or Motion), and Tama (Obscuration or Darkness). So long as these three attributes, forming the essence of the germ, are in equilibrium, that is to say, are of equal degree or force or intensity, Creation remains in the germ-state in the bosom of its First Cause (Krishna). But the moment there is the least tendency of any of these attributes of this germ-essence to fall out of equilibrium with the other two, that is to say, when one becomes more powerful than the others, then they start out of the Central Self—Krishna, encased in another form, almost like unto the Krishna-Form, a state which is analogous to the Unknown-Feeling state in the development of human thought.

This state is called Vāsudeva, which again has a form-centre of its abstract self-radiance, pervading all space. It is the least pronounced state or stage of differentiation induced by the tendency of loss of equilibrium in the even forces of the three Cardinal Attributes (Gunas), illumination, motion and obscuration. The second stage, called Sankarsana, analogous to the Indefinite-Vibration stage of the development of thought, has again a form-centre of its all-pervading abstract self-radiance. This Sankarsana is the Unconscious Cause of Creation. The third stage, called Pradyumna, analogous to the Abstract-Idea stage of thought, has likewise a

form-centre of its all-pervading abstract Self-radiance. This is the Semi-Conscious Cause of Creation; and from this develops the fourth stage, called Aniruddha, which is analogous to the full-developed Thought-stage and is the Full Conscious Cause of Creation. This Aniruddha is called Vishnoo or Nārāyan, from nār (water), and ayan (bed), because he floats on his back on the water of Love-life, while out of his navel springs a gigantic lotus—a figurative expression, meaning the Universe in bud—in which is encased the sleeping Brahmā, the operating Creator, with the germ of Creation dwelling within his mind and about to shoot forth.

In Aniruddha the real stage of inequilibrium of the Attributes (Gunas) develops, and in Brahmā it assumes full development. With the opening of the petals of the Mystic Love-lotus, Brahmā awakes from his sleep (deep trance state), and, unable for a moment to understand the meaning of the Lotus-bed or the Water of Life around (just as a man suddenly roused out of sleep is dazed and forgets to think and therefore feels stupid for the moment), he goes down through the hollow of the Lotus-stalk in order to find out the bottom of the Lotus. He goes down, down, down, and at last finds its depths unending, bottomless. He therefore comes up to the surface again and sits down mystified, when he suddenly hears a voice from the water, as it were, saying: "Tapa, tapa, tapa!" which means, "Meditate, meditate, meditate!" With the sound of that word the meaning becomes apparent to Brahmā. It means: "Why art thou looking outward? Look inward and thou shalt know." Whereupon his eyes involuntarily close, and his mind becomes concentrated inward. Then he sees before his mental vision Aniruddha (Vishnoo) appear and say: "O Awakened One! know and remember that thou art Brahmā, the Creator." At the very suggestion he finds out his own self and exclaims: "Oh, yes! I am Brahmā." Then Vishnoo again says: "Thou hast now to create the universe."

"Oh, yes!" he exclaims, as the memory of his function springs within him, "I am to create the universe; but how?"

"By meditating upon the former creation. As the memory of past creation, which dwells within thee, shall awake, creation will begin."

With hearing begins action; and as Brahmā concentrates his mind upon his former creation, its memory in time flashes through him, and with the flashing of that memory creation manifests itself, in the shape of earth, and sky, and trees, and grass, and ocean, and rivers, and in time beast, and bird, and man, all complete. Just as a master painter first designs a picture in his mind and reproduces that design upon the canvas, even so is the picture of creation produced upon the canvas of Love-life. Only the painter Brahmā paints with the brush of his all-powerful mind-force, which, the moment the design forms in his mind, is materialized into living substance.

SECTION III. THE STEPS OF CREATION.

The Veda says that the universe is like a tree; that is to say, it is a tree, the roots of which are embedded in the unmanifested First Cause—Krishna. Aniruddha is the seed, and Brahmā is the first sprout. This analogy between the seed and the sprout, between Aniruddha (also called Vishnoo and Nārāyan) and Brahmā seems so perfect that it justifies the conclusion that the process of the birth of a plant is only an imitation of the process through which the universe springs into being.

As in the germination of a seed two lobes, called cotyledons, which form part of the seed, come out prior to the appearance of the stem which shoots forth between them, so out of the navel of Nārāyan (Aniruddha) first appear two cotyledons, called "Lotus" in the figurative language of the Veda, and between the cotyledons, sprouts forth the stem in the shape of Brahmā, who is the miniature embodiment of the universe.

Before Brahmā was born, Nārāyan created Universal Consciousness, which was but the manifestation of his own Consciousness (called Mahat, which means Immeasurable). Out of Consciousness sprang Ego (Ahankāra). Out of Ego sprang Mind. Out of Mind sprang Ether (Akasha). From Ether sprang Water. Out of the friction of Ether and Water sprang Air. This Air, rising up from the ocean of Water with great noise, created, by its friction with Water, flames of Fire, illumining all space. This Fire became mixed up, by the cohesive attribute of Air, with Water and Ether, and all four elements became one thickened, molten mass; and as it rose upward the liquid substance which issued from it became solidified and cooled in process of time and formed into Earth.

Then the Lotus (cotyledons) sprang forth from the navel (Sanskrit, Nāvee, middle) of Nārāyan, and within them Brahmā (the stem) shot forth. His body was made of the Five Elements and Consciousness, Mind and Ego. He is also said to be the central form-embodiment of Ego (Ahankāra).

Brahmā is but the creative form-potency of Nārāyan. When Nārāyan bade him to meditate upon his former creation, and told him also that the moment that memory of former creation would awake within him creation would begin, Brahmā meditated as he was told, and creation began as that memory of the past creation flashed within him.

Thus it will be seen that Nārāyan (Aniruddha) is the real Creator. He creates at first the eight main, abstract and concrete principles; viz., Consciousness, Ego, Mind, and the five elements—Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. After the creation of these was created the first concrete form, Brahmā, who was to create the details of Creation. But even these creations were not the product of the arbitrary will of Nārāyan, though their expressions were subject to his will or mediumship. The seed-bud of creation dwelt in the most mysteriously abstract state within Krishna (Absolute Love), a state

so similar to that First Principle that it would enter and merge itself in it. If we cut a seed in halves, we find in it not even a suggestion of the tree of which it is the seed; but if we plant it in the soil, the rudimentary form of the tree's organism, called the germ, asserts itself and creates its state of differentiation from its original state of homogeneity. So from the tendency of the least inequilibrium of the forces of the three Cardinal Attributes, Sattwa, Rāja, Tama (which, having formerly attained equality of force, have lost their different individualities and have become merged and transformed into Pure Sattwa—Illumination) springs the germ-state of Creation, and, passing through its three stages; viz., Vāsudeva, Sankarsana and Pradyumna, reaches its fourth stage, called Aniruddha, where, having attained further development, it sprouts forth into Brahmā, the first visible miniature embodiment of the universe.

As out of the tiny but potent shoot of the plant from the seed, the details of the tree, viz., trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruit, spring forth to attain its full-grown state, so out of its minute but potent shoot, the details of the universe, viz., earth, heaven, sun, moon, stars, day, night, mountains, rivers, vegetation, spiritual beings, animals, men, etc., spring forth to attain its complete form.

The manifestation of Universal Consciousness (Mahat) is called the First Step of Creation. The birth of Ego (Ahankāra) out of Consciousness is called the Second Step of Creation; that of Mind from Ego is the Third Step; that of the Five Elements—Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth from Mind is the Fourth Step; that of the Five Attributes of the Elements—Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell—from the Elements is the Fifth Step; that of the Five Cognizing Senses—Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, Feeling—out of these Five Attributes (also called Objects) is the Sixth Step; that of the Five Working Senses—Speaking, Holding, Moving, Excreting, Generating—from the Five Elements is the Seventh Step; that of gods and aerial, invisible beings is the Eighth Step; that of trees and plants and shrubs and grass and all other vegetation, as also that of the wild animals and birds, is the Ninth Step; that of domestic animals and men and women is the Tenth Step.

These steps or series of Creation have developed between long intervals. These are called purely Natural Creations through the instrumentality of the mind-force of Aniruddha (Nārāyan) and Brahmā.

SECTION IV. THE CYCLIC MOTION OF CHANGES.

The Veda says that when the three Cardinal Attributes, by losing this equipoise of force, sprang into being, and leaving the bosom of Krishna (Absolute Love) passed through the three stages of their development, viz., Vāsudeva, Sankarsana and Pradyumna, they brought with them a vibration from Krishna which found expression in Aniruddha, who exclaimed as he awoke from trance-sleep, as it were: "I am One, I wish to be the Many." This Divine Will manifested itself into the Universe in the manner described in the previous section.

From the One—Love—the motion of manifestation of Creation has therefore been towards manifoldness. From One—Love—the Principles sprang one by one, and where there was only One, there were twenty-four. The details of Creation sustained this process of manifoldness, and motion gradually increased in speed, manifesting varieties, until now that increased motion manifests that Will in millions of phases within every second of time.

This motion of manifestations or changes is like the surface of a troubled ocean, where heaving billows innumerable, crested with foam, cover countless living beings. The current of creative changes is mixed with and fed by, and dashes against, the opposite current of involutionary changes. The moment the last Principle of the Universe—Earth—was created, it had the tendency to go back to the First Source of Creation. But, unable to force its way back through the channel by which it sprang, owing to the rush of creative current, it found a circuitous channel by which its composing molecules started on their way back. As has already been said, and will be fully explained in detail in a separate section, the molecules have a tendency to open the passage of their composing principles, and thus to journey back by myriads of reincarnations through different and higher and higher life-forms to the First Parent Principle: The current of Creation which began with the manifestation of Universal Consciousness is still moving on, and will move on in the shape of changes until universal disintegration and dissolution take place. This current of creative changes is mixed up and swelled by the opposite current of involution, also in the shape of changes. These warring waves of action and reaction make up the Cosmos-Ocean.

Nārāyan (Aniruddha) is the Seed-Manifestation (Will) of Krishna (the Supreme Deity); the Universe is the Physical Manifestation (Materialized Will-Force) of Krishna; Time is the Motion Manifestation (Process of Working of the Will-Force) of Krishna; and the Veda is the Sound-Manifestation (Sound-Expression of the Laws of the Will-Force) of Krishna.

It has been shown how Nārāyan is the Seed-Manifestation and how the Universe is the materialized Will-Force of Nārāyan and Brahmā. I will now deal with this Motion-Manifestation—Time.

"I am One, and I wish to be the Many." The Lord was One, and the moment He wished to appear to be the Many, then this wonderful creation of vastness and variety sprang into existence. From the moment of the rise of that Will in the Divine Mind down to this moment, that Will is undergoing the process of its execution. It is a rush from the One towards manifoldness. This process of that manifoldness is called Creation, and the rhythm of its motion is called Time. The whole Creation is nothing but motion of Changes. Time is nothing but the cognition by our mind of events and ideas which are phases of changes in internal and external Nature. If we had no notion of events and never had an idea within ourselves, we would be in Eternity. So long as we are conscious of the kaleidoscopic changes in us and Nature or are conscious of their impressions on our mind, we live in Time. And the moment all impressions of the mind are obliterated and we become, through any process, unconscious of human and natural events, we lose all consciousness of existence; that is to say, we go behind the veil which enshrouds these physical phenomena, and we enter the realm which is an undisturbed calm of Absolute Life, Light and Bliss, the Trinity which is Eternity.

These changes in Nature and human society, starting from the beginning of Creation, move in cycles; that is to say, they have a cyclical process of motion. In other words, some events, natural and human, that occur within a certain period of time, are reproduced in their principal features in the next period of time of the same length. Creation proceeds towards ever manifold variety at this cyclic pace.

The smallest appreciable Cycle of Nature's change-process is the Day. Twenty-four hours, called one day, are divided into two parts, called day and night.

One Day is a Cycle embodying natural and human events which are reproduced in the following day, and so on. So that every day and night, in their principal features, are but a reproduction of the previous day and night. One day, therefore, is the smallest cycle of time or events, for events are but the phases of natural changes, and time is but the cognition or consciousness thereof.

The next cycle of time or events is the Month, in which two events which occur within twenty-eight lunar days are reproduced in the next twenty-eight lunar days. These two events are the fourteen days of waxing and waning moon, and the bright fortnight is the day and the dark fortnight is the night of the month.

The next larger cycle is the Year, in which the four seasons mark the principal divisions of events and are reproduced in all years in the self-same order, their uniform changes of weather and Nature bringing forth fruit and crops.

In the same way these events, called Time, develop larger cycles in which some event or other, or a series of events, are reproduced in the next equal length of time. There are cycles, for instance, of from 500 to 100,000 years, the phenomena of which are reproduced in the next period of their respective proportions. But the most pronounced cycle is called the Divine Cycle. The Sanscrit word "Diva" is the root of the word "Divine," and "Yuga" is the original of which the word "Age" is a corrupted form.

This Divine Age (Daiva-Yuga) is divided into four Human Ages, called Satya, Tretā, Dwāpar and Kali. The span of this Divine Cycle is composed of 12,000 Divine Years, and each Divine Year is equal to 360 human years, so that 12,000 years multiplied by 360 gives us 4,320,000 human years, which is the length of a Divine Cycle. The next bigger cycle is called the Manwantara, which is made up of 71 Divine Cycles and is wound up with a Deluge, in which the whole world, including the highest peaks of the Himalayas, becomes immersed in water and remains so for the period of 71 Divine Ages. The next larger cycle is the Kalpa, which is made up of 14 Manwantaras, or 1,000 Divine Ages. The next cycle and the largest is called Mahā-Pralaya, in which the whole universe is destroyed totally, Krishna alone remaining with His Radiance, filling all space, and 36,000 Kalpas bring about this Universal Dissolution.

Since the beginning of this Kalpa creation, six Manwantaras (Deluges) have passed away. Since the last Deluge 27 Divine Cycles have rolled away. This is the twenty-eighth Divine Cycle of which the first three sections, viz., the Golden Age, the Silver Age and the Copper Age have passed away. We are just now in the early part of the fourth section, the Kali or Iron (Dark) Age.

SECTION V. THE GOLDEN AGE.

Creation begins with the dawn of the Satya Yuga, which is also called the Golden Age. It is the first part and the longest section of the Divine Age. The span of this age is 4,800 Divine years, which being multiplied by 360 gives us 1,728,000 human years. It is the most spiritual age, because, of the three Cardinal Attributes—Sattwa, Rāja and Tama—which govern, and are the parents of, the composing principles of the Universe, the Sattwa is predominant in its influence. The Sattwa is that attribute which uncovers the true state of things without and within us and in Nature, hence it may be called the attribute of Illumination. Rāja is the attribute of Activity (motion of change), and Tama is the very reverse attribute of Sattwa. It is that attribute within us and Nature which covers the true State of things, hence it may be called the Obscuring, darkening attribute, the Attribute of Darkness.

The Satya Yuga is called the Golden Age, because gold is very abundant in this age of utmost spirituality, and gold is the purest and most spiritual of all metals. The Illumination of predominant Sattwa pervades all Nature in this age. Nature, inside and out, is full of light, almost transparent with light—spiritual through and through. So is man, her best product. Men and women in this age attain a spiritual depth and height which no other age can develop. This spiritual height manifests itself in their physical body, while the depth of their inward spirituality shows itself in their outer life and actions. The Golden Age men are twenty-one cubits, or thirty-one and a half feet, in height. This may strike us, diminutive mortals of this Kali Yuga or Iron Age, as absurd or improbable, but it need not do so if we remember how long ago the last Golden Age was—nearly three million years. Moreover, as they are all of the same height, they do not think they are abnormally tall.

These men and women, owing to their high degree of spirituality, have a perfectly healthy, harmonious and beautiful body, for spirituality is health, harmony and beauty. They have their inner vision fully opened and see more through their ensouled mind's eyes than through their physical ones. They, therefore, see through Nature as through a glass. All Nature stands revealed to them to her inmost depth wherein they see the One Essence which pervades it, the One Spirit of which all things within and on the surface of Nature are but different phases of its manifestation. And in it all they find themselves as part of the same phases, living, moving and having their being sustained by that One Spirit which is both life and light—the One Omnipresent Spirit, the one All-Pervading Essence—Love.

The Golden Age men and women have no garments to cover their entirely bare body, nor do they need any. We clothe our bodies for two reasons: First, out of our sense of delicacy and shame because of our dark thoughts born of improper and unnatural (sinful) actions, and secondly, to protect our body and health from the attacks of the sun, the rain and the changes of weather and climate. The Golden Age

men have no such reason for wearing any clothes. Their perfect spirituality admits of no dark thought to touch their mind, for all is illumination within and without them, while their actions are all in perfect consonance with the purest laws of Nature, in rhythmic motion with the music of the Infinite whose song they hear in their soul. They may be called moving Vedas—walking wisdom and spirituality. The laws of the Veda form the mechanism of their mind, and it is these Vedic laws that move their limbs and prompt their words and actions. Their perfect spiritual health is proof against the hardships of weather, or rather there is no hardship of weather at all. The spirit of the Age pervades all Nature, of which the weather a phase. Even Nature's forces are in perfect harmony with one another, for harmony is the very keynote of the Age. It is Spring, sweetest Spring season, all the year round, during night and during day; warm enough without heat, cool enough without being cold, breezy enough without being windy—man and beast and bird and tree and earth and weather all are in harmony. Harmony, harmony, all is harmony in this Blessed Age.

Man and woman have no need at all for sex life in the Golden Age. The ecstasy of the soul with which their body and being are filled renders it impossible for even any thought of gross fleshly pleasures to enter their mind. The very drawing of breath is to them a pure delight which any fleshly or objective pleasure of our day cannot dream of approaching. Life is lived then in its veriest depth—deep down through the mind, deeper down through the heart, deepest down in the depth of the soul. And when life is lived in such depth, its surface is not heeded or cared for. Such a life does not require much material nutrition—it is nourished by the souls all-nourishing nectar.

These men and women eat very little food—fruits and roots only, and drink milk and water, and these between long intervals. They feel very little hunger and that little on far-between occasions. We feel hungry because of our mind contemplating matter. All matter is changeful—matter is nothing but collected forms of change. Its seeming substance embodies but motion of change, so that its inmost attribute is changefulness. Our mind concentrating on material objects absorbs its attribute—changefulness—and is affected by it forthwith; it becomes changeful in its turn, that is, it is rendered restless, flitting quickly from one object to another. This changefulness of the mind is in turn absorbed by our body, which suffers from its effects in the shape of loss of tissue. And this loss of tissue we have to supply by food and drink and rest and sleep. The Golden Age people do not suffer from this loss of tissue, because their minds are always concentrated on the One Changeless Substance, the very reflection of which through the changeful forms of matter makes them seem steady and substantial. The little wear and tear they suffer from, owing to looking now and then on the surface of things, causes some little need of nutrition, which their occasional fruit and milk meals supply.

If they need little food they also need little rest. And when they need it, they just lie down on the cool carpet of the fragrant grass, for they have no other bed than this, because in the Golden Age there are no houses whatever on the face of the earth.

We build houses for the same reasons that we wear clothes, and these reasons are absent in the lives of the Golden Age people. Their bodies need no protection from the weather, nor do they need external comforts, for they think more of their soul than of their body.

Their home is wherever they live and rest, its roof is the high vault of Heaven with its azure canopy, Mother Earth the floor, the trees its walls; Nature's bowers are their boudoirs. All created beings are their family, the whole earth their country. And the whole earth is one large, beautiful garden, the richest and most beautiful garden of flowers and fruits and songbirds. But more beautiful than the garden are the divine men and women who sanctify its soil by their walking, at whose approach near them the trees worship them with showers of flowers and offers of their fruits as love-gifts.

This is the long-forgotten, and now misunderstood, misinterpreted Earth-Garden of the Golden Age called in the Old Testament the Garden of Eden. They are all now trying to locate it, some people in Syria, others in Egypt, others elsewhere, ignorant of the fact that the Garden of Eden was located upon the whole earth. The word "Eden" even is the corruption of the Sanscrit word "ādhān" (Home). The whole earth becomes this "Adhān"—the Home of all humanity, of mortal souls, the Pleasure-Garden for angels on earth to roam about and sport in. This Garden is the physical manifestation of a higher plane, created as the abiding place of mortal man in temporary state of spiritual perfection. They live a perfectly natural life, feeling themselves as parts of Nature, breathing in unison with the breath of sky and air and tree and grass and beast and bird, their souls in tune with the souls of gods and angels and Infinity Itself.

Among themselves they feel a Oneness which only the most sublimated souls, who have realized their at oneness with the all-pervading Spirit, can feel. All humanity feels as one man, and the only distinction they find in this Oneness is in the little difference in the formation of the male and female bodies, although this outward perception of this external difference in some details of the physical structure does not influence the feeling of unity within. Still the difference creates this much distinction that the women and men see and feel that they are the complements of each other and the difference in bodily structure expresses this fact. All men feel all women are as one and all women feel all men are as one, so that, such is the feeling of unity which pervades the Golden Age people of the earth that all men and women of that age can be called as One Man and One Woman. This is the state of the human society indicated by the story of Adam and Eve. Adam is the typical man and Eve the typical woman of the Golden Age. Even the names bear testimony to this fact. The word Adam is a corruption of the Sanscrit word "Adim" which means primeval, so that Adam means primeval man. The word Eve likewise is a corruption of the Sanskrit word "Hevā" or primeval woman. "Hevā" means life and love—mother of creation. From Mother Nature all things evolve, through the mother all things come to life, therefore is mother "life." The life of all things is motherhood—Life and Love

combined is Mother. Mother! It is the music of the spheres—Life and Love—the grandest sound, the music of the Creator, one grand chord in the Music of the Universe. Love and Life—O Blessed sound, the Lord's Own Music—sweet, profound!

The spiritual beauty of these primeval people—the Adams and Eves—shows itself in their physical forms. Their physical forms, symmetry and expressions are ideally beautiful; these fashion and shine forth the spirit of harmony which dwells within them. It may be in truth said of them that they are made in the Image of God, and the truth of this statement grows upon us when we remember that they live and feel that they live in the Essence of Love—live and breathe and have their being moved spontaneously by the Spirit which is the inmost life and force of all Existence.

This is living on the Tree of Life and eating the fruit thereof mentioned metaphorically in the Old Testament. Love, Universal Love, unmixed, Absolute Love is the only Life. When we lose sight of this Ideal, this substance of life, we fall. So long as our minds are filled from within with this Love, this Radiance of God, and we think, move and act by its influence and promptings, so long do we really live the Life which is our real heritage from God. The Golden Age people live this life moved by the Spirit within them, the Spirit-Life that makes life an ecstasy unto itself. This Life of Joy Absolute is illumined by its own Light by the aid of which they see all Nature as through a transparent glass, they see everything with the ensouled mind's eye—not by the physical eye—for they live within that ensouled mind and rarely come out to the surface called the physical plane. When they do, they feel as if the experiences of that physical plane are, as it were, the experiences of a dream, while the experiences of the ensouled mind they feel as the Reality, the only Reality.

I have already said that the three Cardinal Attributes, (Sattwa, Rāja and Tama) Illumination, Activity and Darkness, are the joint parents of the Principles which compose all creation. When the forces of these Attributes fall into equilibrium, the dissolution of the universe takes place and the equalized Attributes merge into one another and become transformed into a substance quite different from their own. That substance is called Shuddha Sattwa—Pure Illumination. In Sattwa there is a mixture of some Rāja and Tama; in Rāja there is a mixture of some Sattwa and Tama; similarly, in Tama, there is some mixture of Sattwa and Rāja. In Shuddha Sattwa, the Sattwa is free from the other two attributes. Krishna (Absolute Love) is Purest Sattwa. The equalizing of the forces of the Attributes transforms them into Pure Illumination no doubt, but the transformation is temporary. Krishna (Absolute Love) is Permanent Purest Illumination. But even the temporary attainment, by the Attributes, of the Shuddha Sattwa state makes them for the time being the same substance as this First Principle and brings about their absorption into it as long as they keep in that state. This is almost exactly as the germ of a tree remains merged in and becomes part and parcel of the kernel of its seed. And as when the seed is put into the soil, the action of germination separates from that kernel the germ which then grows into a tree, so when

in time the forces of the merged Attributes fall out of equilibrium by Rāja (Activity) asserting itself, they get separated and manifest themselves into the Universe. At first the activity of Rāja is feeble and Sattwa predominates. Out of predominant Sattwa springs the Mind, Rāja brings forth the Ten Senses and Tama the Five Essences and the Five Gross Forms of matter. And all objects and animals and men and gods and earth and heaven are but different degrees of blendings of the Three Attributes.

The Satya Yuga (Golden Age) at the beginning of creation is so full of Sattwa (Illumination) that all Nature is made of materials almost transparent as ether. The matter of this first Golden Age is so fine that it would be invisible to the eye of our gross flesh of this distant Kali (Iron Age). Even in the last Golden Age, Nature was made up of such fine matter that it would look, to our gross vision of this day, as pictures of light.

Why is Nature in the Golden Age so ethereal? Because the Attribute of Illumination is predominant in that cycle. All is Illumination, within and without. Through this illumination the Golden Age people see the Steady, Changeless substance which is the Life and Light of which the outer universe is but the shadow. And with the spirit of this Changeless Love and Life and Light in One before their mind's vision, they cannot but feel that its distorted, changeful manifestations called objects are made of fabrics of which dreams are made of. Even they themselves are etheric and iridescent, not visible to the physical eye of the Dark Age, but always visible to the inner eye of men of any age—to the eye of the highly evolved man whose sight is more spiritual than physical. Ether is cognized through etheric vibrations—light alone recognizes light.

For the First Quarter of the Satya Yuga or Golden Age (One Thousand Divine Years) this perfect state of Universal Holiness prevails on earth and among mankind. This is the original of the recorded vision said to have been seen by St. John the Divine as embodied in Chapters 20, 21 and 22 of his Revelations. This is the Millennium spoken of in the Holy Bible when Satan (Sin—Tama—Darkness), it is said, will be bound and cast into a bottomless pit, shut up and set a seal upon, and holiness will become triumphant throughout the world. This means the predominance of Sattwa (Illumination) in man and Nature and Tama (darkness) will be drowned under it. The people will live on the fruits of the Tree of Life—in the Essence of Love. They will live face to face with God, that is, in perfect realization of His Spirit—Love. This Millennium will begin with the First Quarter of the coming Satya Yuga (Golden Age), the New Divine cycle which will be ushered in after the expiration of the Kali Yuga (also called Iron or Dark Age) we are now living in. That time is far away yet, how far I shall in a succeeding Section attempt to indicate.

As already suggested, the Golden Age conditions of Nature are the physical manifestation of a higher sphere. According to the Hindoo Scriptures there are Seven Spheres (Lokas) or Heavens. People in the West speak of the Seventh Heaven. Few know where the expression has come from, fewer that it has come from the Hindoos

who believe in the Seven Heavens. The first is the Earth. (Bhur) which is counted as a heaven because heavenly joys can be tasted on the earth plane. Above the Earth is the Bhuba Sphere, the Second Heaven. Above Bhuba is Swar the Third; above Swar is Mahar the Fourth; above Mahar is Jana the Fifth; above Jana is Tapa the Sixth, and above Tapa is the Satya Loka (Seventh). The Golden Age state of the earth is but a reflection of this Satya Sphere on it's Sattwa (Transparently Illuminated) surface. The men and women are angels on earth meet and have communications with gods and angels; and at times even Brahmā, the Shiva, the Destroyer, and Vishnoo the preserver, come down on earth and hold converse with these perfectly pure human beings. Earth then is "Heaven Below," and it is hard to tell, when men mingle with the gods and angels when the latter come down to meet them, which are the gods and angels and which are the men.

Saint John's Revelation 21 in the Holy Bible attempts to give some glimpse of this picture of the Golden Age:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"2. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

"4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

What St. John describes as "a new heaven and a new earth" is the illuminated heaven and earth—illuminated by Sattwa, which destroys the darkness (Tama) of the preceding Kali (Iron) Age which pervades Nature during its sway. The "holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," is the reflection of the Satya Loka (the Heaven of Truth), which comes down as it were and mirrors itself on earth. The Golden Age earth is really a bride adorned for her husband, God, for, in the Hindoo Scriptures, Earth has been called the Bride of Vishnoo (God). The meaning of the third verse can be more easily understood as it speaks of the spiritual condition of the Golden Age I have described already.

The fourth verse supports the fact of the unbroken peace and happiness which dwells on earth during the Golden Age. Men know no sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. They are happy and are ever filled with joy. "And there shall be no more death"—this is very important testimony to the one statement in the Hindoo Scriptures about the Golden Age men and women which is more apt to be discredited than any other. In them it is said that in the Golden Age men and women can live for one hundred thousand years and die at will, which is corroborated by St. John, who says, "and there shall be no more death." Life in the Golden Age, say the Hindoo Books, is sustained

by the marrow of the bones; man lives as long as there is marrow in his bones. Death and disease are caused by accumulation of sin, which is the result of improper, unnatural living, living, that is, in violation of Nature's spiritual laws. The Golden Age men live in absolute harmony with these laws, and are therefore liable neither to death nor to disease. Men are filled, in this age, "in full measure of virtue" and sin has no place in it, not a trace of it anywhere.

This is the state of Nature and human society which is reproduced in the beginning and first quarter of every Golden Age, which forms the first largest section of every Divine Cycle. This is real Universal Brotherhood, the union of soul to soul being brought about by the general recognition of the One Spirit which is the root, sustenance and life of all manifestations in Nature. Spirit only makes man brotherly, and the feeling of the One and the Same spirit is the source of true brotherhood, and until One Love is for all, souls shall be separated and countries will war with countries. Every one in the Golden Age looks upon every one else as himself, as it were. It is more than Ideal Brotherhood in this state of society; it is real, practical, spontaneous brotherhood, brought about by the Attribute of Illumination having full play within all created matter, objects and beings. They are united from within, not through outside forces, and so close and natural is the union that they do not realize that it is anything unusual at all, even in the deep demonstrations of spontaneous love which they feel for one another.

If such is the high state of perfection which men attain in the Golden Age, the animal and the vegetable kingdoms also share the benefit of the predominance of illumination in Nature, of which men and animals and vegetation are but different phases of manifestations. We have read in the so-called fables and fairy-books of a time in which animals were wont to speak, and as in our day they do not speak at all, we regard such statements and stories as myths. But they are *not* myths, however absurd they may strike us, viewed from our practical experiences of animals in our Kali Age life. If the animals of this Kali (Dark) Age cannot speak, that is no reason why animals of an enlightened age should not be able to speak. But this is what forms the chief difficulty in the way of our believing in such stories. We have been hypnotized by our conceit into believing that ours is the most enlightened age and that we are far ahead in enlightenment and advancement of intellect of our remote ancestors of, what we complacently term, the "primitive" ages, meaning thereby ages in which men were either savages or half-savages. If this were true, the animals of those ages could be imagined as worse in habits, powers and instincts than those of our "advanced" age. Alas, however, it is not true! Our remotest ancestors, whom we, in our dense ignorance of facts of that remote past, love to call savages, were such giants in intellect, spirituality and moral force that our average best spiritual, intellectual and moral men cannot be compared with them. We are indeed fast losing our moral depth which was the sheet-anchor of their character. Why? Because our minds are getting more and more dense than those of even the near past, not to speak

of those of the remote ages. Why? Because Nature herself is getting denser and denser every day with the growing influence of Tama (Darkness) which is the ruling attribute of this Iron Age. We are the products of Nature—we all, men and beasts and trees and grass. Our density is to be traced to our parent—Dame Nature. This growing density which pervades our minds is daily making us less spiritual and intellectual than our forefathers. No wonder it has affected the body and senses of animals as well.

Illuminated Nature illuminates animals as well in the Satya Yuga. Animals then have more intelligence, better perception and keener instincts than now, and share the love-spirit of which all earth is full. They talk like man, although not in the same clear and sweet voice as man. They roam about with men and love one another as men do. There are no domestic animals in this part of the Golden Age, for man has no home or house. There are no wild animals, for all animals are tame, tamed by the spirit of harmony within and without them. The cow roams about free, giving milk to whoever will drink it out of her udder.

The trees in the Satya Yuga are large and tall in proportion to the height of men, which is 21 cubits. They are overladen with sweetest and juiciest fruits. All kinds of corn grow wild and abundantly without any tending or cultivation. The whole earth is a natural garden, orchard and granary for all created beings to enjoy and draw sustenance from when needed. Here I quote a poem written under inspiration after seeing a trance-vision of the Golden Age, by one of my students, Miss Rose R.

Anthon:

Palpitating with love,
Like a mother's breast,
As she views her babe
As it sinks to rest.

Like a million bees
Throbbing with life,
Each cell a world
In the citied hive.

This was the land
I slept to see,
The land my dream
Unfolded to me.

Here Love did reign,
Love life did greet,
Life crowned with love
The heart did meet.

Here wondrous song
The birds did sing,
And oh the echoes
The skies did ring!

And oh the peace
The heart did know!
And oh the lack
Of haunting woe!

Here man commune
With God did hold,
The doe run abreast
With the lion bold.

The hawk and the dove
Shared one nest;
The lamb and leopard
Suckled one breast.

The tender nurslings,
The soft young things,
Eager their minds,
Like outspread wings.

The flowers nodded
Their faces fair;
Sunbeams embraced
The perfumed air.

Little children
With Nature grew;
Skies overhead,
'Neath feet the dew.

The happy youth
The maid did woo.
Free as the stars
The moon did view.

With joy I beheld,

In this sweet land
Unspoilt was love
By sin's hot hand.

With knots of guile
The heart did bind.
No souring doubts
Disturbed the mind.

Here livid hate
No place did hold;
Jackal and calf
Entered one fold.

Nor envy's sneer
Belined the face.
Nor fiery lust
Filched beauty's grace.

But rayed with peace
Was every eye,
And all unknown
Was panting sigh.

In every heart
Was Love enthroned,
And every voice
Had Hope entoned.

Such was the land
I slept to see.
The land my dream
Unfolded to me.

SECTION VI. THE SILVER AGE.

Thus, during the first quarter of the Golden Age, covering 1,000 divine years, which are equal to 360,000 lunar years, its predominant spirituality sustains itself in its full vigor. The next quarter is almost equally powerful in spirituality. But after the middle is passed, a little decline is perceptible, not so much in spirituality as in the outward habits of the people. During this period the Vedic truths reveal themselves through the mediums of the entranced minds of some of the highly illuminated men. Now, what is a Vedic truth? It is an expression in sound-form of one of the inmost laws of Nature. Before this period the Golden Age people breathe, move and have their being in these laws—as sensitive embodiments of these laws. They are, as it were, moving Vedas—human flesh-vehicles moved and manipulated from within by the basic laws of all Existence. The predominant Sattwa in its extreme purity, which is the essence of physical Nature in the Golden Age, blends with these laws so harmoniously that they form the self-acting mechanism of all motion of its materialized counterpart. So long as these people are in perfect unison with these inner laws, vibrating spontaneously with their vibrations, they are quite unconscious of the operations of these laws, or even of the laws themselves within them: so long they live as unconscious moving manifestations of the laws. But the moment they become conscious of them, then that consciousness expresses itself in the form of thoughts, and these thoughts find expression in words through the medium of some entranced minds. These are called the Eternal Truths of the Veda, truths which are the foundations and sources of all truths promulgated by the illumined sages of all climes and times ever afterwards.

Just as, so long as we are perfectly healthy, we remain unconscious of our health and enjoy the blessing of health most; but when some disorder creeps into our system, we become conscious of it and feel indisposed and try to adjust its lost equilibrium. Towards the end of the third quarter of the Golden Age, a slight disorder is felt in the spiritual health of the people. Then a readjustment of the slight loss of the equilibrium is made with the aid of contemplation of the meaning of these Vedic truths which are revealed through the still perfectly spiritual souls. Before this time all of them live the truths unconsciously; now they live the truths consciously. This indicates their fall from their absolutely healthy state of spirituality. The degeneration increases with time at a very slow rate, however, for Sattwa is still predominant, although Rāja (Activity) has begun to assert itself more and more until the end of the Golden Age is reached, when the action of Rāja becomes fully perceptible.

This pronounced assertion of Rāja within all Nature is betrayed by outward signs and symptoms. Distinct changes are observable in the thoughts and actions of men, while there is decrease in the wild natural growth and products of edible fruits,

roots and corn. These main features of change mark the end of Satya Yuga (Golden Age) and the beginning of the Tretā Yuga (Silver Age).

From natural all-absorbing, inward concentration upon the basic principle of the Universe—Love—and drawing absolute never-failing happiness therefrom, most people now begin to look outwards for happiness, trying to draw it from the enjoyment of material objects. A small portion, however, still retains the same inward look and enjoys the primeval ecstatic condition of the mind. These still live in the Tree of Life. But those who look outwards and try to draw happiness from without, eat for the first time of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, as indicated by the figurative language of the Christian Bible. So long as they do not look outwards, they do not know of material pleasure, pleasure which is mixed with pain, Rājasic pleasure, pleasure which lasts for only a short while, pleasure which has reaction of pain or cessation.

This knowledge of material pleasure and hankering for securing them is the fall of humanity. The cause of this outward-looking is to be traced to the assertion of the Cardinal Attribute of Activity (Rāja) within Nature rather than to any fault in her products themselves. Predominant Sattwa (Illumination) maintains the harmony in the mind induced by calm concentration upon one object and that object a steady, Changeless one. Predominant Rāja (Activity) destroys this harmony and calmness by making the mind active with thoughts of many objects. This state of activity itself turns the point of the mind's ken outwards and disturbs its harmony. The mind is active only when it has to deal with the impressions of more than one object. When the surface of a mirror is turned towards the sky, it reflects only that one blue sky. When it is turned towards the earth it reflects many objects. Such is the case with the mirror of the mind. When it is turned inwards to the soul, it reflects its one all-pervading, colorless radiance and is therefore tranquil and happy. When it is turned outwards, it reflects the many-colored objects and is disturbed by their conflicting attributes.

All through the Golden Age the mirror of the human mind is kept turned inwards to the soul and reflects nothing but the soul of things. At the end of that blessed period, the natural assertion of Rāja turns it outwards to external objects which at once reflect themselves in it. From this time people begin to take serious cognizance of their surroundings and privileges, and to think of material enjoyment, to taste material pleasures. Living the natural Love-Life of the Golden Age is living on the fruit of the Tree of Life. Love alone is life; it is the source of all life. The dawning of the knowledge of material pleasure is eating for the first time of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge—material knowledge. The first hankering for it is the persuasive voice of the Evil One, called in Sanscrit, Māyā. Māyā means illusion, that which is unsubstantial to the inner sight yet seems and looks substantial to our outer (material) sight. Good and evil may be called the equivalents of the two Sanscrit words "Sat" and "Asat." Good is "Sat" which means that which exists by itself, which has

substance. Evil is "Asat" which means non-existent, which has no existence (substance) of its own. Good is God (Love). Evil is that which partakes of, or is related to, the phases of unsubstantial (changeable) manifestations which form the shroud of the only Reality—Love. To have our minds vision turned from this Reality to its Unreal Shroud and mistaking it as the Real, constitutes our fall—the Fall of Mankind spoken of in the Bible. As long as we know nothing but the Truth and live absolutely in that Truth, we have no idea of the False (evil), the deceptive real-looking Unreal. But the moment we are attracted by the Unreal and live in it, we begin to have knowledge of both Good (the Real) and Evil (the Unreal). We become so attached to the Unreal that we cannot leave it, although we know it to be Unreal (evil). Here is born what is called "conscience," which is the Warner of sin—this living in the Unreal though we know it is so and that we should not live in it.

This is the state of mind of the major portion of the Silver Age people. With this outward-looking of their mind begins the hunting for Absolute Happiness on the surface of life, instead of in its deepest depth where it dwells. This search for it through material pleasures ends in this real object of that search being lost from their view and the pleasures themselves taking its place. This last stage of mental degradation is not true, however, of all the people of the age. A small portion still retain much of the high spirituality of the Golden Age. Some are swayed by predominant Rāja, others are ruled by Rāja and Tama, while others are covered almost entirely by Tama. This leads to the division of the people into castes. Those who are uninfluenced by the assertive Rāja are called Brāhmans; those swayed by Rāja are called Kshatriyas; those by Rāja and Tama are called Vaishyas; those mostly ruled by Tama are called Sudras. I have treated the caste system at some length in the next section.

Tastes for material comforts involve housekeeping, and housekeeping is impracticable without a house. The people therefore build houses to live in for the first time in the Degeneration period of the Satya Yuga. The Tretā is called the Silver Age because gold, the spiritual metal, becomes less abundant with the decrease in spirituality in Nature, and silver is found in abundance. People in the Satya Yuga use gold for household utensils, hence the Satya Yuga is called the Golden Age. The period in which gold plates come into use does not belong to the Golden Age proper. It is used in what is called the Degeneration (Sandhyāngsa) period of the Golden Age. Every Age has a Junction period and a Degeneration period, called in the Hindoo Scriptures, the Twilight Periods. These periods are of equal length. The morning Twilight period of the Satya Yuga is 400 divine years, equal to 144,000 lunar years. Of the same length is its evening Twilight period. The morning Twilight period represents the Junction period, the junction between the previous Kali and the Satya Yugas. The evening Twilight period may be called the degeneration of the Satya Yuga. It is in this degeneration period covering 144,000 years, that Rāja asserts itself and people begin to turn to material pleasures, build houses, wear clothes, take to

housekeeping, eat cooked food and generally use gold plates, gold being abundant and on account of its possessing pure (spiritual) magnetism, purer than that of other metals.

The average human height in the Silver Age is 14 cubit or 21 feet, average longevity of human life is 10,000 years; human vitality is centered in the strength of the bones; man lives as long as his bones sustain their strength. In the Golden Age men enjoy full measure of spirituality. Virtue resides in them, in the language of the Shāstras, in full four quarters. In the Tretā, owing to the decrease of spirituality, virtue loses one-quarter and retains three. In the Golden Age, they are natural embodiments of Vedic wisdom. In the Tretā, they have to study that wisdom, as it expresses itself through entranced Sages, to keep up spirituality. And as the Silver Age advances, the increased influence of more and more assertive Rāja within them makes it more and more imperative on all religious teachers and kings to direct people's attention to the necessity of wider and deeper study and practice of Vedic truths.

As I have said, in the Golden Age there are no carnal relations between man and woman, so is there none in the Silver Age, although man and woman as husband and wife live together in houses, have housekeeping and enjoy material comforts. Yet, strange as it will strike most of us here at this distance of time, the Golden Age and Silver Age women bear and give birth to children. The child is born in the womb of its mother at the wish and command of the husband. The wife asks her husband for a child, and the husband of the Golden Age, who is a miniature creator in the potency of his mind-force, says, "So be it," and the wife at once conceives. But she has no pain of child-bearing or child-birth to suffer from. The child is born soon after, and, at times, almost immediately. In the Tretā Yuga, the conception takes place in some cases in the same manner, and, in most cases, through the eating by the wife of "charoo," a mixture of boiled rice, milk, sugar and butter—magnetized by mystic words or the will-force of a psychic husband or a saint or a Brāhman—a magnetism which draws into the preparation a disembodied spirit who passes into the body of the wife through the food.

The difficulty in believing this process of child conception lies in the ignorance which now prevails in the minds of most people of the modern world, especially in those of Westerners, as to the origin of conception, as to how conception takes place. The prevailing idea, formed from the teachings of imperfect modern science, is that it is the male seed itself planted in the female soil that begets and develops into the child. No greater fallacy can exist than this idea. Modern science is progressive, and in the process of time that progress will surely open its eyes to the true fact in regard to this matter. It will then find that it is the invisible germ hidden inside the seed, the subtle form of organism encased in the thickened juice of the tree which the seed is, that develops into the shoot and the tree and not merely the juice itself. This subtle organism enters into the forming bud from outside. Without this incoming subtle organism no seed can germinate, neither does a seed germinate, as is well known, of

which the germ has been destroyed. Similarly, no conception can take place without a disembodied soul—a human germ—entering the human seed when planted in the human soil. The juice of the seed and the juice of the soil form but the physical body of the child. The astral body, which is encased in this physical body, comes from without to dwell in that seed and leaves the developed physical body at death, which is nothing but the total disorganization of the physical body. The astral body never dies unless it is destroyed by bringing about absolute equilibrium of the three Cardinal Attributes, which form the Ego of man, through spiritual development. I have treated this subject more fully under the heading of "Reincarnation."

The length of the Silver Age proper is 3,000 divine years, equal to 1,080,000 human (lunar) years with the two Twilight (the Junction and the Degeneration) Periods, of 108,000 years each, in addition.

SECTION VII. THE CASTE SYSTEM.

I have said that at the end of the Golden Age and during its degeneration period, people's minds lose their tranquil equilibrium and look outwards for happiness. At this stage of the disturbance within Nature and humanity occasioned by the assertion of the Rāja attribute, the caste system comes into existence. The object of the caste system is to preserve as much order and harmony in human society as possible and prevent its disruption into individual units. In the Golden Age all the people are as one family, in the Silver Age they are divided into four families, divided according to their inclinations, habits and actions, and harmonious relations being established with one another through laws and interdependence. Those who still retain their perfected spirituality by subduing the influence of Rāja are called Brāhmans which means those who know or still dwell in Brahman—the Spirit of God. They are considered the head of the other castes because they are the embodiments of spiritual wisdom which is the chiefest requisite in the building of character and the higher development of the human soul. Some of them still retain their Golden Age habits of life, others clothe themselves with the barks of trees and live on fruits and nuts and roots in the forests, in huts made of tree-trunks and leaves. They pass their days and nights in contemplation of the Deity, the Divine Spirit and its Laws operating within Nature and inculcate these truths into the minds of the other classes of people.

Those who, being unable to subdue the influence of Rāja, are swayed by passions and become bold, spirited and filled with material desires are called Kshatriyas. They become rulers of the other two castes. These are the first Kings and Rulers of men. But they rule according to the injunctions of inspired Codes of laws, laws which are propounded with the object of the highest good of humanity in view, as well as the propagation of peace and goodwill among all classes of people.

According to these laws the King's first duty is to look to the material welfare of his subjects; the second is to protect them from injustice and aggression; the third is to help their moral and spiritual development; in short, the King's duty is to treat his subjects as his children. If any King fail to perform these duties to the satisfaction of his subjects or become aggressive towards them, he is immediately removed from his throne by the Brāhmans (Rishis), the all-powerful Brāhmans, who always have the welfare of God's creatures at heart, and whose spiritual powers are mightier than kingly weapons and might. The Brāhmans are called the "gods of earth" (Bhudevas) on account of their disinterested love of humanity and self-sacrificing devotion for its welfare and their irresistible spiritual and psychical powers to carry their objects for the good of humanity into action.

Those among the Golden Age people in whom excessive action of Rāja develops some Tama as well, and partly covers the Sattwa Attribute, form yet another distinct caste. They are called Vaishyas. While the Kshatriyas occupy themselves in

taking over the control and government of countries and peoples, the Vaishyas take to the occupation of agriculture, commerce and raising of cattle, as much in their own individual material interests as in the interests of all humanity. In the Golden Age, owing to the fulness of spirituality within Nature, all kinds of grains grow wild and abundant. With the decrease of that spirituality towards its end, these natural products of the earth diminish in quality and quantity, while the growing material instincts in people bring about their larger consumption, thereby creating greater demand for them. This increased demand is supplied by cultivation by the Vaishyas.

Those, again, among the Golden Age people who, owing to the predominance of the Tama Attribute in them, are filled with envy and greed, and become untruthful and devoid of clean habits of life and take to all sorts of low means and ways for their living are classed as Sudras. The Kshatriya rulers compel these Sudras for their own good as well as the good of all other classes of people to take service under the three upper castes as domestic servants, so that by contact and association with their masters and by the examples of their purer ideas and habits of life they may be elevated in morals and conduct.

The science and wisdom which are the foundation of the caste system of the Silver Age people and which still form the backbone of the degenerate remnants of these primeval people, now known as Hindoos, are worthy of study of all civilized mankind of the present day. It is the scientific law of the caste system which has preserved the indestructible individuality of the Hindoos as a race; it is the chief source of strength which has supplied their inexhaustible vitality as a nation; the never failing force which has insured the permanency of their existence on the face of the globe. It is a system, the absence of which in the organization of all other human societies, modern and ancient, has been the cause of their decay and death. The Hindoo caste system is based upon laws of the inmost science of life, the laws which modern scientists are trying so hard and yet so hopelessly to discover and understand through wrong processes of investigation. Modern scientists are boastful of their achievements in the field of discovery of Nature's laws and imagine they have learned almost all of Nature's secrets, while in truth they know but a few of her surface-laws the mainsprings of which are to be found deep down in the mental and spiritual strata of which they even dream not of—a realm which must ever remain closed to purely objective investigation.

It is as wrong to try to study Nature from the operations of her physical laws as to govern and guide human beings by the aid of the deceptive light of those laws. The physical is the manifestation of the mental plane, as the mental is the manifestation of the spiritual plane, as I have shown in previous Sections. The phenomena of the physical plane of Nature are deceptive to the purely physical vision because they are the product of Tama—darkened Rāja. Deceptive also are the phenomena of the mental plane—though not as deceptive as those of the physical—to a mental vision the light of which is not derived from the spiritual plane—the mysterious machine room which

alone supplies the life-substance and springy of action to the mental and physical planes. The student of physical and mental Nature who is not provided with the microscope of spiritual insight is apt almost invariably to read her in both these aspects incorrectly. He should not, therefore, be considered a safe guide for the healthy and harmonious development of human character, which is but a part and phase of one whole Nature called the Universe.

The laws operating in the deepest depth of Nature can only be seen and studied by the illumination of the soul, the Radiance of Krishna's Body. These the Brāhmans, the portion of the Golden Age people who still retain their high state of spirituality, study and learn and utilize in codifying principles and rules for regulating the daily life of the rest of the people. The conception of the caste system betrays their intimate knowledge of these inner natural laws upon which it is based and the profound wisdom with which its organization to the minutest details is arranged. The organization of the caste system is, in fact, devised after the organization of the human body—after the inner and the outer human body. The entire caste system is like a huge living human body—living with its organs and senses in harmonious working order and its mind contributing to and enjoying the effect of that harmony and feeling the higher planes to which the effect of that harmony elevates.

What is the most needed essential for the healthy, harmonious and useful conduct of human life? Love, Intelligence and Wisdom. I had almost said Love or Wisdom, for Intelligence and Wisdom are but manifestations of Love. Intelligence is the light of Love, and wisdom is but its reflection on its own enlightened shadow—the mind. Wisdom likewise embodies both Love and its light. Without wisdom a human being is like a wayward, mischievous animal. Our wisdom (intelligence and thought) inspire and guide our actions. Good thoughts lead us to good actions, bad thoughts lead us to bad actions. We are nothing but our mind and our mind is nothing but our thoughts—commingled effects of the reflections upon the mind of external objects and internal impressions of previous reflections of objects, called Ideas. Thoughts that lead us to bad actions, that is to say, actions which hurt others and us too, which bring inharmony to others and finally to our own mind, are neither beneficial nor useful to our life; they are injurious to its best interests. Wisdom (harmonious, useful thoughts) is therefore the most essential requisite of human life. Without it power and wealth are apt always to be misused and misdirected, resulting in loss of harmony. And harmony is happiness, happiness which is the goal of all our quests and efforts in life.

Thus the Brāhmans, who devote themselves absolutely to acquiring wisdom by communing with the Soul of Nature and its finest and purest attributes, and to supplying them to those who do not any more enjoy that advantage and privilege, naturally form the head—the seat of wisdom and intelligence—of the social organization, called the four-castes. The lower three castes are indebted to the Brāhmans for wisdom which they receive from them in the form of lessons and codified laws of life which guide their daily existence, just as every one of us is

indebted to our intelligence and wisdom for performing the functions of life to our own and our neighbors' benefit. Hence the Brāhmans, who supply the most important essential of life, are protected, provided for and paid utmost homage to, by all the other castes.

Next to wisdom comes strength, physical and mental, another greatly needed requisite of human life. A man needs mind-force to rule his own mind and body as well as those of others to whom he is related, in order to maintain harmony within and without. He needs also physical strength to defend himself and others against attacks and aggressions and prevent encroachments by others upon his property and interests. The Kshatriyas (Kings) form and supply this requisite to the four-caste organism. They form the arms of the Caste-Body, arms being symbolical of strength and ruling power. Without a powerful, noble ruler, all communities of men are liable to find themselves in disorder and inharmony and to suffer from lawlessness and injustice, just as a man who has no strength to defend himself from aggression is liable to be robbed of his possessions and be miserable.

More important than the duty of protecting the life and property of his subjects is the King's duty to help their moral and spiritual well-being. And this the king does by enforcing the performance of the religious duties appertaining to each of the three castes as enjoined in the Vedic laws, discovered and enunciated by the holy ones. Those who do not perform these duties and practices are punished by temporary excommunication and, if still persistent in disobeying the injunctions, by absolute banishment from all societies. These early sages have always held that prevention is better and easier than cure of diseases, physical, mental or spiritual. Regular spiritual practices, performed daily, form habits, and spiritual habits cleanse the impurities of the mind which then becomes fit to reflect the highest spiritual truths by the light of which man witnesses the unity of all Nature, feels the ecstasy of the One Essence which pervades it and stands face to face with his Maker.

The next essential of harmonious human life is food. Most people of our day will say that food is rather the first essential of life. We, in this degenerate age, have indeed come to think so. But the Silver Age people, as well as all really thoughtful people amongst us, do not think so. Food does sustain life, no doubt, but that life, if void of wisdom and force of mind, is not worth living. It is the life of an animal or a vegetable. Food is essential to life; so are wisdom and mental force. Is our life sustained by food alone? I should think not, unless it be the life of a man who is but a little removed from a beast. Happy thoughts furnish the chief support of our life. Our life depends more upon happy and harmonious thoughts than food. If our thoughts are sad and gloomy, we do not enjoy life at all or feel that we are living, although we may eat the daintiest food, be surrounded by luxuries and have plenty of the world's goods. Many of us destroy this food-sustained life suffering from the pangs of miserable thoughts, many die of broken heart and other diseases brought on by the continued

pressure of sad thoughts, although well fed and well clothed and well supplied with money and other material comforts of life.

The Vaishyas represent the vital vigor of the Four-Caste organism, and as, according to the Shāstras, the seat of the vital vigor is the loins, the Vaishyas form the loins of that body. The Silver Age Vaishyas take to cultivation of the soil, raising of cattle and trade more for the weal of all mankind than for their own personal aggrandizement.

The Sudras are the feet of the Four-Caste organism, very important members of the body too. They represent devotion through service. Indeed, devotion is the training which each caste passes through while fulfilling the duties of its profession. The Brāhmans are to practise meditation on God and study the Veda; the object is devotion to the Supreme Being. The Kshatriyas are to rule the other two castes with the aid of the Brāhmans, with love, justice and fatherly care according to inspired laws; the object is to acquire devotion to the Supreme Being. The Vaishyas are to till the land and raise cattle only to serve God's creatures; the object is to cultivate devotion to the Supreme Being thereby. The Sudras must serve the three pure and spiritual upper castes for the purpose of absorbing their spiritual magnetism through association and examples; the object is the same, cultivating devotion to the Supreme Being by loving service rendered to His devotees.

Thus the Caste system, though worked by human agency, is founded upon natural laws. As originally created in the Silver Age, its object is to form people into groups according to the similarity of their natural casts of mind, according to their natural instincts and dispositions, with the view of uniting them by the bonds of their common as well as mutual interests, with the view of helping them to material, moral and spiritual elevation by compelling them to discharge their respective duties according to the injunctions of inspired codes of laws furnished by illumined Sages whose very pure, unselfish, spiritual and self-sacrificing life is the best guarantee of the wisdom, efficacy and usefulness of their advices and teachings. The relation of interdependence which these caste laws consolidate is in itself one of the grandest achievements of the caste system for the good of the human family. It is the most practical means of preserving unity and a natural preventive of the disintegration of the whole mass of humanity into individual units than which no greater calamity can happen to the general as well as individual weal of human beings. Yet, alas, among non-caste races this is happening, especially in the Western countries of the world, at the present time!

Look at the state of the human society at this moment, particularly that portion of it which is governed by the ideas of what is boastfully called "civilization"! Look at the external results of the internal influence of this civilization! Material comfort and pleasure has become the very ideal of life for its average votary. All, almost all are ever rushing on the path of securing the means for that one end. And in that mad rush they are jostling, hustling, hating, abusing, cheating, killing, and destroying one

another physically and morally. In that mad rush for that one goal, in that selfish fight and quarrel, out of the exhaustion brought on by the efforts of that bustling and hustling, they have no time or opportunity or inclination to think of anything which has no immediate concern with that utterly material aim of life. They have no time to think of their mind, much less of their soul, which most of them have abolished as a delusion and an obstacle in the way of material success. They have even no time to look up into the blue heavens during night or during day, to look at the beauties of the stars and the moon, much less to think of what they are and if they have any relation with them. Material interests are fast taking the place of natural love and affection. Husbands and wives are fighting with each other; sons and daughters are ignoring and disobeying their parents; masters and servants have no other regard for each other than that inspired by personal gain; they are always trying to cheat instead of helping each other. Members of communities are divided against each other and only seemingly united for the sake of selfish ends. Society exists only in name. Envy, malice, greed, selfishness, conceit having gained predominance in all, have split society into units.

This chaotic state of modern human "society" in most parts of the world, the truth of which will be generally acknowledged, ought to convince all thoughtful people as to the wisdom and vital necessity of the caste system. Even now where the four-caste system still exists, it does serve to keep the communities within its rule as one compact body to a great extent, through the influence of its laws of interdependence and mutual harmonious relations. Thanks to Caste, even the degenerating Hindoos of to-day have not yet been split into units. This remnant race, a race which has still retained some of the instincts of the original human family of the Silver Age, is being more and more divided and subdivided, no doubt, at the present day. But these divisions and subdivisions are large coherent parts, linked together into one great whole. The entire race is divided into four castes; the castes are divided into sub-castes, the sub-castes again into communities, the communities into rural societies, the rural societies into large patriarchal joint-families. The members of families are ruled by the patriarchs, the patriarchs by the headmen of caste communities, the caste communities by the spiritual (Brāhman) guides, through the enforcement of the salutary Scriptural injunctions, the infringement of which is punished, in minor cases, by expiations involving physical hardships and spiritual austerities and purifying ceremonies, and, in serious cases, by expulsion from caste, which, in India, is a greater disaster than natural or material calamities. And all these rulers and ruled are related to one another by more or less natural love and affection or respect and sense of duty born in their blood through thousands of generations of hereditary habits of thought and life; all are inspired to command and obey by the spirit of the Veda which their mind absorbs through the performance of their respective spiritual, social, physical duties as enjoined by the later Scriptures—the

Shāstras, which are modified embodiments of the revealed laws of the Basic Spirit of All Life, the all-cementing Spirit of Nature—Love.

SECTION VIII. THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE.

Simultaneously with the introduction of the Caste System in the Silver Age are instituted the Four Stages of Life, the object of which is to help the lower state of human consciousness to gradually attain to the highest spiritual realization. They are graduated processes of mental and physical application and discipline by the practice of which individuals are to recover the absolute illumination, being and bliss enjoyed by all human souls in the Golden Age. They impart a scientific training to the human mind in order to enable it to subdue its Rājasic (active) and Tāmasic (darkening) attributes by developing the Sāttwic (illuminating) attribute through concentration upon the Basic Principles of Life—the Centre and Essence of Absolute Purity and Illumination.

The first stage is called Brahmacharjya or spiritual Pupilage. The second stage is called Grihastha or Householdership. The third stage is called Vānaprastha or Asceticism. The fourth stage is called the Bhikshu or Wandering Friarship. The first, third and fourth stages are enjoined for the three twice-born castes and the third and fourth are open even to a Sudra if he is found worthy of adopting them. The Brāhman, Kshatriya and Vaishya are called twice-born; the first birth is the physical birth, the second is the spiritual birth through the investiture of the holy thread from which begins the performance of daily spiritual duties and practices.

The first stage of life begins, soon after this spiritual initiation, at the age of twelve, when the boy goes to reside with the Gooroo (spiritual guide) for studying the Veda and for undergoing spiritual, mental and physical discipline. The Gooroo is an illuminated Brāhman sage whose love and affection for the pupils in his charge and anxious care and efforts for the unfoldment of their souls are not equalled by those of even their parents. He feeds, clothes and lodges them in his own abode free of any charge or consideration whatever. His one thought and concern is to help them to realize the Truth, to be freed from the bondage of matter and thus enter the Absolute Realm of Eternal Love and Happiness.

While every student has to perform the same regular spiritual rites and practices and to say the prayers daily after physical purification, the method of training adopted by the Gooroo for developing their soul is not the same in each case. To some he explains the truths of the Veda and asks them to meditate on their meanings. Others, who show natural instincts of devotion, he trains into practical realization of the same truths without teaching them a single word of the Veda.

The chief method of a Gooroo's teaching is to draw the student's mind away from worldly attractions and turn the direction of the mind's vision inwards into the soul. Devotion is the principal aim, for devotion means concentration and when that concentration is fixed upon the contemplation of the Essence of things which pervades them all and yet is unmixed with the outer substance and attributes of their manifested

forms, the mind absorbs the perfect purity of that Essence and is filled with the serenity and the inexpressible joy born of absolute freedom from the influence of matter.

If the student obtains this practical realization of the Essence of Existence, he remains for the rest of his life in this stage of spiritual pupilage. But he is no more a pupil; he becomes a teacher of pupils—a Gooroo. It is this practical realization that invests a student of wisdom with the magnetic power of awakening that realization in others.

A spiritual student's training is essentially based upon a life of purest mental and physical chastity; the student is not allowed by the teacher to mix or talk with worldly men or to discuss temporal subjects among themselves. When the practical realization of the Truth is attained, life's one object is attained. If, however, after staying and studying with the Gooroo for twelve years, the student fails to have this practical grasp of the soul of wisdom, he leaves the Gooroo and with his permission returns to his family, takes unto himself a good-tempered, virtuous and spiritually-inclined wife and enters into the life of a householder. But the principal object of this second stage of life is the same as in the first-realization of the Truth. The practice for physical and mental purity is continued, the Veda is studied daily, diligently and devotedly, and the meanings of its truths and principles contemplated with calmness and concentration, comparing their lessons in the light of the experiences of worldly life. The obligations of household life are greater than those of pupilage. Life must be sustained on simple and sparing meals; the means of living must be honestly earned, the hungry or needy beggar must be satisfied according to means and ability; the pleasures and comforts of household existence must be enjoyed moderately and with discrimination; parents, wife, members of the family, poor relatives and dependents and devoted servants must be supported, loved and made happy. All legitimate wishes and wants of the wife must be satisfied, she must be cherished with affection and respect and regarded as the presiding deity of household harmony. If during this household life the truth is realized, the householder remains at home during the rest of his earthly days; he has no need to go into the third stage of life, for, as I have said, realization of the Truth is the end and aim of life in all its stages. If, however, this main object is not obtained, the householder, after twenty-four years of family life, must enter the third stage, that of the ascetic. He must leave his home with his wife and retire from worldly life and interests and live in some secluded forest place near his home and practise austerities, physical and mental, in order to purge the mind of all its material inclinations for a period of twelve years. If during that time the realization is obtained, he remains in that stage for the rest of his life, imparting the realized knowledge and wisdom to all who may come to him.

If, however, he fails in his search for it, even in this ascetic stage, he returns to his home with his wife, and if he has a son to protect and support her, he leaves his home and family, with the permission of his parents and his wife, and enters into the

fourth stage, that of the holy wanderer, to tread the path to Freedom and Truth all alone, sundering all ties of worldly life and surrendering himself—body, mind and soul—to that search. He must not occupy his mind with any other but that one thought; he must live on one simple, spare meal a day, enough to sufficiently satisfy his hunger; he must dress himself in scant saffron-colored clothes, the color of Love and Wisdom. He must ever be wandering, never entering a human home, and rest under trees; but must not sleep under one tree or on the same spot or place for three successive nights, Never talk with people on any other subject than that of his search, and discuss it with humble spirit of inquiry with illuminated sages he comes across on his journeyings.

This all-absorbing meditation does help to awaken in him at last the light of the Truth, and blessed with that light he is filled with joy and feels himself the happiest mortal, in touch and tune with the purest spirit of the Universe, the Infinity which is the parent of the Finite. With the first flush of this realization he changes the color of his clothes from saffron to white, the color of Illumination (Sattwa), and as he wanders still, in the ecstasy of the bliss of Truth within his soul, gradually the objective phenomena around him seem unsubstantial and finally grow dim and shadowy, while the realized spirit in which his mind lives immersed, he perceives to be the only substance of those shadows. Then, as he roams along, laughing and sporting like a little boy in the fulness of the glee within, he becomes in time almost unconscious of anything outside of his soul. His very sight is a blessing to all beholders, a blessing which fills them temporarily with the delight of his intoxication. He has no count of time or notion of the phases of time—whether it is morning, noon or night. He lives henceforth in Infinity and views all Nature as dwelling within him and anon views himself as a wavelet in the infinite ocean of its Essence. He does not feel any hunger, for with the satisfaction of his spiritual hunger all hunger has been satisfied forever. He is the embodiment of ecstasy, uncovered ecstasy, and even his physical cover, the white cloth, has fallen from his body. He stands naked as naked Nature's most natural man. He is clothed with the illumination of his soul, like the Golden Age man.

SECTION IX. THE COPPER AGE.

The Divine Cycle of time can be likened to a fruit. Like the ripening and rotting of a fruit, the Divine Cycle develops and degenerates into rottenness. The Golden Age is its ripening stage. At the end of that age, it is fully ripe. The Silver Age is its overripe stage. The Copper Age marks the stage of its rottenness and the Iron Age is its fully rotten stage. At the end of the Iron Age, it is reduced to its seed out of which springs the sprout of the Golden Age. And during the junction period of the Golden Age, covering 144,000 human years, the sprout grows into a flowering tree which bears fruit with the commencement of the Golden Age proper.

The length of the Copper Age is 2,000 divine years, equal to 720,000 human years, while its Twilight periods are 72,000 years each. Men in this age are seven cubits or ten and a half feet high. Virtue lives in it in two quarters, the other two being filled by vice. Vitality is rooted in the blood; men live as long as there is blood in their body. Gold and silver leaving become dearer the metal generally used in making household utensils is copper which is found abundantly, whence the age derives its name. The intensity of accelerated Rāja within Nature helps the assertion of Tama in all her manifest phases, although Sattwa still has some influence. The trees become less in height, less fruitful and the fruits less sweet; crops less abundant despite the best efforts of cultivation. Cows give less milk than in the Silver Age, while wild animals become more ferocious. Most animals can speak in the Silver Age, but now only some of them, the higher ones, are blessed with that power during the major portion of it.

People in the Copper Age become more and more outward-looking generally, especially the Sudras, some of whom having become filled with dense Tama, revolt against all laws and discipline and turn into thieves and robbers. These latter are expelled from their caste and banished out of civilized centres of population the world over by the kings. They are called by the common name of robbers and specific names of Yavans and Mlechhas which means men who are wild, barbarous and unclean by nature and habits. These Yavans and Mlechhas come into existence towards the end of the Silver Age and rapidly increase in number during the Dwāpar (Copper Age), towards the end of which they form the majority of the world's population and are known by different names according to the localities of their habitation, different shades of their dark attributes, and the callings they pursue: Yavan, Kirāt (hunters), Gāndhār, Cheen (Chinese), Shabar, Barbar (barbarian), Shak, Tungār, Kanka, Palhab, Ramat and Kambhoj. The kings in the Copper Age have a hard time to protect their subjects and their territories from the depredations of these wild characters and robbers. The king's first duty is to preserve peace in his kingdom so that his subjects may not be disturbed in the performance of their religious duties, may apply

themselves to the study of the Veda and the contemplation of the Supreme Deity and tread the path of virtue without annoyance.

The king's chief duty being to insure the material welfare of his subjects with the sole view of helping their spiritual welfare, the punishment for the infringement of caste and religious rules is made severe and swiftly administered. At the same time the spirit of the times is taken into consideration and many rigid rules are relaxed and minor faults are pardoned. The four castes are subdivided into sub-castes according to the different callings that the Vaishyas and Sudras show preference in their inclinations to follow. Those who take to agriculture are classed as cultivators, those who rear cattle and sell milk and butter are called milkmen, while those who take to trade and commerce are called traders and merchants and so on. All these form into different sub-castes under the general caste of Vaishya. Similarly the Sudras are subdivided according to their respective callings; viz., blacksmiths, potters, carpenters, masons, etc., all under the general caste of Sudra. The chief object of these sub-castes is to save human society from disintegration as much as possible, to preserve the masses of men in as large coherent sections as practicable linked to one another through spiritual, moral and material relations.

Another, and almost equally important, object of the caste and sub-caste systems in the Copper Age is to conserve the heredity of their different intellectualities, talents, healthy characteristics, and instincts. This becomes all the more necessary owing to the fact that it is in the Dwāpar Yuga that husbands and wives begin to have carnal relations. During the Golden Age and the greater portion of the Silver Age all men and women are, what Christians call, virgin-born. The fuss that is made about this immaculate conception succeeds only to excite a smile of pity in the Shastra-enlightened Hindoo—a smile of pity for the ignorance of the facts in the past history of the human race of which they seem to know so little and care less to know more. This fact about the Golden and Silver Ages, this generally prevailing immaculate child-conception, ought to open their eyes. If they require any authority for this statement, I refer them to the study of the Shānti Parva of the Mahābhārata.

The Yoga-power of the Golden Age men draw disembodied souls from the Bhūva sphere and spiritual souls from higher spheres to enter into a woman's womb and be born on the earth plane. The will-force of these men supplies these incoming souls with the material of a physical body. In the Silver Age the higher illuminated Brāhmans and Saints can bring about conception in the same way, while others bring it about by making the women eat magnetized "charoo," which not only draws these spirits to the womb, but supplies the material for the physical body. In the Copper Age, however, the decrease of spirituality takes away the power, and so the material of the physical body has to be supplied by the physical vigor of the father and the blood of the mother to enable a disembodied spirit to enter the womb and grow into a child.

This degenerated process of procreation coming into vogue in the Copper Age renders it necessary to fuse higher magnetism into the lower castes, as well as to preserve the magnetism of each caste from deterioration. The means adapted for securing these ends is to allow the two higher castes men to marry girls of the lower castes, and towards the latter end of the Copper Age even Vaishyas are permitted to marry Sudra girls. The lower caste men, however, are never allowed to marry higher caste women, as it degenerates the breed, the seed being a far more potent factor in producing excellence of growth than the soil. The offsprings of these intermarriages form into castes distinct from those of their fathers and mothers, lower than their father's and higher than their mother's.

In order to preserve the magnetism and the hereditary talent and instincts from deteriorating, the castes are divided into sub-castes according to their general proclivities and professions of livelihood. Each sub-caste must marry within its own circle, and must eat food cooked by the hands of its own members. Heredity is now being believed in by the materealistic people of the modern world, and when that belief in heredity will have grown stronger in their minds, they will then take practical measures to preserve the good qualities of heredity from being spoilt by coming in contact with the bad magnetism of its lower traits.

This human magnetism is a subject which is worthy of the study of modern scientists. If they can find out what it is, ascertain its properties, power for good and evil, and how good magnetism can be conserved and transmitted and how bad magnetism can be purified, they will do humanity greater good than they have done by the discovery of steam and electricity, which, judged from the standpoint of the highest good, ought to be considered as very doubtful boons. Magnetism is not useful magnetism if it is purely physical. It is not worth preserving, it is injurious, and its contact ought to be avoided.

It is spiritual magnetism which is worth preserving. It is spirituality which is the medium which transmits good heredity from parent to progeny. The mind is the storehouse and battery of all human magnetism. The vibrations of the mind pervade every atom of the body and the mind's vibrations are generated by its principal and most powerful thoughts and sentiments. These vibrations are the essence of these thoughts and sentiments, and magnetism is that subtle essence impregnated with the potencies of the mind mixed with the subtle forces of the physical body.

Marrying, cooking and eating within the caste helps to conserve in the individual members thereof the spiritual and mental magnetism, generated by the performances of the religious duties and ceremonies and spiritual incantations which form the daily routine of household life enjoined by the Scriptures.

Thus wisdom, talent, traits, instincts are all ingrained in and transmitted through the blood from generation to generation of each caste. The caste is like a university, each home a school, and the instincts and talents, brought into being with the birth of each member, are the implanted principles of the knowledge of each

profession of which it is the caste. A carpenter's caste is a guild for carpentry, a carpenter's home is a technical school for carpentry where the natural talent and love for the art are partly imbibed by the instincts of heredity and partly by observation which is the best system of training.

With these tendencies of material arts are born in the blood of the child the germs of the moral and spiritual culture of the parents. These germs shoot forth into healthy growth under the fostering care of the child's guardians, aided by the religious, social and domestic duties the growing child has to perform daily. The carpenter is as much a useful member of the four-caste society as the Brāhman. The householder Brāhman can no more do without a carpenter than a carpenter can do without a Brāhman. But the value of the Brāhman's help to the carpenter being more important to the development of his soul, which is the true aim and goal of earthly life, the obligations of the other castes to the Brāhman are greater and deeper than those of the Brāhman to the Sudra. The question may now be asked, has that carpenter no chance of becoming the equal of the Brāhman through spiritual culture? Yes and no. Yes, because Brāhmanhood is nobody's monopoly. Brāhmanhood is but a state of the human mind—the ensouled state of the human mind, and anybody who develops this state of mind, even though he be encased within a Pariah's flesh, lays legitimate claim to Brahmanhood. Only he must make that ensouled mental state perfect, only he must enter the fold of Brāhmanhood through the door of Nature, through the ingress of Rebirth. The maturity of a material or mental condition is best known to Nature. A mass of animal flesh, lying on the surface of Mother Earth, undergoes all the processes of disintegration and putrefaction, and when that disintegration is complete, Earth assimilates and absorbs it again; it becomes a part of her body, it becomes earth itself. What is true of material plane of Nature is true as well of her mental and spiritual planes. When a carpenter has developed full Brāhman consciousness, Nature opens to him wide the portals of the spiritual caste which had looked down upon him in his carpenter birth. Even in his carpenter birth, he does not go unrewarded. The case of the carpenter Rishi, called Suta, is a luminous instance in point. His spiritual culture was so great that the highest illuminated sages (Rishis) learned from him the lessons of the Purānas which he preached to them, sitting on a raised platform with their reverential permission. He was considered a knower of Brahman and so enjoyed the respect paid to the highest spiritual beings. A Sudra may not become a Brāhman, but may become through practical spiritual culture a higher being than a Brāhman even in his Sudra birth, and be born into a highly spiritual Brāhman family, by sheer dint of merit, the merit of developing spiritual consciousness—in the next birth. Similarly a Brāhman, born in the highest family of his clan, will, by developing Pariah qualities, be outclassed in his Brāhman birth and enter through the door of Nature into a Pariah family in a subsequent birth.

The above facts and truths are known to a child even of every caste. Even a child knows, either in the Copper Age or to-day among the four-caste people, that a

caste-birth is dependent upon Karma (actions). A Sudra, therefore, takes the very fact of his birth as sufficient reason for his being placed in the lowest caste. He is reconciled to his fate, a fate with the potentialities of his actions in previous existences. And the little gloom of sadness that his lowly station of life casts upon his mind is illumined now and again by the silver lining of the consolation that it is in his power, if he so wills it, to be a high Brāhman in the next incarnation, if he succeeds in developing his higher soul-consciousness.

The Veda in the Copper Age has for the first time to be studied and its truths practised in two parts—the philosophical and the ceremonial parts. Men generally are degenerated so much in this age that they can no longer grasp the truths of the Upanishads without first purifying their body and through the purified body the mind. The Vedas are divided into Upanishads (Eternal Spiritual Truths) and the Mantras (incantations, hymns and ceremonies, the practice of which cleanses the impurities of the mind and body). In the Dwāpar Yuga, therefore, the performance of the ceremonials of the Veda is much in vogue. When the body and mind are purified, they are made fit for grasping the meanings of the higher philosophy of life and become receptive to the influences of the subtlest spiritual vibrations.

SECTION X. THE IRON AGE.

But even these attempts and safeguards for keeping up the higher individuality of the human race fail to retard the course of the degeneration which Nature herself undergoes in the process of time. The fruit of Divine Cycle, spoken of in the beginning of the last Section, reaches an advanced stage of rottenness which marks the commencement of the Twilight Period of the Kali, called also Tamas or the Dark Age. The characteristics of Kali are symptoms of Nature filled with denser gloom than heretofore.

The usual Kali, the last section of every Divine Cycle, is much more dense with Tama (darkness) than the one in which we are living now. The reason is that at the junction of the last Dwāpar and the present Kali, the fullest incarnation of the Supreme Deity, Sri Krishna himself, came on earth to dwell among men for a period of a hundred years. This Avatār and source of all Avatārs, this central Form-Point of All-Pervading Brahm, this Embodiment of Para-Brahm, is gracious enough to come and dwell among men on earth only once in 71 Divine cycles. We, the degenerated mortals of this Dark Age, are more fortunate than even humanity of many a Golden or Silver Age. The Supreme Lord sanctifies the soil of the earth-plane of every universe with the all-purifying touch of His Lotus-Feet by turns. The countless universes that spring out of Him and return in germ-form again into Him have the grace of His personal touch and supervision at appointed times. When Krishna comes to live in any of the universes, Nature therein is turned inside out, so that the inmost essence of it may flow over its surface and wash off all the causes of pollution. It has been recorded by the contemporary sages of Krishna-Leelā, the all-knowing sages who came down to earth from higher planes to act as scribes of the Lord's deeds, that by the coming of Krishna not only the 36,000 years, forming the junction period of Kali, was destroyed, but also almost half of the age of Kali proper, while the Lord's Rash-Dance with the Gopis absorbed a whole Kalpa covering 36,000 Divine cycles out of the age of Brahmā.

The age of Brahmā is the age of the universe, that is to say, the age of Brahmā is equal to the duration of creation. Brahmā lives for 100 Brāhmīc years and one Brāhmīc year is made up of 360 Brāhmīc days. One day of Brahmā is equal to one Kalpa, so is his night. A Kalpa is equal to 12,000,000 divine years. One night of Brahmā covers the same period of time so that one day and one night of Brahmā covers 24,000,000 divine years. Multiplying these figures by 360 we get 8,640,000,000 divine years, which is the span of one year of Brahmā. Multiplying these figures by 100 we get the span of Brahmā's age, 864,000,000,000 divine years, which being multiplied by 360 we get 311,040,000,000,000 human (lunar) years, the age of Brahmā, the duration of creation.

Thus the night of the Rash-Dance not only absorbed one Kalpa equal to 4,320,000,000 lunar years out of the duration of creation, but also 36,000 years which form the junction of Dwāpar and Kali, as also about half the span of the Kali proper. About this last there is no authoritative statement in the Shāstras, but it has been stated therein that when Krishna left the earth and went up to His Abode, the forces of "advanced Kali" overtook humanity. Now, according to the Hindoo almanacs, about 5,000 years only have passed since Krishna's departure, which would mean that it is now but the beginning of Kali proper, the span of which is 360,000 years. But the signs and symptoms of the times already visible are unmistakably of the middle Kali, detailed descriptive features of which are to be found in the Mahābhārata as also in all the Purānas. This being so, it is not a wrong supposition that we are already in the middle Kali and that Krishna-Leelā has also taken away half the age of Kali proper.

Nor is it necessary that the Kali has to pass through the conventional figures of its duration given in the Shāstras. What is true of individual humanity is true also of the whole mass of humanity which represents Kali. Kali is nothing else but the forms of Nature's changes of the latter end of a Divine cycle. We, men and beasts and trees and grass, productions of Nature, represent the phases and features of Kali. Dense Tama working within Nature brings out the characteristics of this dark age to the surface of the earth. Man being the most highly organized product and the most powerful medium of her attributes, the thoughts and actions of men are most affected by it. The dark thoughts and actions, called sin in common parlance of humanity, form the sins of Kali which represents the spirit of human conduct and characteristics in the Dark Age. We see that people, who are naturally healthy and robust, shorten their longevity by over-indulging in vice. Thus a life of vice or sin, that is, life lived in violation of Nature's laws, begets diseases of the body which bring about early destruction. A man for instance, who, according to his natural state of health, ought to live for one hundred years, is often found to die at the age of thirty, a victim of dissipated life. This rule applies to Kali. All our accumulated sins form Kali's sins. And these accumulated sins are begetting diseases in the body and mind of humanity from which Kali must die an early death.

This Kali, therefore, with its rapidly increasing accumulation of sin, may come to an end in less than 10,000 years, its conventional period of existence, 360,000 years, being condensed into that short space of time. Judging from the signs of an advanced state of rottenness, already developed, it would seem as if the worst features which hasten its end may manifest themselves in less than a few hundred years. But, like wheels within wheels, the Satya, Tretā and Dwāpar cycles have their sway through its duration by turns. By this I mean that during the course of Kali (Iron Age) features and characteristics of the Golden, Silver and Copper Ages manifest themselves by turns all through it. Indeed, the spirit and attributes of these four cycles weigh the moral and physical atmosphere of each day and night. Supposing the average day begin at 6 A.M., the influence and the attributes of the Golden Age

prevail from 6 A.M. to 3:36 P.M.; those of the Silver Age prevail from 3:36 P.M. to 10:48 P.M.; those of the Copper Age from 10:48 P.M. to 3:36 A.M., and those of the Iron Age from 3:36 A.M. to 6 A.M. Illumination and comparative calmness dwell within and without us from morning tip to high noon owing to the predominance of Sattwa, the predominant attribute of the Golden Age. From noon activity (Rāja) asserts itself, and by about 3 o'clock in the afternoon it gains full force when light (inside and out of us) is on the decline and calmness is disturbed, introducing the influence of the Silver Age, which lasts until about 11 at night, when Tama (Darkness) begins its reign and, combined with Rāja, holds the rule of the Copper Age. The signs of Tama are laziness, inaction, sleep, etc. We begin to experience these from it o'clock at night and until three in the morning slumber and gloom envelop us and Nature. But sleep and darkness are deepest from three to five in the morning, these hours are ruled by Kali, the Dark Age.

Thus cycles revolve within cycles as they revolve even within the smallest cycle, called Throughout the Iron Age, the conditions of the first three cycles prevail one after the other, and when this influence of the Copper Age conditions in the Kali Age spends itself, conditions of darker Kali prevail for a time: Then again signs are visible of Golden Age influence and after a time degenerate into Silver Age phases, then into Copper Age mixed light, then again into the deep gloom of Kali within Kali, and so on. As Kali advances more and more the successive, rotatory influences of the other three cycles become feebler and feebler, and at last under the deepest gloom of Kali gaining fullest power, their influences are kept down absolutely. Here begins the end of the Kali period. Soon after the signs of the coming Golden Age are visible. These ever recurring conditions of the Golden and Silver Ages, though feeble in their influence, counteract the destructive influences of vice and sin and thus help to save the life of Kali from coming to an end all too soon.

The Kali Yuga is called the Iron Age, because gold, silver and copper becoming scarcer, people use all sorts of mixed metals, but chiefly iron, in making household utensils, iron being found in great abundance. The average stature of mankind is three and a half cubits or 5 feet 9 inches. Virtue is reduced to one-quarter, the other three-quarters being made up by vice. With the decrease of spirituality in every succeeding age, the root of vitality has been transferred from marrow to bone, from bone to blood. Now, in the Kali that root of life is destroyed. Life in this age is generally sustained by food alone. The effect of constant concentration upon changeful, external objects rebounds upon the body, causing loss of tissue greater than that in the former ages, which men still have their minds turned inwards, between whiles, to have a dip in the source of All-Life—the soul.

The Vedas in the Iron Age are no more understandable to the people in their original sound-embodiments except to a small portion of spiritual Brāhmans. They are therefore presented to the people in general in the form of Shāstras and Purānas. These embody the Vedic truths, principles and ideas in easy constructions and simple

language, illustrated by examples and stories drawn from facts in life of the past ages. The Shāstras are, therefore, nothing but the Vedas, simplified, explained and illustrated, with the object of enabling the deteriorated intellect of the Iron Age man to grasp the light and the spirit of the Storehouse of Revealed Wisdom. The ceremonial parts of the Vedas are likewise modified and rendered easier for practice in the form of Smritis (forms of spiritual duties and sacrifices) the daily performance of which is enjoined upon the four-caste people.

Yet for all that, despite all these strenuous efforts of the small spiritual portion of the people to save the souls of their brethren from succumbing to the dark forces of the age and the allurements of a material life of undisciplined liberty and license, human society falls into a mental and material state of chaos, typical of the stage of complete rottenness of a fruit. As many grains of wheat when ground in a mill look like one substance, called flour, which means so many separate grains of wheat have been divided into such minute parts that they appear as one substance; so, in this most advanced stage of decomposition of human society, its various and separate composing parts and phases—religious, racial and material—will be divided into one whole-looking mass of separate minute units. People's minds, at this latter end of the age, will be so far removed from the idea and notion of God and the soul that the Vedas, the Bible and all other religious books and philosophies that are now extant will disappear, and even the fact that they had at any time existed will be completely forgotten. Churches and temples, mosques and synagogues will no more be seen on the face of the earth, humanity will live for life itself—the grossest material life. Each individual will differ from the other on all imaginable points of view on all subjects. Every man and woman will be his or her own God or ideal. There will be no sympathy between them, each one asserting his or her independence over all of his or her fellow creatures. They will think, act, move, eat, sleep as their own wild, wilful dispositions will prompt causing quarrels and fighting between another. Selfishness and aggression will be the keynote of their character, the number of Mlechhas and Yavans and outcasted people increases out of all proportion to the number of the four-caste people who may now be called the Root Race of the earth. In the process of time this Root Race of people will cling round the centre of the earth to save their spiritual instincts, pure ways of living, customs and habits from being contaminated by association with the strayed portion of humanity who now form the greatest majority. As, when in the throes of death, through disease, the only visible action of life is centered in the heart, while all other parts are numb and comparatively lifeless, so with the advance of Kali, the spiritual life becomes centered in the heart of the earth. This heart of the earth is called in the ancient Scriptures the Sea-Girt Isle or peninsula, the Belt of the Earth's Body—now called India. In this heart only of the earth live the original four-caste people, while the rest, broken away and divorced from the parent stock and religion, are scattered all over the rest of her body.

The signs of advanced Kali are already visible all over the earth at the present moment, nay, even of its most degenerated stage, especially in the West—signs and symptoms which are manifesting themselves here and there even in men of the Root Race. What a horrid state of affairs the closing period of Kali will bring about may be judged from the prophecies made five thousand years ago by the illuminated sages of this Root Race, prophecies which are correct in startling exactitude and some of which are on all fours with the signs and characteristics of our present period, as will be seen from a few extracts from them given below.

The conditions of the different stages of Kali have been described in all the eighteen Purānas, and the Mahābhārata which embody the history of the human race from creation to destruction—the past, present and future phases of human society of all times and of all climes. The following few details translated from a minute description of the early, middle and final stages of the Kali, given by the Mārkandeya, in reply to questions put in to Kali by King Yudhisthira in an assemblage of saints, kings and nobles, inspired by incarnated Krishna, who was present in person, will be of interest to most of my readers:

Raja Yudhisthira, Emperor of Bhārat-varsha, the central of the seven continents of the ancient world (now known as all the world), during his sojourn among the Rishis (saints) of Kāmyak Forest, with a view to ascertain the future state of the world, asked the immortal saint (Brahmarshi) Mārkandeya, "Holy one! After having heard your wonderful accounts of the creation and the destruction of the universe, we have become anxious to hear about Kali Yuga, and we beg you to describe this age in detail to us. What results will be produced by the destruction of the Root Religion? What will the valor, strength, food, behavior, costume and longevity of the human race be like? And how long after will commence the Satya Yuga (Golden Age) again?"

Saint Mārkandeya answered: "O King! In the Satya Yuga, virtue being void of the least touch of greed, deception and other evil qualities of the mind, was like a full four-footed bull. In the Tretā, it lost one and in the Dwāpar two feet. In the Dark Age it will be only one-footed, the other three feet being destroyed by vice.

"The longevity, heroism, intelligence, strength and mind-force of mankind are gradually decreasing age by age; they will decrease still more in the Kali. The Kings, Brāhmans, Vaishyas and Sudras will practice false piety, and this false piety will be turned into a means for cheating others. Love of truth will decline in men; decline in love of truth will cause shortness of life; shortness of life will prevent the proper cultivation of wisdom, Little wisdom will beget ignorance, ignorance will beget greed, greed anger, anger delusion. And swayed by greed, anger, delusion and sensuality, they will be envious of and antagonistic to each other.

"The twice-born castes will become void of truth and holy meditation. The mean Chandals (pariahs) will behave like Kshatriyas and Kshatriyas will imitate the ways of the Chandals. Husbands will become extremely henpecked; feed upon fish,

flesh and milk of goat and sheep. Man will aggress upon and develop an irreligious, atheistic and thievish nature.

"People will not discriminate about the eatableness or uneatableness of any food. Brāhmans will cease performing spiritual practices, will denounce the Vedas, and being deluded by false discussion give up holy ceremonials and engage themselves in mean actions. Father and son will feel no compunction in killing each other, but will rather feel delighted at the deed and call it an act of God.

"The whole world will become Mlechha (unclean and barbarous) void of religious performances and ceremonials, gladness and festivities. Almost all people will be miserly, defame their friends and defraud and steal the money of poor unprotected widows. They will possess little strength and no energy, yet be greedy and filled with material, sensual attachments; will gladly listen to the advices of well-known bad persons and accept charity by false pretences.

"Conceited yet illiterate kings will challenge one another to fight, will try to kill one another, and will be like thorns in the sides of their subjects. Setting at naught their duties of protecting the people, they will, swayed by greed and pride, be ever anxious to rob and punish them, and, prompted by their cruel heart, they will snatch away the property and wives of honest and pious men.

"None will ask a father for his daughter to marry, and no father will offer his daughter in marriage. The daughters will choose and marry their own choice without consulting anybody or going through any ceremonials.

"Brother will cheat brother. Even learned persons will lose love of truth and be addicted to telling lies; the old will act like boys, boys like old people. Cowards will brag of their bravery and brave men will act like cowards. All will eat the same kinds of food and be tilled with selfishness and delusion. No one will trust another.

"Brāhmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas will cease to restrain and rule the Sudras or even each other. All castes will be levelled and become one—unclean and barbarous. Fathers will not pardon sons, nor sons pardon their fathers. Wives will cease from attending upon their husbands; men and women will all be self-willed and envious of each other. People will not perform any good works or ceremonies to satisfy the gods. They will not listen to each other; there will be no gooroo (teacher) or chelā (pupil), all will be filled with the darkness of ignorance. At Kali-end. their longevity will be sixteen years; most will die immediately after that age is reached. Women will give birth to children at the age of seven or eight, and, in some cases, even at five or six; men will beget children at the age of ten or twelve; in some cases, even at the age of seven or eight. No husband will be satisfied with his wife, no wife satisfied with her husband. They will have very little wealth, and even those who will have no wealth whatever will wear the false marks of wealth. Envy will be predominant in every mind, hunger ever burning in every stomach. Cross-road and streets will be thronged by wantons and libertines. Women, forsaking shame, will bear spite and grudge for their husbands. Men will be all of unclean habits, manners and

customs, eat anything and everything and will be terrible in every way and action. They will cheat all in buying and selling of goods, out of sheer greed.

"None will care to acquire spiritual wisdom, yet all will be busied in performing spiritual ceremonies for form's sake and be naturally addicted to crooked acts. They will show the faults of each other. People will live in constant fear of losing their lives as victims of their own greed and envy. The Sudras will kill Brāhmans and rob them of their property, and the Brāhmans being thus oppressed will cry out in agony and out of fear will roam unprotected on the surface of the earth. Some of them will take refuge in lonely spots on river banks, in mountains and in dangerous places to save their lives; others being oppressed by the grinding taxes of unjust kings, will lose all patience, and taking to the services of Sudras, will perform forbidden acts.

"The generality of people will become fierce and of murderous propensities. The Sudras will become spiritual preceptors and Brāhmans will listen to them, believing their wrong precepts to be demonstrated facts. The low will be high and the high low: all conditions will be reversed. All, all people will forsake God and worship Mammon. The Sudras will cease from serving Brāhmans. The Earth will no longer be adorned by the temples of God. All mankind will be impious and develop frightful characters. Meat will be their food, liquor their drink. The one object of life will be to increase flesh and blood. The rain-clouds towards the close of Kali will pour down rains out of season so that, overwhelmed by incessant and untimely rain, people will subsist on fruit and roots. Pupils will not care for the lessons of their teachers, temporal or other, and will act against their wishes. The poverty-stricken Goroos (spiritual teachers) will curse their disciples. There will not be the least trace of respect left in the world. The relations of friends and kiths and kins will depend upon obligations of money.

"At the close of the cycle flowers will grow upon flowers, fruits upon fruits, and, owing to the rains not falling in season, there will grow but scanty crops, so that famine-stricken populations of the earth will cry out in hunger and roam upon her surface. Fragrant things will lose their odor, sweet juices will lose their sweetness, seeds will not germinate properly.

"Women will transfer their love from husbands to servants. All women, including wives of heroes, will prefer somebody else to their husbands for lovers. Pious men will be in mean stations, short-lived and poor; vicious men will occupy high positions, have long life and prosperity. There will be constant breaking out of fires all over the land. Tired and hungry wayfarers will ask for food and refuge from householders in vain, and out of despair rest and sleep upon the road. Crows and other birds, snakes and beasts will make unearthly noises."

When Nature and human society will be thus revolutionized, reaction will naturally set ill. When the fruit of Divine Cycle will thus reach its extreme stage of rottenness, out of its seed will spring forth a shoot which will grow into a fresh tree. That tree, in turn, will bear fresh fruit—a fresh Divine Cycle. In this state of the

darkest gloom, faint streaks of russet light will be visible which will grow bright anon and give birth to the dawn of the Golden Age again.

Reaction is the law of Nature, reaction is the result of every phase of action. When vice has its full run on the face of the globe, when it has reached its lowest depth and wildest reign, it spends its force, becomes weakened, allowing virtue to lift its head once more and build its palace of light upon its ruins. Vice is born of Tama, and virtue of Sattwa and the active force of both is Rāja. Time is the self-manifesting kaleidoscopic revolution of color-pictures on the transparent canvas of ether. After the deepest shades of dark colors are exhausted, there is a reaction of lighter colors. When Tama has exhausted its force, Sattwa asserts itself by natural law.

This healthy reaction growing stronger will gradually evolve some order out of the chaos of the closing Kali. A portion of the people will get disgusted with the reign of utmost licence and inharmony, and, endowed with strong mental force to resist the influence of the age, will pierce the veil of darkness enveloping everything and see the light that dwells within. These will stimulate this reaction, and spread the discovered light among others groping in the darkness for that light.

The four castes will be gradually established once more in some fashion.

At this stage will be born in the village of Sambhalpur in India a Brāhman of great spiritual force, named Vishnujashā, and in time will become the father of the coming Incarnation of Vishnoo, one of the most powerful incarnations—Kalki. The Lord Kalki will rapidly grow into youth and spiritual power. At his mere mental call will come to him countless vehicles, armours, all kinds of weapons of war and soldiers. He will then lead them to battle against all the Mlechhas, robbers and tyrants, all over the world, who will fall shouting in agony before his mammoth sword. After extirpating them all, the hold will establish once again perfect order and harmony on the surface of the earth. After ruling the world as Emperor and infusing into humanity the spirit of highest spirituality, Kalki will make over the charge of the earth to the Brāhmans and disappear after entering a most beautiful forest.

Here will commence the Junction period of coming Golden Age. During this period, covering 144,000 lunar years, all germs of vice, crime and sin will be destroyed and men will become engaged in spiritual practices and ceremonials. The earth will be adorned with beautiful forests and gardens, buildings, lakes, reservoirs, and temples of God and many are the sacred ceremonies that will be constantly performed on her surface. Everywhere will be visible holy Brāhmans, saints and anchorites. The four stages of life which before were filled with rogues will now be filled by pious, honest and truthful men. The deep-rooted bad instincts and associations will then be driven out of the minds of all people. All the crops will grow plentifully in their proper seasons. All people will be employed in charitable acts, religious sacrifices, and in performing spiritual duties. The Brāhmans will again be absorbed in holy meditations, satisfied and serene; the Kshatriyas will exhibit their

valor; the kings rule the world with justice and mercy; the Vaishyas carry on trade and agriculture; the Sudras serve the three upper castes with loving service.

This purifying process of humanity will be carried on all through the 144,000 years bringing about the highest spiritual, mental and physical development. From the shortest stature to which the human body will be decreased, it will gradually, through this long process of time and culture, be increased once again to the height of 21 cubits or 31 1/2 feet. With the height of the body will be reached the height of spiritual perfection. All, all men and women will once again enjoy the blessings of predominant Sattwa within Nature and roam upon the earth in the Garden of Eden with their vision turned inwards into the soul of things, their body clad with the sky, their hearts filled with ecstasy, their thoughts centered upon God. We all who are now walking the earth, had walked in the last Golden Ago and formed members of that godly fraternity of Adams and Eves and shall do so in the coming Golden Age, unless we develop higher soul-consciousness and, before the end of the present Kali, transfer ourselves to any the upper four spheres or to the highest beyond the universe—Golaka—the abode of Absolute Love, to dwell with our only Lover and Beloved—Krishna.

SECTION XI. MANWANTARA OR THE DELUGE.

The next larger cycle of time is called the Manwantara or the Deluge. When the Divine Cycle has revolved 71 times it brings about a cataclysm. The oceans surge up and cover the entire earth with its waters, even the highest peaks of the Himalayas being submerged, and remain so for the period of 71 Divine Cycles. This world-wide natural catastrophe occurs periodically, owing to more and more increased accumulation of the sins of humanity, who, along with all living beings and vegetation are thus destroyed by submersion. The only man saved is the most virtuous and spiritual man of the time, who becomes the Manoo elect, that is, the spiritual governor of the next Cycle which extends between the time of the reappearance of land after the Deluge to the next Deluge. This period is called Manwantara, the period between two Manooes. The account of the Deluge as given in the Old Testament of the Bible has been taken from minute accounts recorded in the Alatsya (Fish) Purana and the condensed facts about them given in all the Purānas as well as the Mahābhārata. Only, the Bible version is distorted in some particulars.

Since the beginning of the present Kalpa creation, six Manwantaras, each ending with the Deluge, have passed away. We are just now living in the seventh of which twenty-seven Divine Cycles have rolled away and we are now living in the Iron Age of the twenty-eighth. Many millions of years therefore have gone by since the last Flood. Towards the end of the Kali Yuga of the last Manwantara, mankind became filled with the utmost corruption. But there was, according to the Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavat Purana, one man, by the name of King Satyavrata, whom this spirit of corruption failed to touch. He was almost as pure and spiritually powerful as Brahmā, the Creator, while he was possessed of uncommon physical beauty. He was engaged in spiritual austerities and meditation in a holy forest on the top of the Himalayan mountains for many hundred years. One day, while he was sitting in contemplation on the bank of the river Cheerinee, a little fish leapt out of the water into his hands. He threw it back into the river but the fish, to his surprise, spoke and begged the king to protect him from a large fish coming to devour him. Satyavrata out of compassion took the fish into his hands again, went home and placed it in a water-pot. He tended him as his own offspring. The fish gradually grew so big that he had to be taken to a large pond, but after a few years the pond could no more hold the fish, so large had it become. The King wondering at this unprecedented growth suspected the fish to be Vishnoo Himself. The fish begged Satyavrata to put him into the holy Ganges which he did by his Yoga power. In time, however, the fish growing still larger, he had to be taken to the ocean. The King exhibited his yoga-power again by carrying that huge fish to the ocean.

As soon as he was thrown into the sea, the phenomenal Fish smiled and thus addressed the King, "O thou kind one! Thou hast saved and protected me in every

way, but I will leave nothing undone to return this kindness. Now, listen! The time has come for one of the great events of the world. The destruction of the earth is at hand. On the seventh day from this, the earth shall be swallowed up by the waters, from which thou canst not be saved except through me. A large ark shall come to thee into which thou must get with the seven Rishis (Illumined Beings) of the Great Bear who shall help and bear you company. Take thou also all kinds of seeds of all trees, plants, shrubs and creepers, as also pairs of all animals and creeping things on this boat and wait for me. I will soon appear there, bedecked with horns. Do not doubt my words, but do as I tell thee."

The strange Fish then disappeared as Satyavrata said, "So shall it be." He then did just as the Fish had told him. When the ark came, he went aboard with the Seven Rishis of the Great Bear and seeds and animals and waited in anxious contemplation of the Divine Fish which soon appeared as he had promised, bedecked with horns and high as a hillock. He made salutation to him and tied the ark to his horns with a strong heavy rope, whereupon the Fish pulled the ark with great speed and began to play upon the bosom of the ocean.

Then the ocean heaved with huge waves and the waters roared. It all looked as if the ocean was performing a wild dance. The ark was then tossed and whirled about with great force, and soon not a trace of land or sign of any direction was visible. Earth and sky seemed one vast expanse of water under which all men and beasts and birds and vegetation were drowned and destroyed. The Fish and the ark and Satyavrata with the Seven Rishis and the seeds and animals alone existed. The Divine Fish drew and preserved the ark for many years on the surface of the deep.

Long, long time after, when the waters subsided and the highest peak of the Himalayas made itself visible, the Fish drew the ark to it and said in a pleasant voice, addressing the Rishis, "O ye illumined ones! Bind the boat for a while to this mountain-peak," which the Rishis did. In commemoration of this event, this peak of the Himalayas is still called the "Boat-Binding Peak."

When the ark was safely tied, the Fish said again to the Rishis: "I am Brahmā of Brahmā, the Creator. I have taken the form of the Fish to save you all from the Flood. Now this Satyavrata will be known as Vaivaswata Manoo. He will, by my grace and power of his Yoga, create all mobile and immobile beings of the earth, gods and asuras and men." So saying the Fish vanished.

Vaivashwata Manoo, who is also called Shraddhadeva, then sat in meditation and in time, by his Yoga-power, created all the beings and creatures of the earth and celestial planes as he was bidden to do.

This is the shortest sketch of a very long account of the Deluge in the Hindoo Books. The word Manoo has been distorted into the word "Noah" in the Old Testament.

In the distorted version of the Deluge in the Holy Bible, this principal factor of the preservation of Noah and his Ark, the Divine Fish, has not been mentioned out of

ignorance of the detailed facts of the cataclysm. This ignorance is excusable, judging from the fact of the remoteness of the time when the last Flood occurred. What the Bible estimates as 6,000 years the Hindoo Books put down at more than 4,000,000, when Manoo (Noah) was afloat on the waters of the universal inundation. The Divine Fish is an incarnation of Vishnool who is worshipped and prayed to in that form even now in India. When God Himself in Fish-form was the guide and protector of Manoo there was no need of birds being sent out to reconnoitre as to the reappearance of land. It was the Fish that first espied the highest peak of the Himalayas visible above the waters and drew the ark to it and asked Noah and the Seven Rishis to bind that boat to that peak. That peak is still called the Boat-Binding Peak, the Sanscrit word being "Nour-Bandhan" peak. The Bible calls it the Ararat and they are now trying to locate it in Syria and many other places. Even a common sense view of the matter ought to decide in favor of the Himalayas which are ever known as the highest mountains. That the first subsidence of the waters should first uncover a Himalayan peak is only natural to suppose.

With the appointment of a new Manoo are also appointed some highly spiritual souls as gods, as well as the Seven Rishis (illuminated beings) who govern the seven stars of the Great Bear, in the places of the gods and Rishis of the past Alanwantara, whose terms of office extend through the duration of one Manwantara, the cyclic period between two deluges. As every civilized country on the face of the earth is governed by a king and ministers and officers, according to systematic laws and regulations, the three spheres Bhur, Bhuba, Swar are likewise ruled by a king, ministers and officers. The government of the British Dominions may be taken as some sort of example to illustrate the Divine Administration. If we take England as the Swar sphere, Ireland as the Bhuba sphere, India and Canada may stand for the Bhur or Earth sphere. Manoo, governor of the three spheres, can be likened to the King of England, though, unlike the English King, he is invested with Supreme Power; Indra is his Prince Minister. The Seven Rishis of the Great Bear may be called his independent Cabinet Ministers and Advisers but superior to him in wisdom and intelligence. The gods may be compared to Members of Parliament, Secretaries of India and the Colonies and departmental administrators. The Sons of Manoo act like Governor-Generals of India and Canada, etc.

At the beginning of a Kalpa cycle, which is measured by one thousand Divine cycles or a little over 14 Manwantaras, the Manoos, Rishis and gods of all the 14 Manwantaras are selected beforehand. We are now living in the Seventh Manwantara. Shrāddhadeva, called also Vaivaswata, is our Manoo. The Saints Kāsyapa, Atri, Vasistha, Viswāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Bharadwāja are the seven Rishis; Purandar is the present Indra. The Manoos, the Rishis, the Indras are all named for the coming seven Manwantaras of the present Kalpa in the Shāstras.

The prevalent belief among Western Orientalists is that Manoo was a man who was born a few hundred years ago and died a natural death after writing his law

institutes for The Hindoos. A more erroneous idea could not exist from the Hindoo point of view. Manoo, being the spiritual administrator of the three worlds, has to live all through his term of office, which extends through 71 Divine cycles of which we are living in the 28th. Every Manoo incarnates himself as a Rishi towards the end of every Golden Age and compiles his law, and institutes for the benefit of humanity, while the seven Rishis incarnate among men at the end of each Kali Yuga to reveal the truths of the Vedas which are forgotten and lost before that time.

SECTION XII. THE KALPA CYCLE.

When the Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, forming the Divine Cycle, have revolved for 1,000 times they complete a still larger cycle than the Manwantara, called the Kalpa. As each Manwantara is wound up with a Deluge, each Kalpa brings about a still greater disastrous event, that of the destruction of the lower three spheres of the universe, the Bhur, Bhuba and Swar. The description given of this great cyclic event in the Purānas as well as in the Mahābhārata, especially by the Immortal Mārkaṇḍeya who has seen it many times, are simply appalling to the imagination of puny man.

As I have already said it is only the excessive accumulation of human sins (Tama-life) that causes these natural catastrophies. The sum of sins which causes the Kalpa dissolution is many times greater than that which is the cause of the Flood. Human sins, however, are the immediate cause. The real or latent cause is to be found in the operations of the Cardinal Attributes of Nature. Sattwa and Rāja are absolutely subdued by Tama, which then growing more and more intense bursts into a flame out of the friction of its own forces. This conflagration first manifests itself through etheric matter in the shape of seven suns suddenly appearing in the heavens and with their combined heat burning down the three spheres into ashes. This is followed by the appearance of strange clouds which then burst and deluge the ash-turned earth. The ash, in process of time, is absorbed by the water; then the air, turned into violent winds, absorbs the water; and then, when the air has been absorbed by ether (Akāsh), the destruction of the three spheres is completed.

The Immortal Mārkaṇḍeya described this Pralaya (Dissolution) five thousand years ago to King Yudhisthira in the presence of Krishna and the assembled sages in the Kāmyak Forest. The following is a summary of his statement:

"O King! At the end the Kali Yuga (previous to this Pralaya), when the earthly days of all beings have come to an end, no rains will fall on earth for many successive years in consequence of which all beings on earth will die, owing to unbearable heat and hunger caused by drought and famine. Then will appear simultaneously in the heavens seven suns which will draw all the waters from all seas and rivers. Whether dry or wet, whatever grass or wood there is on earth, will be reduced to tinder. Then will spring up the Fire, called Samvartak, which, aided by the wind, will attack the sun-absorbed earth and, piercing its surface, will burn all there is in its bowels. Indeed, by this wind-helped Samvartak Fire all created beings from the gods to

creeping things and all that now exists in the three worlds will be destroyed and transformed into one huge heap of ashes.

"Then will appear in the firmament wonderful-looking, lightening-bedecked clouds, arrayed as garlanded rows of elephants. These clouds are, some of them, of the color of the blue lotus, some of the color of the Koomood flower, some of the color of the golden heart of the lotus, some yellow, some green, some speckled gray, like the color of the crow's egg, some colored like lotus leaves, some are light brown, others look like large cities, others like hordes of elephants, others like the color of eye-cosmetics, others shaped like crocodiles. These mysterious-looking, deep-sounding rain-clouds, sent by God, spreading themselves over the sky, will send down rains in a continuous stream, like watery pillars descending from above, inundating all the ash-heaped mountains and valleys, and extinguish the fearful Samvartak Fire.

"O King of the Pandus! Thus, after these rains have fallen continuously for twelve years, the waters of the seas will rise in a flood and cover the earth, at which, the still solid cohesiveness of her mountains giving way, the earth will sink to the bottom of the sea. Then the clouds, driven by the powerful winds in all directions, will suddenly disappear. Then he of the Lotus-Abode and Lotus-born, the primeval god, Brahmā, drinking in the winds and the air, will fall into sleep at the close of his day."

The lower three spheres—Bhur, Bhuba and Swar—are thus dissolved and there is nothing in their place but one vast expanse of water. The upper four spheres, Mahar, Jana, Tapa and Satya or Brahmā, remain intact. The dwellers of the Mahar Loka, however, unable to bear the heat of the Samvartak Fire during the earth's destruction, leave it and go up to the Jana to live there during the duration of the Pralaya.

Now, the question may be asked, why these four upper heavens are not destroyed, and how can there be an ocean of water when the Water Element is destroyed along with the other Elements?

The answer is very interesting and instructive. There are two kinds or states of these Five Elements—Ether, Air, Fire, Water, Earth. One may be called Pure and the other Mixed. The Pure state of an Element means wholly unmixed by even the least touch or tinge of the other four elements. A mixed Element is made up of half part of one Element mixed with one-eighth part of each of the other four Elements. The Bhur, Bhuba and Swar are made of these five Mixed Elements which being destroyed by this Kalpa Pralaya, the three spheres are necessarily destroyed too. The Upper four spheres are made of the Unmixed Elements and hence they survive the Kalpa dissolution of the Mixed Elements. It is needless to say that dwellers of these upper realms are possessed of a physical body made of these Five Pure Elements, and in the highest realms the dwellers have no physical bodies at all and therefore no elements in their make-up. The bodies of some of them are formed of the Five Finest essences of the Elements—Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell; and of others, the highest beings in the Brahmā Loka, of nothing but Consciousness and Ego and Ensouled Mind.

The water of the Watery Expanse, into which the lower three spheres are reduced by the Kalpa Pralaya, is this Unmixed Pure Water, which is invisible to our ordinary physical eye. The world is indebted to the Immortal Mārkaṇḍeya for a description of what remains after this Kalpa dissolution. Blessed, then, with the finest and purest Element-body, he alone hovers over this vast Watery Expanse. His experiences are recorded in that History of the Universe, the Mahābhārata, of which here are a few details:

Said Mārkaṇḍeya: "O King! In this, time of the Kalpa Pralaya, when all gods, asuras, elements, demons, men, animals, trees and the firmament, etc., all, all the mobile and immobile beings and objects, will be dissolved into one vast ocean, I alone will hover over that endless expanse of water and become sad-hearted on viewing this general destruction. After floating on it for a very long period of time I will feel extremely exhausted. Then, shortly after, a huge tree in the midst of that one-ocean will attract my eye. O King! Resting on the spreading boughs of that tree I will see seated on a couch of glory a lotus-eyed Boy with a face radiant like the light of the full moon. Instantly on seeing him I shall be extremely astonished and will say within myself 'How wonderful! Everything has been destroyed, how then is this boy resting here?' O Great King! Although I am blessed with the knowledge of the past, present and future, I shall fail to know who that child may be.

"Then that lotus-eyed Boy will thus speak to me in the sweetest voice: 'O Mārkaṇḍeya! I know thee. Thou art become very weary and wishing for rest. Therefore do thou enter my body and live there as long as thou mayest desire. I have been very pleased with thee.' O King! on hearing these words of the Boy I will be filled with the spirit of indifference to my manhood and long life, at which suddenly that Boy will open his mouth, and I will then enter into that mouth through some divine means.

"O Great King! Through his mouth I shall enter his belly and to my astonishment, shall see within him this whole earth of many kingdoms and cities, rivers, mountains, seas, the blue heavens bedecked with the sun and the moon, and the many forests. There I shall find Brāhmans engaged in various religious ceremonies, the Kshatriyas in ruling to the satisfaction of all other castes, the Vaishyas in their usual vocation of agriculture, and the Sudras in rendering loving sacrifices to the Brāhmans; lions and tigers, and all the gods, angels and serial beings are living peacefully in their respective spheres. In fact, all that existed before I shall find existing within the belly of that Great Soul.

"O King! Thus, having seen the whole world within that Boy, I will travel for many thousand years, like one in a dream, within that world and in trying to find out its limit will rush in all directions but will not succeed in doing so. Then disappointment will turn my thoughts to that beautiful Boy again, and, with all the concentrated force in my body, mind and speech, I will then ask for his protection and

grace. At this I will be carried, by a violent wind as it were, through his mouth out of his body and I will find him still sitting under that tree.

"The Boy will then ask me with delighted heart and smiling face, 'O my good Rishi Mārkaṇḍeya! Thou didst become very tired floating on these waters for such a long time. Have you now been well refreshed by living within my body?'

"Then I will behold my soul freed from all bondage by the illumination which will enter me with the Boy's words. And placing his crimson Feet on my head I will address him thus with folded hands and humility, 'How lucky I am! To-day I have beheld the Lotus-eyed God of Gods, the Soul of All Things! O God! I have become very curious to know Thee and this Thy wonderful Māyā (Illusion). Entering Thy belly through Thy mouth, I have seen the whole world existing there. O Lord! it was through Thy grace that I did not lose my memory, and it is through Thy will that I have now come out of Thy body. O Lotus-eyed! I have become very desirous to know Thee. Why art Thou resting here in the form of a Boy after having devoured the whole world? How is it that this whole world is now dwelling in Thy body? How much longer will Thou rest here? O Lord of Gods! These subjects are great and unthinkable, and so I beg to hear from Thee their detailed explanations.'

"The God of the Gods, after consoling me, on the last occasion, began to answer my questions. He said:

"O Brāhman! Even the gods have failed to know the mysteries of my creation. I will tell thee of it only to please thee. O Rishi! Thy wonderful devotion to thy father and to Me and to spiritual celibacy have won thee this grace; I have appeared before thy vision. In time past I called water by the term "Nār" This Nār is ever my seat, hence I am called Nārāyan. I am the First Cause. I am Eternal, Inexhaustible, the Creator and Destroyer of all that exists. I am all Wealth, I am Death, I am Shiva. Fire is in my mouth, the earth is my feet, the sun is my two eyes, the Celestial Regions are my head, the sky and the cardinal points are my two ears. Space and Eternity are my body, the winds my mind.

"All sacred ceremonies are performed to please Me. All the Vedas come out of and enter into Me. The peace-loving, mind-disciplined, enquiring, soul's-mystery-knowing Brāhmins contemplate and worship Me alone. I am the Fire called Samvartak, I am the Samvartak Winds, and it is I who am the Seven Suns that rise and shine in Pralaya. The stars that thou seest now in the firmament are the pores of my body, the sky is my raiment, the seas my seat and abode. It is I who have divided them as they are.

"Men are born, are overwhelmed by My Māyā and become enterprising through my Law, never through their own desire. Those Brāhmins who thoroughly study the Vedas, perform many spiritual sacrifices, bring peace to their souls and vanquish anger; it is they who attain to Me. Those persons who are addicted to bad actions, are swayed by greed, are misers, crooked-minded and void of soul-culture can

never reach Me. The paths of Yoga are as easy for pure souls to tread as they are uncertain to the wicked and the foolish.

"Whenever religion suffers from revolution and vice triumphs over virtue, I create myself and walk the earth and set things right. Whenever are born on the earth the selfish and envious Asuras and Demons so powerful that even the gods cannot destroy them, I in the form of man take birth in the family of pious men and bring peace to the world again by subduing them. I am white-complexioned in the Satya Yuga, yellow in the Tretā, red in the Dwāpar and dark in the Kali. At the end of each great cycle it is I who destroy every thing. I am the Three Paths, the Soul of the Universe, Giver of all Happiness, Superior to All, All-Pervading, the Endless and the All-Powerful.

"At the last Kali Yuga of each Kalpa I spread my illusion upon all beings and enter into my trance-state. When old, old Brahmā, transformed into a child, goes to sleep and keeps sleeping, I rest here on the waters until he is awakened. Now, go thou about on the waters in restful spirit until that time, when I alone will create again earth and sky and light, air and water, and all bodies.'

"So saying, O King, that wonderful Being vanished from my view. Then by and by this world was created again. Thus in the last Kalpa Pralaya did I witness this wonderful event. The Lotus-Eyed Diety I then saw, you brothers have now established blood relations with Him, this Krishna. It is through His grace that I have obtained uninterrupted memory, become so long-lived and endowed with the boon of dying at my will. This Krishna who is now sitting before us all, this Krishna present here, who is born in the line of the Vrishnis, is just now merely playing on His earth. But it is He, this Krishna, who is the Ancient Person, the Lord, the Unthinkable Soul, the Creator, the Destroyer, the Eternal and the Master of All! I have been able to remember all these facts only through the inspiration of His presence here. He is the Mother and Father of all beings: do you all take His Refuge."

Krishna has been called Nārāyan here by Mārkaṇḍeya, because Nārāyan, the Fourth Form-manifestation of Krishna in the unfoldment of creation, is generally known as the Supreme Diety—Krishna. Nārāyan, as I have said before this, is Aniruddha out of whose navel springs the seed-bud Lotus with Brahmā, the operating Creator of the details Creation.

SECTION XIII. NATURAL DISSOLUTION.

What is popularly known as Universal Destruction, is termed in the Hindoo Scriptures "Prākritic Pratisanchar" or Natural Retrogression, which means Natural Dissolution. This marks the close of the Greatest Cycle of Time. It is the End of Time, the End of Creation. It is the Maha Pralaya. It involves the annihilation of the Universe, in one sense, because after its occurrence none of the Principles, except the Ultimate, exists. "In one sense" I say advisedly, for although the Manifest universe becomes non-existent, its latent spiritual impressions, forming its germ, are carried by the Three Cardinal Attributes into the Ultimate Principle, Love—Krishna—and preserved unconsciously, even during their rest in Krishna, in a state of equilibrium. It is out of this Mystic Ideation that, in the event of the inequilibrium of the Attributes, a fresh creation springs into existence. There is no such thing as destruction in the law of Nature. Nothing is destroyed totally; all forms of destruction are but phases of transmutation, from gross manifestation into fine, from fine into finer, from finer into finest, from finest into mystic ideation which belongs to the realm of absolute spirituality.

The Hindoo doctrine in regard to the process of creation is the unfoldment of the Twenty-three Principles from the *reflection* of the One, the manifestation into Many and the Diverse of the Mystic Energy of the One Unchangeable Absolute. This Mystic Energy unrolls its many and diverse phases and forces in creation and incessantly throughout its duration. "Prākritic" means "Natural" from "Prakriti," Nature. "Pratisanchar" is "Prati" and "sanchar"; "Prati" means backward, and "sanchar" means the act of moving, motion. The whole word therefore means "moving backward." Prākritic Pratisanchar, therefore, is the moving backward of the Unfolded Principles of Existence (Nature) into its One Source, out of which they originally spring. This backward motion of Variety into Unity is caused by the extreme action of intense Tama from which the following natural reaction puts the forces of the Three Cardinal Attributes into equilibrium. This equilibrium is the Unmanifest (Avyakta—unexpressed) state of Nature, and the inequilibrium brings about the Manifest state, the gross form of which is the universe. This action of Natural Dissolution has also its reaction. It reacts into a fresh Creation.

The symptoms which manifest themselves previous to the occurrence of this universal destruction are almost the same as those before the Kalpa Pralaya. Only, the degeneration of human society develops worse phases which are followed by intense heat, owing to the suspension of rains for years and years together, resulting in the death of all moving and breathing beings. Then appear in the heavens twelve suns, instead of seven as in the Kalpa Pralaya, which give birth to the Samvartak Fire. The fire is followed by the appearance of the Samvartak Clouds, which deluge the earth with continuous rains for years; the deluge is followed by the winds, etc.

But the main difference lies in the absolutely destructive power of these Elemental agents. When the suns and the fire have done their work, the black surface of the earth looks like the back of a tortoise. Then the water in which it is submerged absorbs the very attribute of Earth—Smell—along with its substance which then becomes absolutely nonexistent and transformed into water. The water is then absorbed by Fire (heat) with its attribute—Taste—so that water becomes absolutely non-existent and is turned into Fire. The volume of Fire is then so increased that it burns the suns themselves, so that all the heavens, filled with all-pervading flames, burn on until everything in them is destroyed. Then the air devours the Fire with its attribute—Form—so that there remains nothing visible to the eye. The winds then move about with all their force in the Akās. Then Akās (Ether) absorbs the Air with its attribute—Touch—so that nothing remains which can be felt. Then Akās itself becomes unmanifest, the Universal Mind having absorbed its attribute—Sound—which originally sprang from it to create Akās (Ether). This is called the dissolution of the gross form of the Universe.

The dissolution of the fine (subtle) form begins with the Moon, the presiding deity of the Mind, absorbing the Mind with its attribute —the power of Willing and Non-Willing, which power with all its associations is then centered in the Moon. After a long time the Mind, centralized in the Moon, brings about the poise in its vibratory volition (the cause of material desires). This will-control results in the Moon-centered Mind being absorbed by its original Belief in the Oneness of Nature and Brahm (Divine Essence). The Belief in this Unity (Ego) is then absorbed by Universal Consciousness, and Universal Consciousness with its attribute of the Power of Decision is absorbed by Absolute Being (one of the Three Attributes of Para-Brahm). Then Wisdom (another of the Three Attributes, also called Intelligence or Truth) absorbs this Absolute Being. Then that all-impregnated Wisdom enters the Unmanifest Soul—Absolute Love—KRISHNA.

SECTION XIV. MODERN SCIENTIFIC TESTIMONY.

A recent discovery of modern science has not only thrown the clearest light upon this Hindoo doctrine of the unity and composition of the universe, but has fully proved its correctness. This is the first indirect investigation of Western material science into the realm of the subjective side of creation. The author of this discovery, by strange irony of Fate, is a Hindoo, though educated and trained in scientific knowledge in England, under English teachers of Science. He is now a scientific celebrity among Western scientific celebrities of the day; and if the work of his tested discovery be rightly estimated, he ought to be classed with the highest of them all. His name is Professor Jagadis Chunder Bose, D. Sc., Professor of Science in the Calcutta University.

Prof. Bose's discovery, now embodied in book-form and entitled "Response in the Living and the Non-Living," marks a new epoch in the advancement of modern science. It has been accepted by all scientific authorities, after the Professor had demonstrated it by experiments before a large number of scientific people in London, and notably by Lord Kelvin.

Armed with the demonstrated facts of this discovery. Professor Bose maintains that the true test of the existence of life in any form of matter is its sensitiveness to external stimulus. According to this test he proves conclusively that no essential difference exists between animals and metals or vegetables. He has shown by scientific experiments that a bar of iron is not only as irritable and sensitive as a human body, but that it can be killed or poisoned in the same way as a human body can be killed or poisoned. According to his discovery, life pervades every object and part of Nature; and only some of these parts or objects can be said to be in a dead state, which means they can be deprived of their sensitiveness to external stimulus.

If any part of our body is pinched, the nerve which connects that part with the brain, running all along, sends an electric current to the brain, vibrating under the pinch. The brain alone feels the pain inflicted upon any part of our body, says modern science; and it is proved by the fact that no pain is felt by us if our brain is deadened by chloroform.

The galvanometer is a well-known and very delicate scientific instrument for detecting the presence of electric currents; it has a needle on a pivot, and the faintest electric current will cause a deflection of this needle. If at any intervening part of the electric current-bearing nerve in the human body the galvanometer be attached, and the end of the nerve pinched or otherwise irritated, then immediately the needle of the galvanometer will deflect, thus showing that the irritation of the nerve causes a current like that of electricity to be sent along it. This fact is now very well known to scientists, and Prof. Bose's investigations are based upon this well-known scientific fact.

With a view to ascertaining whether or not matter which has hitherto been known as non-living could be proved so under the test of the galvanometer, the Professor attached the instrument to bars of different metals, with startling contrary results. The Professor found that all metals show visible signs of sensitiveness when twisted or tapped. The greater the irritation the greater the visible signs of sensitiveness; even every single peculiarity in the irritability of animal matter is exactly reproduced in the case of metal. As, for instance, when the sensitiveness of a muscle or a nerve of an animal wears off after a time, under repeated irritation, it begins to show signs of fatigue, the deflection of the needle of the galvanometer becoming more and more feeble; the Professor found that metals would betray exactly the same signs of fatigue under repeated irritation. Again, after a short rest, the signs of fatigue were found to disappear in animal muscle and in metal alike, their sensitiveness being fully restored. This last fact is known to many of us who constantly use a razor and find it losing its keen edge and growing duller and duller, despite vigorous stropping, and spontaneously recovering its original keenness by being laid aside for a few days.

Professor Bose's process of registering the deflections of the needle of the galvanometer is this: By a mechanical device the point of the needle is photographed on paper, which is moved along at a constant rate, the needle's point tracing out a series of zig-zag lines on the paper, when the needle is oscillated by an electric current. The *width* of the zig-zags corresponds to the *amount* of the deflection of the needle, therefore the *strength* of the electric current. If there be no current, and consequently no deflection of the needle, its point will remain stationary and merely trace a straight line on the moving paper.

This book of Prof. Bose's, "Response in the Living and the Non-Living," is full of still more wonderful revelations. He has found and shown, to the satisfaction of European scientists through experiments, that metals do not only go to sleep, but can be poisoned and killed like human beings and animals. Like an unused animal muscle showing signs of sluggishness and appearing to be in a kind of torpor, then gradually seeming to waken up under irritation, and finally returning to full activity, Professor Bose proves that metals behave in exactly the same way and process of gradation. He also proves that the effects of extreme cold and extreme heat produce exactly similar conditions in both animals and metals.

But men or animals can be drugged and made drunk. Can metals likewise be drugged and made drunk? Yes, says Prof. Bose, and he proves it absolutely. He proves that metals show the same increase of irritability under the influence of stimulants and narcotics as the human body. Moreover, even as different animals are affected differently by the same dose of a stimulant, so also are different metals. Under the influence of carbonate of sodium, irritability of platinum is increased threefold, while the irritability of tin is less.

Still more significant is the action of anaesthetics and narcotics. Under their action the sensitiveness of metals can be reduced to any desired degree, exactly as is the case of human beings. A more striking parallel between animal matter and metals is established by Prof. Bose. The action of some narcotics on the human frame is known to be paradoxical under certain conditions. While a large dose of opium, for instance, decreases the sensitiveness of the human body, a very minute dose has exactly the opposite effect, that is to say, acts as a stimulant. This anomaly has been found by Prof. Bose to have a parallel in metals, tin being found to show that its sensitiveness is increased half as much again by being treated with a minute dose of potash (3 parts in 100), but the sensitiveness begins to decrease when the dose is increased.

Now the question suggests itself that if metals are as much alive as animals, then they must also be as liable to die as animals. Prof. Bose has found this to be a fact, too. Metals not only die; but they can be poisoned and revived, and poisoned and killed.

In order to find out these facts, Prof. Bose took a piece of metal which showed full vigor of sensitiveness and so was considered healthy, and treated it with a moderate dose of oxalic acid, which is a powerful poison. The needle of the galvanometer instantly indicated a spasmodic flutter; the sensitiveness of the metal more and more feeble, till it seemed almost to die away. At this stage, a powerful antidote being applied, slowly and gradually the sensitiveness began to revive, and in time became as active as when the metal was not poisoned. The treatment of another piece of healthy metal with a strong dose of the same poison resulted in violent spasms, with rapid enfeeblement of sensitiveness, which soon vanished altogether. After a proper interval the antidote was tried in vain; the piece of metal was killed forever. The results of experiments with different metals and different poisons were the same; but all poisons not being alike in their action upon animal matter, the same is true of their action on metal, absolutely and undoubtedly. In some cases, however, after all traces of poison had been removed by the counteracting influence of stimulating acids, the poisoned metal was eventually reanimated; which meant that the metal was not really killed, but was merely in a state of suspended animation. The most striking feature of the discovery in this connection is, that the very poison which kills both animal and metal is itself endowed with life, which shows itself by indications of irritability and sensitiveness, and which can itself be killed.

Here is another significant point in regard to the operation of poison on both an animal and a metal. In the case of an animal the operation is twofold; first, the actual death process, lasting from a few minutes to several hours; secondly, the purely nervous effect which manifests itself in the form of spasms, paralysis or other symptoms, and which is developed much sooner, sometimes instantaneously. Prof. Bose has discovered the same phenomenon in metal. Under the effect of some

powerful poisons there was instantaneous spasm shooting through the metal long before the corrosive action of the acid could penetrate beyond the surface.

Professor Bose has proved in his book that all these phenomena with every single variation exist as much in the vegetable kingdom as in the animal and mineral. Indeed, the three kingdoms of matter, the animal, the vegetable and the mineral, are, says the Professor, but one in essence and the physiological distinction between so-called organic and inorganic matter, of which man and metal are but types, is based upon a false and unscientific assumption. Prof. Bose dedicates his book to his countrymen, the Hindoos, because, he says, his discovery is a discovery made millions of years ago by the Hindoo sages, who proclaimed the unity of the universe in essence and construction, as well as in the laws that govern it.

SECTION XV. SCIENCE UPHOLDS SHASTRAS.

Now let us consider the main points of this great epoch-making scientific discovery by the light of the truths of Nature and the laws of matter discovered countless ages ago by the illuminated sages of India, and handed down through the corridors of time. Every discovery of modern science has tended to establish the principles of Hindoo religion and philosophy, by furnishing practical testimony to what were so long considered as their mystic teachings. But this discovery of Prof. Bose's is an unexpected stumble of a purely objective method of investigation upon the truths and laws of the subjective realm. The evidence which Prof. Bose's experiments afford is of course indirect; but this indirect evidence is startlingly direct in its pointed and unmistakable suggestions. It is therefore most opportune at the present moment, when the human mind the world over is striving, impelled by a natural hunger, to get at the facts back of the physical shroud of the universe.

The Hindoo sages say that the universe is one whole, huge being, of which the high heavens are the head, the sun and the moon the eyes, space the body, and the earth the feet. Every inch, nay, every point, of this universe-body is alive as a healthy human body. The composing principles of this body are twenty-four, as I have already explained. These twenty-four principles are therefore present in every atom of it, in every speck of earth, the last principle in creation. This speck or molecule of earth has, however, no opening for any of its composing principles; whereas vegetable and animal life-forms have many of these passages of their composing principles more or less open. As a tortoise puts forth its body out of its shell and again draws that body into it, so out of Love the twenty-three principles are projected, and drawn, in the fullness of time, back into its bosom again. This reaction or journey of the universe back to its source is called universal destruction, or dissolution, or disintegration. This universal dissolution takes place when the Three Cardinal Attributes of creation, out of which all the composing principles have sprung, fall into equilibrium; in other words, become equal in power or tension. This loss of tensity or equipoise in the power of the Cardinal Attributes, viz., Sattwa (Illumination), Rāja (Activity or Motion), and Tama (Obscuration), results in the loss of their individuality, and their transformation into Pure Illumination. By pure illumination is meant unmixed illumination; that is to say, absolute illumination, having no tendency or trace in it of being disturbed into obscuration. In short, Sattwa, Rāja and Tama are each of them mixed with the other two, its own quality being predominant in it. Their inequality of power brings them forth into and sustains their being. The moment this power becomes equal and they lose their existence, the Absolute Illumination, co-existent with Absolute Love and Absolute Being out of which they sprung, alone remains.

This equipoise of the cardinal cosmic attributes takes place at intervals of time, the dimension of which staggers the human mind to imagine. But while the return-

journey of the universe as a whole takes place once in an indefinitely long period of time, the molecules of earth, as soon as they are created, have a tendency to go back to their original source. But the molecule's journey backward to Love is made by a very circuitous path. That path leads through the process of opening one by one the passages of its composing principles. By passages is meant channels of communication and sympathy with the main laws and vibrations of the working of the universe.

The first step the molecule takes, in this return-journey, is by opening the passage of one principle, the sense of feeling, and becoming a blade of grass. A blade of grass has only one sense opened, the sense of touch, by which it draws juice from the earth for its sustenance. After being reborn thousands of times as a blade of grass, it draws the magnetism from the different life-forms in Nature, which helps it to develop into a shrub. And then, after thousands of shrub-lives, it develops into a plant, and then into tree-life, in which it puts forth flowers and fruits. And, finally, drawing in more and more magnetism and vibrations from the animal world, it develops into an animal itself. At first it is but an animalcule, and then a worm. As a worm it has opened more passages, the passage of tasting (the palate), the passage of gripping (with the mouth), the passage of moving (the feet), the passages of excreting and generating, the passage of seeing (the eye), the passage of smelling, the passage of hearing, etc. Through thousands of rebirths in each animal form it is promoted into higher and higher animal forms, in which more and more passages of its composing principles are opened. The last forms of lower animals it takes are those of monkeys and apes, the forms just before developing into human form. In these ape forms of life it opens all principles except four; viz., Mind, Ego, Intellect and Love. However intelligent a monkey or a dog or any other animal may be or seem to be, the Mind principle is not yet open in it. All its actions are prompted by instinct, which is the natural impulse of the indirect influence of the mind on the verge of being opened, as well as of automatic memory of past experiences in this and previous existences, the impressions of which are in their very blood. With the opening of the Mind principle begins the human form. It may be the most savage man, but it is human. He can think, is self-conscious, and acts with reasoned decision, however crude or erroneous; because with the opening of the Mind there are simultaneously opened the Ego and the Intellect, they being almost on principle in three.

After these explanations of the composition, construction, and transformation of matter, let us go back to unopened matter, in order to explain the mysteries of Professor Bose's discoveries by the aid of the galvanometer. The Professor has discovered that the application of this delicate instrument reveals the fact that matter which has hitherto been considered non-living is very much alive indeed, as fully alive as living animals are, because they respond to external stimulus as fully as any living being. According to Hindoo definition and idea of construction and composition of matter, it is only natural that this should be so. To the Hindoo sage this

is not at all a wonder. Love, Consciousness, Ego, Mind, the ten senses, the five fine essences and the five gross forms of matter, called elements, are as much present in minerals, which are but formations of earth, as in animals. A lump of earth, or a piece of metal, or a vegetable, cannot give visible, direct response to external stimulus, because they have no openings (open physical organs) through which to manifest it. If you can by any means feel the vibrations caused by such stimulus within them, then only can you find the proof of the uniform composition and construction of all forms of matter in this one whole living universe. The galvanometer serves this purpose, and hence the Hindoo idea stands to-day as a demonstrated fact.

Let us analyze the tests and proofs of the galvanometer a little more closely, and understand them according to the Hindoo doctrine of the construction and organization of what is called organic or inorganic matter. The Hindoo doctrine does not recognize the nerve or the brain as any of the principles which compose what is called the living body. The nerve is but a mere physical vehicle of the sensation of the mind (which includes the Ego and the Intellect, the part of universal consciousness in individual souls), and the brain is the physical centre of these physical channels of the mind's sensation and experiences. The mind feels the sensation of the external stimulus through its channels, the five cognizing senses, and the mind's sensations are carried through the nerves to the brain. This is in regard to animal life, which has brains and nerves formed fully or partially. The vegetables and minerals have neither brains nor nerves. How, then, do they show the same irritation as animals do to external stimulus, as shown by the galvanometer?

The answer is simple. Because they have the psychic vehicles, the five cognizing senses, by which to convey the sensation of the external stimulus to the mind, and therefore they need no physical brain or nerve. Only, having no physical openings, they cannot manifest the effect of those sensations outside themselves, as animals do; and only an instrument, like the galvanometer, is able to detect the sensations and indicate them by the deflection of its needle. Mineral and vegetable matter having all the twenty-four principles in them, have the mind and the senses, too. Only, they are in a shut-up, undeveloped state, and perform their undeveloped, crude functions like an unconscious mechanism.

It is through the senses that sensations are perceived; and had not the senses been present within a piece of metal or a vegetable, there would be no sensation in it, and therefore the galvanometer would have been useless in its application and results, because, there being no sensation, there would be no deflection of the needle. Professor Bose's experiments conclusively prove not only the unity, but the uniform composition and construction of the whole universe; that all its composing principles are present everywhere; that in some phases they are in a latent and in others in manifest state. The tests of the galvanometer also prove that what is true of the whole universe is true of a particle of earth; that the whole universe is one whole living mass, like a single living being, and that every molecule of its composition is a

universe in embryo; because every molecule is instinct with all the forces and properties of the twenty-four principles, which are the materials as well as the attributes of the cosmos.

SECTION XVI. PHYSICAL AND ASTRAL BODIES.

It is the ignorance of the knowledge of the constitution of the universal and human bodies that forms one of the chief obstacles of a correct study of the laws operating behind external Nature. It is the general belief of modern humanity that the human body is made up of flesh and blood alone. This is true so far as the physical body is concerned. But there is another body within us finer than the physical which is the real body and of which the physical body is the outer encasement. This real body is called the Astral Body. The whole human body is like a clock of which the physical covering is its case and the astral body its works. As the mechanical part of a clock is the real clock and its case with its dial and hands forms its covering by which it indicates its working, so the astral body is the mechanical part of the human body and the physical is its case through which it indicates its operations. Though far from perfect, the analogy is very suggestive. For instance, the mechanical part of the clock cannot serve its purpose without the aid of the case, dial and hands. The astral body likewise cannot be of any use without the co-operation of the physical body.

The mechanism of the astral body is composed of eighteen Principles, viz., Consciousness (Intellect), Ego, Mind, the Ten Senses: the Powers of Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, Feeling, Speaking, Holding, Moving, Excreting and Generating; and the five attributes of the Elements: Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell. These Principles work through their counterpart-organs of the physical body which is composed of the five remaining Principles, viz., the Five Elements—Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth.

Now let us see how the physical body is composed of the five Elements. The vigor of our father and the blood of our mother, of which our physical body is made, are formations of assimilated food. Every kind of foodstuff, vegetable or animal, is but condensed form of earth's juice; earth-juice is earth. Now Earth is composed only of its five attributes: Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell, the first four of which compose Water, the first three compose Fire, the first two Air, and the first, Sound, is the Attribute of Ether (Akās). Therefore the other four Elements are present in earth on account of their respective attributes being contained in it. Our physical body, therefore, being made of formations of Earth, is composed of the Five Elements.

The material of the physical body is supplied by our parents and the astral body we supply ourselves. The astral body is our permanent body. It puts on new flesh-garments from time to time. When it slips into a new flesh-garment it is called birth; when it slips out of it, it is called death. But really the astral body lives on forever and ever and never ceases to exist unless we find the means and take measures to destroy it. The extinction the astral body is brought about by the mind's absolute dissociation

from the bondage and influence of matter and material ideas, and absorption into the Divine Essence, Mukti.

The earth and the visible sky form the physical body of the Universe and the upper six spheres form its astral body which includes still subtler bodies. This means that both the universal and the human bodies are constructed on the same principle. Both are formed of seven bodies, encased like a sheath within a sheath. These are called the Food-made (physical) body, the Vital body, the Mental (or Astral) body, the Psychic body, the Wisdom (or Causal) body, the Blissful body and the Soul body.

SECTION XVII. KARMA.

The Universe is one whole manifestation of Cause and Effect. All Nature is manifested and materialized forces of Action and Reaction. The Doctrine of Karma is based upon the natural law by which action produces reaction, the law of cause and effect. It holds that every action is the cause of every reaction as well as the effect of the action which is its producing cause. The doctrine of Reincarnation specifies the different physical forms in which groups of accumulated causes of reaction manifest themselves in Nature. The laws of Karma are the regulated blendings of the subtle forces of the finer principles of Nature which, operating from within, shape these outer physical forms.

Karma begins with the creation of the Universe, and Creation begins with the loss of equilibrium of the three Cardinal Attributes while dwelling in a quiescent state in Absolute Love—Krishna. This inequilibrium develops the germ of the Past Universe, which the Attributes hold within them, and manifests itself as a New Universe—a new Creation. The word Karma is derived from the Sanscrit root Kri, to act. Karma means action. Action means the motion of the operating forces of Nature. The Karma of the past Creations, stored up as ideation within the even forces of the Attributes, works itself out in the form and phases of a new Creation. Every succeeding Creation therefore is the reactive result of all previous creations. This reaction of the accumulated action-potencies of the past creations produces the uniform dimensions and the principal features of the cycles, so that the history of every cycle, from the smallest to the largest, repeats itself in its chief points in naturally regulated succession.

As in the great universe, so in its epitome, man. The microcosm is ruled by the same laws as the macrocosm, the laws of cause and effect, of action and reaction. Man is the conscious embodiment of the blended forces of his past actions, actions of previous conscious embodiments born of the forces of still more previous embodiments.

Action proceeds from thought. Thought is the source and spring of action. No action is possible without its producing cause, thought, which is a phase of the mind's volition. All our thoughts are impressed on the mind, the moment they form themselves, in condensed pictures. The more powerful a thought, the deeper the impression on the mind. Weak, undeveloped thoughts make superficial impressions and are liable to wear off. The impression of a powerful thought is likewise rubbed off by the force of a strong counter-thought. An angry thought, for instance, prompts us to do a bad action, but before it is reduced to action, our reason sometimes intervenes, argues against it, convinces us of its error which induces repentance. The stronger the counter-thought of repentance, the more quickly and effectively it rubs off the impression. But if the thought is reduced to action, its impression is deep and

enduring, and requires the aid of absolutely sincere, burning repentance to destroy that impression.

These thought-impressions on the mind are called seeds of Karma. They are exactly like seeds of trees in their potencies and operations. As a seed of a tree, when planted in the soil, germinates, grows, flowers and bears fruit, so does a Karma-impression germinate, grow, flower and bear fruit. As the germ of a seed, in process of development, produces the events called sprouting, putting forth leaves and branches, flowering and fruiting, so, a man's mental thought-impressions of previous lives, in almost the self-same way, sprout, put forth leaves and branches, flower and fruit in the shape of events, inside and outside of him. The thought-impressions are reflected upon the aura. "Aurā" is a Sanscrit word, its transliterated form being "Arā," from "Ar" which means the spoke of a wheel. "Arā" means full of spoke-like shoots of radiance from any centre. This centre of our aura is our mind. Aura, therefore, is the radiance of, the mind which permeates and envelopes our body in an oval shape and generally extends one cubit outside of our body. The aura and reflections of these thought-impressions on the aura are visible only to the spiritual and psychical sight. The illuminated saints and yogis who have developed this sight, not only see this aura, but also the reflections of the thought-impressions which they can read and interpret as we read and interpret words. These reflections are called the characters of the mind—the Hidden Pictures (Chitra-Gupta) of Human Conduct—which reveal the past, present and future history of a human soul to those who can decipher them.

From the aura these characters are reflected again upon the Ether which receives the impression and keeps the record of each external and internal event in Nature. The Ether is the storehouse of the records of all human and natural happenings and vibrations. And it is from this storehouse of all mental records that true clairvoyance draws its inspired messages and revelations. A fully developed Yogi can learn the details of an event which occurred ten thousand years ago or of any time, and can tell of any present or future occurrence in any part of the world by concentrating upon the Ether, the all-knowing Ether.

Thus the records of the causes of human actions are kept in triplicate, so that there is no escape from the potencies of their merits and demerits, unless the main records (those on the mind) are melted away by the fire of absolute, all-absorbing spiritual consciousness.

Actions (Karma) are of two kinds, white and black. White Karma springs from the Sāttwic state of mind, and Black Karma from its Tāmasic state. The color of Sattwa (Illumination) is white, the color of Tama (Darkness) is black, hence Karma is white or black. Rāja is the attribute of Activity, the working principle, the motive power of action. Without the aid of Rāja no action is possible. When Rāja works with dominant Sattwa the result is white Karma, when it works with dominant Tama, the result is black Karma. The white and black actions are commonly called good and bad. What is a good action? It is an action whose ultimate reaction produces harmony

and happiness and illumines the mind. What is a bad action? It is an action which, however enjoyable or otherwise while it lasts, produces a reaction of inharmony, pain and misery, causing darkness of the mind.

In respect to the law according to which they come to be worked out in their turn, the Karma-seeds, white and black, are of three classes—Sanchit, Prārabdha and Kriyamān or Agāmi. Sanchit means stored-up. Prārabdha means Karma the reaction of which has begun or that which is working now. Kriyamān means Karma-seeds originating out of the Prārabdha Karma now being worked out, but which will form the seeds of future (Agami) actions. Sanchit Karma includes the seeds of all the actions of past existences stored up as impressions on the mind. Out of this storehouse of Karma-seeds that, white or black, which is the most powerful asserts itself to be worked out first, drawing to itself, by the law of affinity. Karma-seeds of minor power, but of a nature similar to its own. This most powerful Karma-seed, lumped up with small Karma-seeds of similar character, forms the Prārabdha Karma, Karma which is in the process of being worked out. And in its process of working the fresh thought-impressions which the mind is registering are called Kriyamān (Karma being born), also called Agāmi (future) Karma, Karma seeds which, after being deposited in the storehouse, will come to be worked out in their turn in future, either as main or minor Prārabdha, according to their potency.

This is the law of working of human Karma, the inexorable law which shapes our life and destiny, which fills existence with joy or sorrow. Karma is unending unless we learn the mysterious law which works it and grasp the still more mysterious Law behind that Karmic law and by its practice destroy its roots and prevent its present and future actions within us. I will speak of this Law and of its ways of practice later on.

We often see a man, who has lived a good, pure and harmonious life, suddenly, through circumstances or bad associations, changed into a bad man. He becomes worse in habits and conduct and dies in that degraded mental state. Similarly we find some one very bad up to a certain period of life; he suddenly turns good and, before death, develops into an angelic character. This law of Karma is behind this change of character. Good Prārabdha influences one into good life and actions while it is working. But if some black Karma-seed is the most powerful of all Karma-seeds in the mind's storehouse, after the good Prārabdha has been worked out, it asserts itself to be worked out next and, lumped up with the minor seeds, forms his Prārabdha which changes the whole complexion of his character and conduct. The case of a bad man becoming good is subject to the same law; a white Prārabdha, owing to its predominant power, succeeds a bad one. The liability of alternate succession of bad and good Karma producing the actions of human beings is expressed in the metaphoric saying that the action of Karma in man is like a revolving wheel.

As a seed of a tree takes time to bear fruit, grow old and die, so a Karma-seed takes time to develop and die. As the periodical putting forth of leaves, flowers and

fruits are the events in the life of a tree, so the experiences of a man's life represent the development of his Prārabdha Karma-seed. The time a Karma-seed takes to work itself out is measured by the duration of the sustaining power of its potentialities. One Prārabdha Karma may embrace two or three or more births if it is very powerful, or may end in the middle of one birth, if it be not so powerful. An extraordinarily powerful Karma may extend for a long, long time, covering many, many births, suicide for instance. The thought which leads to suicide makes the deepest impression on the mind, far deeper, in fact, than even the thought which commits murder. Why? Because we love our own life more than anybody else's or than anything else on earth. It, therefore, requires an extraordinarily powerful thought to overpower that innate, intense love of our life and incite us to destroy it. The thought back of this self-murder, therefore, makes the deepest impression on, our mind and thus becomes the most powerful Karma-seed of all Karma-seeds. This being so, it asserts itself to form the Prārabdha, every time it is worked out, to the exclusion of all other Karma-seeds, for a long series of births, in every one of which that soul commits suicide, sometimes, as it is often found, without any apparent reason. It is divine mercy alone that saves a suicide from committing suicide in every birth ever afterwards. Hence suicide is the greatest sin, greater than even murder.

To the average Western mind this Karma philosophy strikes as intolerably pessimistic on account of the inexorableness of its laws. There is, however, no help for it. These laws rule us all whether we believe in it or not. They are no man-created laws, they are laws which operate throughout Nature, as much within a white man as within a brown, yellow or black man, of all stations of life, of all grades of consciousness. Yet it need not strike anybody, who has found the easy and rosy path out of the woods of Karma, as pessimistic at all. But he or she must ever keep to that path and never stray out of it from sheer wilfulness, or else there certainly is no escape out of the labyrinth of Karma.

SECTION XVIII. REINCARNATION.

Reincarnation, as I have said, is the physical form in which groups of accumulated causes (Karma) of reaction manifest themselves in Nature. Reincarnation means rebirth. Rebirth means, to be born again in flesh after death. In order, therefore, to know what is rebirth, we must know what is death. To know what is death, we must know what is life.

Let us see what life really is. Human life is conscious mentality encased in flesh. To be briefer, human life may be summed up in one word—consciousness. Life of lower animals is negative consciousness, while human life is positive consciousness.

Human consciousness is subject to three states. The Waking state, the Dream state and the Dreamless Sleep state. In the waking state all our inner and outer senses work. The inner senses are; The Intellect, the Ego and the Mind. The outer senses are the five cognizing and the five working senses. These senses are fully active during

our waking state. So long as the mind thinks, the intellect decides, the Ego is self-conscious, the eye sees, the ear hears, etc., they are acting. And activity (Rāja) brings about the reaction of weariness (Tama). In other words, the senses become tired out, owing to incessant work and need rest. It is the state of weariness of the senses that makes us feel exhausted and seek rest. But the senses cannot have full rest as long as we are in a waking state, for their activity never ceases while we are awake. Here Nature's law steps in and draws a veil between the senses and their objects, the veil of Tama, born out of the excessive work of Rāja. We fall asleep.

But in the first stage of sleep our senses still sustain their activity, though in a lesser degree than in the waking state, owing to their still cognizing reflections of the objects, and scenes impressed on our mind while we are awake. This is called the dream state of consciousness. Dreams are of three kinds. The ordinary dream is made up of the blended reflections of impressions of scenes and thoughts in natural or fantastic shapes. The second kind of dream is a clear unmixed reflection of the mind's impressions of some of our experiences in a previous birth. The third kind of dream is a reflection cast upon our pure consciousness of coming events from their Karmic impressions on the Ether or on our own aura. The ordinary dreams belong to the dream state. The other two classes of dreams are experiences during the dreamless state of sleep, generally in the morning just before awaking.

The dreams in the first stage of our sleep keep our senses still employed and the mind active on that account, for the activity of the mind is generated by the operations of the senses with their objects. Hence neither the tired mind nor the tired senses derive the complete rest they need, until gradually the veil of Tama grows dense and shuts out even the mental reflections of objects from their view. This stops the operations of the senses which then are absorbed by the mind whose offsprings and agents they are, for the senses cannot exist when they are deprived of their function of cognition. The same thing occurs with the mind, for its activity, caused and sustained by the activity of the senses, is the only reason for its separate existence. With the loss of its function, therefore, the mind loses this separate existence and is absorbed by the Ego. The Ego is in the same way absorbed by Consciousness, for the Ego is dependent on the Mind which sustains its existence of self-consciousness. And then Absolute Consciousness, with the passive germs of the Ego, Mind and Senses merged in it, is absorbed in its turn by the Soul and dwells in its realm until the senses have rested sufficiently.

In the depth of this dreamless sleep state of our consciousness, Tama gives place to the reaction of Sattwa which is very pure during this state. This dreamless sleep may be called a negative trance state. When we awake, through development of the Rāja Attribute, we feel not only thoroughly refreshed but also in a state of mental harmony, a happy mood of mind. We also feel that we were, during that dead sleep, in a state of utter oblivion of everything. We feel we forgot then even our own existence, feel that we were not conscious even of our own self, that we were in an absolutely

happy state, happy with happiness itself. We know of this condition, when we awake from it, by inference from the happy state of our mental mood, induced by the abstract impression of it upon our consciousness which was present then in its pure state. The cause of the refreshment and new strength of our body and senses is this dip in the Essence of the Soul, the source of all energy. The physicians try to put their patients into this deep sleep in serious cases of illness, knowing by experience that deep sleep is a quicker and more powerful restorer of health than any medicine, but they do not know where lies the balm of sound sleep.

The activity of Rāja brings about the awakening from this state by causing the unfoldment of the infolded Ego, mind and senses which resume their operations with external and internal objects as before. The difference between death and sleep lies here. After sleep we resume the functions of our senses, but death is caused by the confusion of our mind, on account of the senses not being able to resume their functions, owing to the disorder of the physical counterparts of the sense-organs through disease. Disease belongs to the physical body, and the senses with the mind and Ego belong to the astral body which we are. The pains we feel are caused by our identifying ourselves with our physical encasement. If we keep the fact constantly alive in our mind that our physical body is the earthly home of our soul, which is the centre of our astral self, we will not only not feel physical pain but prevent or do away with such pain even in the physical body. To know ourselves as nothing but our physical body is the densest, narrowest and the most mischievous ignorance. We often find proofs of this separateness of the physical and mental bodies from acts which present themselves in our daily life; we fail to cognize the experiences of our body or even of our senses when our mind absent from them and absorbed in some other direction. It is the mind that feels pain pleasure, not the body, neither the senses.

The physician, through the action of drugs, causes the attribute of Tama to assert itself and cover the mind's perception with its dark veil, so that the patient may not feel the pain of a serious operation on the body, while we feel no pleasure in eating or drinking if our mind is away from them.

The Yogi who has, by practice, developed unbroken consciousness of the separateness of the mental and physical body not only enjoys, when the consciousness is absolute, immunity from physical diseases and mishaps, but also does not feel the throes of death when he leaves his worn-out or diseased physical tenement. But the generality of mortals who cannot think of themselves as anything else but their physical bodies, owing to ignorance, suffer from all physical diseases. When these physical diseases put the physical counterparts of sense-organs into disorder, it confuses the mind when it finds that its channels of outward communication, the senses, can no longer work through them. In that confusion it loses its balance and is strongly swayed by the desire to again see and hear and feel and taste, etc.

But finding it impossible to do so in the present body any more, it tries to find some vehicle through which it can resume its functions. The pain of the worst stage of

the physical disease distracts it more and more so that it thinks it would be more comfortable in any other body than its present one. In confusion, this central force of the astral body enters with that body into the volume of air which fills the physical body, thinking it will gain relief from the unbearable pain. And no sooner the astral body, which is very subtle and finer than the air, enters into it, than it passes out, thus air-encased, through the mouth, causing the death of the physical body. This is the common process of death. Some astral bodies enter the air-body unconsciously if the mind has been benumbed by pain or covered by the influence of excessive Tama. But this is certain of every ordinary soul that it goes out of the body encased in air.

The thought predominant in this supreme moment of human life decides the destination of the human soul encased in the astral body when it leaves its physical home. If we think of nothing but of Krishna at this moment we go to Krishna and live in His Abode, Goloka, the Abode of Absolute Love. If we think of Christ we go to Christ in His Father's Kingdom of Heaven. If we are filled with the conception of Nirvāna—extinction of all individuality—we go to Nirvāna. If we desire for higher life above the earth we go to the higher spheres. But if our earthly attachment having their influence on our thoughts at that moment, fill us with regret for being taken away from them or make us desire for earthly life, we return to earth-life again, but not necessarily to a joyful or comfortable life. A life of worldly joy and comfort is due to good Karma and self-denial in some previous existence. A life of sorrow and hardship is due to bad Karma.

The earth-bound soul, on leaving the physical body, feels overcome by the shock of its final trouble with and severance from that physical body and remains in an inert state for a time. When it recovers from that shock, it finds that it has been transferred to a worse state. Although the air-body in which it encased is not diseased, it has, however, no openings for its senses to perform their respective functions. It finds it cannot see or hear or smell or touch or taste anything and yet the desires for these objects of the senses are as strong as when it was in the physical body. This makes it weep for the loss of its dear physical body and it hovers about in space sad and restless. It has no stomach, yet is filled with mental hunger and thirst which grow intense because it has no means of satisfying them. Indeed, finding this astral life to be of greater torment, the unhappy earth-bound soul longs to have a flesh covering again, to be reborn, and flies hither and thither blindly, because of the want of physical organs, and some day gains this object. It enters, through the vigor (Sanskrit Virga, 'virjya,' force, power) of a man into a woman's womb. This causes conception. No conception can take place without a disembodied spirit entering the womb. Vigor mixed with the mother's blood supplies the physical body which is mere dead matter without the vivifying astral soul. It is only when an astral soul enters it that the womb closes and conception takes place. The incoming soul then feels itself confined within its scope and cannot go out of it by its own effort or will.

The selection of the vigor and the womb for the astral soul is made principally according to the subtle law of individual Karma and, secondarily, according to the law of affinity. The mental characteristics of the parents must be similar to those of the soul to draw it to them. As for its physical body, it may favor in appearance its mother or its father more or less according as their individuality and image are stamped on the vigor and the blood through the state of extreme mental concentration induced at the time. If the incoming soul possesses far stronger individuality than those of the father and the mother, it asserts this upon its body and the child looks like neither the father nor the mother. He looks like himself—a form and appearance born of the imagination of its own strong individuality.

This direct rebirth from hovering in the astral body in the astral plane for some time is not true in the case of every disembodied soul. There are souls which, after death, may go at once to Heaven ('Swarga,' Celestial regions) or to Purgatory, the nether regions. According to the Hindoo Scriptures, Heaven (Swarga) is not the Abode of God, but the abode of the gods, the Swar-sphere where the gods, the governors of the Elements and Attributes of Nature, dwell. It is the Prārabdha Karma of the soul that determines its translation after death to Heaven or Purgatory. The joys of Heaven are reserved as a reward for good Karma. And yet these heavenly joys are but finest forms of material happiness, enjoyed by merit of good actions performed in earth-life for the sake of just such recompense. These heaven-dwellers mentally enjoy all these exquisite pleasures of the senses at their will, as well as the company of celestial beings, as long as the term of their merit lasts. At the expiration of the term they come down to earth to be reborn again. These heavenly blessings are, therefore, but transitory.

Intensely wicked actions, in the same manner, are punished by a term of suffering tortures in Purgatory, at the expiration of which the purged souls may go straight to heaven, if good Prārabdha Karma succeeds their expiatory sufferings, or be reborn again on earth. The tendency of the pleasure-seeking, materialistic, modern mind is to disbelieve the existence of any such place of torture as Purgatory. They think that Heaven and Purgatory exist only on earth within man's mind. This is true and yet it is not. If anybody develops high spirituality he or she can taste higher, finer and more lasting joys than even celestial pleasures. For such there is neither Heaven nor Purgatory, for intense spirituality burns down all seeds of Karma. As to enduring the tortures of Purgatory here on earth through repentance, that is true too. But if the spirit of repentance is not absolute, it fails to fully purge away the sin, so that such sinful souls have to go to the nether regions for complete cleansing. The Hindoo Books do not believe in such a thing as Eternal Hell or Punishment, because it is absurd, unjust and unscientific according to the laws of Nature. The governor of "Naraka" (Purgatory) one of the gods, the presiding deity of (Dharmarāj) and the regions of his rule are situated within the bowels of the earth. Human houses of correction (prisons) tend more to corrupt than to correct, because those in charge of

them are not imbued with a perfect spirit of sympathy, justice and mercy. In the Divine houses of correction (Purgatory) perfect justice blends with mercy and sympathy, and the governor thereof is the embodiment of these three attributes. He has to deal with his prisoners according to their own records of their misdeeds, reflected on the aura, a true copy of which is kept in the books of Ether, from which his Recording Angel transcribes items credited to each individual soul.

For the pious, spiritually developed soul, however, there is no Purgatory, as I have said. It lives and breathes in a plane which is outside of the three lower planes of selfish actions and their reactions, outside of the jurisdiction even of the gods. To his ensouled mind the word purgatory or heaven has no meaning whatever. He loves spirituality for its own dear sake and feels itself safe from all evil in the embrace of its protecting arms.

Into the vigor or the blood of such a spiritual soul, no wicked astral spirit can enter. Its pure aura repels such spirits and admits only kindred spirits seeking rebirth, drawn to it by Karma and affinity.

Much suffering is the lot of the ordinary soul while growing in the womb, on account of its cramped consciousness and the narrow space in which it is confined. After the sixth month, it has a wonderful experience. The veil shrouding its past existence is suddenly lifted and the memories of all of its past births rush across its mind. It even witnesses the scenes of thousands of its previous existences and realizes the reason of the pain and sorrow suffered during all these existences—the reason of its having been attached to material objects and having disregarded the development of its spiritual self, its having been unmindful of its duty, to its Maker and its fellow man. This realization crushes its mind with contrition and it weeps and prays to God to forgive it and promises to live a life of devotion to Him in the future. This goes on for three months together until it is born, when, at the touch of the earthly atmosphere all those memories vanish and it is once more drowned in oblivion. It is more from the pain of this shock that it cries out at the time of birth.

SECTION XIX. HOW TO DESTROY KARMA.

Now comes to be considered the question of questions—How to do away with and avoid bad Karma. If Karma is the cause of all our sufferings in life, how to remove that cause. We have before this had births and till actions in those innumerable births have produced countless Karma-seeds. All these seeds are stored up in the repository of the mind. How is it possible, it may be asked, to destroy them all, and prevent fresh accumulation of new Karma-seeds in the present birth?

To those who ask this question seriously, that is, with a serious intention of acting upon any suggestion that may seem feasible to them, the answer is pregnant with all the essentials of a true solution. To such the answer is simple and the mode of solution simpler. To the really serious soul, hungering for freedom from the bondage of Karma, even the practice of the principle of the advice may strike as Still more simple. But the practice involves the full realization of the source of Karma, the perfect understanding of its laws, their operations and their relations to his own individual self.

Here I will try to put the philosophy of this solution as briefly as possible. If our actions of this life are the products of actions in previous lives, the actions of those previous lives are the effects of actions in still more previous lives and so on. Thus trying to trace the causes of all our actions in all our past lives, we are bound to arrive at the time of the Creation of the universe, when it sprang from the Will of Krishna. We, as parts of the universe, sprang from that Will too. Krishna's Will before Creation was; "I am One and I wish to be the Many," and His Creation is the manifestation of His Will's motion towards manifoldness and Karma is the law of the rhythmic steps of that motion. The Will of Krishna, therefore, is the cause of all Karma the entire Creation as well as of ours, because we are but parts of that Creation. This makes it clear that, since Krishna is the cause all Karma of the Universe, He is the Actor of all actions. This being so, the cause of our sufferings from bondage to Karma lies in our mistaken conception that we ourselves are the doer of our actions. This cannot be, because all our actions proceed from our past Karma, the roots of which are embedded in the Will of Krishna. It is Krishna that is the whole Universe, as well as its laws and actions. It is Krishna that suffers and enjoys in so many shapes and forms which make up His moving Will, called Nature. All our troubles are born of our usurping His place, the place of the Real Actor. Hence Karma clings, by natural law, to whoever claims it. We claim the doership of actions which manifest themselves through us, but the real Doer is the spring of primeval action—Krishna Himself.

This belief, that we ourselves are the doers of our actions, subjects our Ego to their reactions. If by tracing the source of Karma to Krishna, we dispel this illusion from our mind and keep it ever out of it, so that it may not disturb our conviction of

the fact that Krishna is the only Doer, all our past and present Karma, the stored-up and the working—Sanchit and Prārabdha—will leave us of themselves and go to Krishna to be absorbed by Him, while, for the same reason, the Karma-seeds springing from our present actions will be rendered germless like roasted seeds which never grow. But this belief needs constant practice of this thought in order to be sustained without interruption and involves thinking of Krishna, Absolute Love and Life, every minute—thoughts by which the thinker absorbs the essence of the purest spirituality whose illumination ever guides him along the paths of Truth and Wisdom and prompts him to actions whose results bring harmony and happiness to himself, as well as to all with whom he comes in contact.

This exposition of the truth of our utter irresponsibility of our actions will appear strange and mischievous only to unthinking minds. The fear that such a belief of irresponsibility may lead some people to bad actions is entirely groundless. Such a thing can never happen for, with such a belief firm our mind, we have to think of God always in our daily actions, and this constant thinking induces concentration upon the Deity whose spirit is sure to prevent and counteract all our evil thoughts, not to speak of evil actions. A man who will do evil actions, taking advantage of this principle, will only deceive himself. Such evil-doing can only show that he has no belief in the principle at all, but thinks of it only with a view to justify actions which lie, in his heart, believes to be his own, but attributes to God to get rid of their responsibilities, if possible. But if anyone believes firmly that God is the Doer of all actions and yet, for want of proper culture of this belief, he is betrayed into evil actions, be sure his belief growing stronger will soon control his actions and lead him along the paths of the good and the pure. God-Consciousness destroys all evils of the mind to their very roots.

Thus Karma and its effects, which for the ignorant, unthinking, and reckless human soul are ever interminable, can by exercise of wisdom and mental power and discipline be absolutely done away with. Karma belongs to Krishna and it is to Krishna that it and its fruits should be unreservedly dedicated good. The moment this mystery of Karma is solved and the soul that solves it acts upon its lesson, than Krishna takes it into His arms, and the soul and its Maker, now face to face, laugh together at this riddle of life, and in that laugh of ecstasy all sorrow and pain of the past are forgotten by that saved soul.

SECTION XX. THE ATOM'S RETURN JOURNEY.

It is absolute Krishna-consciousness—or God-consciousness, if you will, if that God is Absolute Love—that carries the atom from its man-stage of development to its Real Home, Krishna, the Abode of Eternal Love and Bliss. Like all roads leading to Rome, all religious paths lead to that Home. The primeval, the most natural and the most scientific religion, called now the Hindoo religion, has constructed five main roads for making the return journey easy, and the travelers can choose any of these roads, according to their inclinations and the state of spiritual progress. One is the Path of Light and Psychic Force, called the path of the Sun, because the Sun is the presiding deity of the path. The second is the Path of Success whose presiding deity is Ganapati, Bestower of Success. The third is the Path of Destruction of Tama whose presiding deity is Shiva, the Destroyer, one of the Hindoo Trinity and the presiding deity of Tama, Shiva who has subdued Tama and become its lord. The fourth is the Path of Divine Energy whose presiding deity is Durgā, the Motherhood of God and the Universe—"Prakriti," Divine Nature. The fifth is the Path of Spiritual Devotion whose presiding deity is Vishnoo (Aniruddha), the presiding deity of Sattwa, out of whose navel the universe has sprung and who is the dispenser of Moksha to the walkers of all the other paths. In this path is included another path, a path far superior to all the five paths, the Path of Absolute Causeless Love which leads direct to Krishna, whose presiding Deity is Krishna, the Deity of all the deities. These different path-walkers are called by the names of their respective deities of worship—Saura, Ganapatya, Shaiva, Shakta (worshippers of 'Shakti,' Energy) and Vaishnavs, among whom are included Krishna-worshippers.

The Sun is the medium of the physical manifestation of the Divine Light, the Light of Absolute Intelligence, the Co-existent Attribute of Absolute Love. It is called the Parent of the gross universe, the Outer Eye of the Deity, the passage of the First Sense of the Divine Mind which produced Forms. The devotee of the Sun worships it as such, as the medium of the Absolute Deity, Krishna. Some of them concentrate their eyes upon the Sun, immersed in water up to the neck from sunrise to sunset, others pray to it morning, noon and evening and contemplate its power. The sun is not blazing hot as some modern people think. It is peopled by spiritual souls who, by the merit of soul-development, go from earth after death to dwell there for further development. These spiritual souls are spiritually governed by one who is most developed among them. He is called the Sun-God, the representative of the sun. Sun-worship leads finally to Krishna-worship in some fully developed reincarnation.

Ganapati, first-born of Shiva (Shiva means Weal, Destroyer of Ill or Evil), is the presiding deity and bestower of Success—material, moral and spiritual—which is the chief factor of human weal. Satisfied material success, virtuously earned, inspires the desire for moral development in well-ordered minds, and moral development, in

turn, leads to spiritual imfoldment. By concentration on this Central Idea of Success itself, the mind of the devotee of Ganapati, absorbs its essence, the force of which guides his efforts to prosperity. Earthly prosperity, enjoyed with discrimination, impresses us with its hollowness, its failure to satisfy the inner craving of the mind and points to the path of solid, all-satisfying, permanent happiness.

Shiva is the Presiding Deity of the Weal of Creation, hence his name—Shiva. He is the Conqueror and Destroyer of Darkness (Tama). He helps his devotees to dispel the darkness of ignorance generated in their mind by its Tama Attribute, and thus uncover its attribute of Sattwa by the illumination of which their souls reach the state of Moksha—Freedom from the Bondage of Matter—and finally merge in the Divine Essence whence it originally sprang.

Durgā is Divine Energy, the Motherhood of Creation. She is the Sāttwic force by which Shiva subdued Tama. Hence she is the consort of Shiva, the Helpmeet of Spiritual Weal. Without Durgā, his Shakti (Energy), Shiva is inert; with his Shakti, he is alive and rules the universe. Shiva and his Shakti are inseparable, as man and his mental energy, which alone he is, is inseparable. Man is moved by his mental energy, so Shiva is moved by his spiritual energy. Durgā is the highest spiritual phase of Kālee, Conqueress of Time and Door of Eternity. She is the Spiritual Force of Nature (Prakriti), she is the Mother of the Universe. Her devotees called Shaktas (Shakti-worshippers) meditate on her as the Great Mother and pray to her for her grace, as a child talks to its mother and looks up to her for help, protection and sustenance. When the most spiritual of her devotees develop the same natural love for and unshaken faith in her as those of an innocent child to its mother, they are blessed with her last grace. They are helped to Moksha or led into the path of Krishna, this last the greatest of all her gifts. She, as Yoga-Māyā (energy of the highest spiritual concentration), holds the key of the Gate of Goloka, Krishna's Abode of Love-Bliss.

Vishnū is the sum total of all the deities which are the manifestations of his powers and attributes. He is the Parent of both the Motherhood and Fatherhood of the Universe—the Spring of Creation itself. He is the Presiding Deity of Sattwa out of which are born Rāja and Tama. He is the Preserver, the Sustaining Power of the Universe. He is the Way to Moksha, His Essence is the Abode of all Salvation. He is the Outer Form of Krishna, the Form through which Krishna manifests His Will and becomes the Many from the One. His Abode, called Vaikuntha, the Centre of his All-Pervading Essence, is over this universe, over Brahmā-Loka—Brahmā's Abode. He is the last but one Goal of all spiritual aspirations. He is the Gate of Krishna, the Last Goal.

The upward evolution of the atom from the man-stage has to pass through many higher spiritual stages in higher and higher spheres. Interested spiritual culture, by which I mean spiritual culture with a view to enjoy the finest essence of sensuous happiness in spheres higher than the earth, never lifts a human soul beyond the Bhūva and the Swar, the abode of the gods. The Bhūva sphere is just over the earth. It is the

astral sphere. It is peopled by semi-celestial spirits and beings whose bodies are made mostly of ether, air and fire and the finest essence of water and earth; hence they are invisible to our gross physical eye. They are so light that the air to them is like firm land to us; they walk over it as we walk over earth. There are houses and roads in this sphere as on earth, as also in the Swar sphere. Many psychical persons have now and then a glimpse of the Bhuba sphere and the dwellers therein. One of my students in New York, the truth of whose visions is known to many, has often seen these airy houses, roads and beings. The Swar is composed of finer material than the Bhuba, and its atmosphere is more sacred. Selfish spiritual culture is rewarded by a term of residence in the Swar. When the term is over the soul has to come down to earth again to be reborn as man.

The soul which loves and cultivates unselfish spirituality, spirituality for spirituality's sake, succeeds when it has no desire or sympathy any more for anything earthly, in skipping over the Bhuba and Swar, after death, and enters and becomes a dweller in the Mahar sphere. Such a soul seldom comes back to earth, but through higher development attains to the Brahmā Loka and there waits, to be absorbed or immersed in Vishnool's Essence, till the time of the Universal (Natural) Dissolution through which it reaches its goal.

The worshippers of Vishnool pray for one of the five states of Moksha (Salvation), according to the preference of their inclinations. These five states of Salvation are Sālokya, Sāmipya, Sārūpya, Sājujya and Sārshti. Sālokya is, to dwell in the plane of Vishnool. Sāmipya is, to live near Vishnool as a servant. Sārūpya is, to live with Vishnool as his companion and having Vishnool's form and appearance. Sājujya is, to remain immersed in Vishnool's Essence. Sārshti is, to possess even the powers of Vishnool. Those who attain to the first three states of Salvation serve as messengers of Vishnool, and at times act as mediums of communication between Vishnool and the dwellers of the Universe, while some of those who attain to the last two states come down to earth only from time to time as Avatārs, partial Incarnations of Vishnool (God). These have developed complete God-consciousness and after being immersed in the Essence of Vishnool for eons together, they have been thoroughly Vishnoolized. True, they were human beings before, but now they are Parts of God Himself. They have no more recollection of their former existences. Therefore, to call them any other than Vishnool is blasphemy. When the affairs of the earth are in chaos and humanity in general needs spiritual uplifting, some of these immersed souls are detached, and they come down to our sphere, take birth and walk among us, helping us, by examples and teachings, to right actions which lead to Salvation.

SECTION XXI. YOGA.

There are five processes of mental discipline by the aid of which the human soul can reach the goal quicker. These are called the five paths of Yoga, viz., Hatha, Karma, Rāja, Gnāna and Bhakti. Yoga means Union. The word Yoga is the original of its corrupted English form "Yoke." Yoga, therefore, means yoking the Mind to the Spirit of God by concentration. Hatha Yoga consists in cleaning and disciplining the outer and inner physical body by the practice of certain postures of sitting, processes of moving the muscles and fixing the eye upon some external object or the tip of the nose. These, in time, induce mental poise. Karma Yoga is performing good actions, and practising spiritual formulas which contribute to the purification of the mind and, finally lead to the unfoldment of the soul. Rāja Yoga is stopping the functions of the mind's volitions. By volitions of the mind are meant thought-currents. By the practice of Rāja Yoga, the outflow of these thought-currents can be entirely stopped and turned inwards in one concentrated stream into the soul. The main process of shutting in the mind-currents is by controlling the breath. The action of our breathing upon our mind is like that of the pendulum of a clock upon the movements of its hands. As, for instance, the quicker the pendulum swings the faster the movement of the hands, so, the quicker our breathing, the more rapid the action of our thought-currents. By controlling the breath by certain exercises, prescribed by Rāja Yoga, one can make his breathing slow and thereby diminish the speed of the thought-currents. During these breathing exercises, the mind is concentrated upon God or the Divine Idea, or some mystic words expressive of the Deity. This lessens the activity of the mind which then gradually experiences a calmness unfelt before, a calmness which in itself is a happiness which no form of enjoyment of material pleasure can afford. Calmness of mind develops into harmony, the result of the expression of the Sattwa attribute.

There are five kinds of mental states: Murha, Khipa, Bikhipa, Ekāgra, and Samādhi. The Murha, ruled by predominant Tama, is generally attracted to evil objects owing to lack of discrimination. Khipa flits from one object to another in search of pleasure. It is ruled by predominant Rāja, so is ever active and never satisfied. The Bikhipa mental state, ruled by the equal combination of the three attributes, is generally like Khipa, but at times fixes its attention inwards though for a short time only. When the Bikhipa is helped by the practice of concentration into the Ekāgra (one-pointed) state, then it is that harmony is brought about. When, by constant practice, the one-pointed mind becomes unwaveringly fixed on the Deity or the Idea of the Deity gained through the increasing illumination of the Sattwa, it enters into the Samādhi (Trance) state, the state of Absolute absorption into the Deity.

The practice of the Rāja Yoga has been forbidden in the Shāstras in the Kali Yuga (Iron Age) because, in this age, excepting in rare cases, the human body is too weak and delicate to stand the hardships, psychic exertions and physical privations of

its practices, and because an adept Yogi-Gooroo, without whose constant help in every detail of it no student can attain the highest result, is very hard to be found. Many who now practice it under inexperienced Gooroos in India meet early death or develop incurable diseases or even turn insane. A moderate amount of simple breathing exercises may not be so injurious or fatal, but too much of it or the practice of the advanced rules ought never to be attempted, especially in the West, where a proper Gooroo can never be found and where most people's nerves are generally shaky.

Gnāna Yoga is an entirely mental process of Yoga, a process of discriminating between the Unsubstantial and the Substantial in Nature and concentrating upon the only Substantial Essence of things and gradually getting absolutely absorbed by it. The keeping up of this process of thought in an unbroken stream requires living a life of simplicity, solitude and renunciation. The life in which this thought-current becomes unbroken is the last life, last incarnation of that soul. It escapes rebirth for good for which it has worked for many incarnations. Its separate Ego is merged in the universal Ego and finally is lost in and becomes one with the One-without-a-Second.

Gnāna Yoga belongs to the school of the Vedānta philosophy. Vedānta is "Veda" and "Anta" which means "End," so that Vedānta means End of the Veda—the Aim or Goal of the Veda; and the word Veda is the original of the English word "Wisdom" (Swedish, Visdom) from Sanscrit, "Vida," to know. Veda means knowledge of the Reality, the Truth. The Vedānta Aphorisms of Vedavyasa are but Indices to the Principles of the Upanishads—the Wisdom part of the Veda. There are two Schools of Vedānta, the Old and the New. The Old possesses the true interpretation of the Aphorisms, the New is deluded by their false interpretations, is only about two thousand years old and has a comparatively small number of adherents. The Old school is founded on Parināmbād, the new is founded on Vivartabād, The Old school holds that the universe is composed of the ever changeable manifestations of the Will (Energy) of the One Changeless Deity (Parināmbād), the New calls the whole universe, in fact, all that is visible and perceptible, Māyā (Illusion), in the sense that it never existed, does not exist now and will never exist. All that exists is Brahm, the Divine Essence, and we are That. All else is illusion wrought in our mind through ignorance, just as the mistaking a piece of rope lying in some dark place for a snake is due to the illusion of the darkness. This theory with its plausible analogy is all wrong. The universe is not all illusion though it is the changeable force-materialization of the Unchangeable One Substance. The force or energy or light or reflection of a substance is inseparable from it and is pervaded by it and partakes of its spirit. This materialized force-reflection of Brahm not only possesses its substance at bottom but must be called a part of it as the light of a flame or reflection of a light is undeniably its part. The analogy of the snake and rope is, therefore, not true of God and the Universe: The snake is merely the conjuration of the darkness and not born of the rope; but the universe is born of Brahm (the rope). The

theory that it is born of the illusion of our ignorance, is absurd in that it involves accepting that "ignorance" to be something self-existent, that it has an independent existence, separate from the All-in-All, the One-without-a-Second. If not, whence is this "ignorance" which has such power of illusion over our mind and senses? What is it? Whence does it come? The Neo-Vedāntist answers, it is something inexplicable, His Māyā is inexplicable—the argument of one in darkness himself. This New Vedāntic thought has done and is doing more harm to the world than any other religious theory. It is a worse delusion than the delusion of Māyā.

SECTION XXII. BHAKTI YOGA.

Bhakti Yoga is concentration on the Deity through Devotion, the best and highest form of Yoga, higher than all the other forms, as Krishna Himself has said in the *Bhagavat Gita* Devotion is the full fruition of spiritual concentration. A true devotee is the highest Yogi, for he is filled with humility, and sincere, abject humility is the expression of the sublimest spiritual nature; it is "the softened shadow" as the Lord says, "that is cast by My Love." Sincere humility springs from the clear realization of the Presence of God in everything, that the whole universe is formed of the many forms of the One Form and its Radiance. And with that never fading vision before the mind's eye, the devotee forgets himself and stoops low at the feet of every one and at everything he sees, for he sees in them all his Deity.

Bhakti is of two kinds, Gnān-Bhakti and Prem-Bhakti. Gnān-Bhakti is devotion aided by culture of wisdom, its Deity is some incarnation of Vishnoo and its goal is the Abode of Vishnoo or the Essence of Vishnoo. Prem Bhakti is devotion through Love—Causeless, Disinterested Love, love for love's sake, and its Deity and Goal is Krishna—Absolute Love. The Path of Prem Bhakti lies within the Path of Gnān Bhakti, but this Path within the Path is hedged in high to shut out the view and sound of the main path. The devotee of Prem Bhakti dedicates all his knowledge, wisdom and actions to Krishna, the spring of all Wisdom and Actions, and prays Krishna for His love, the luxury of loving Him for His dear sake.

The Prem Bhakta wants nothing from his Lord, no boon, no blessing, material or celestial, not even Salvation or Mukti, nothing, nothing, save—the blessing of being filled with love for Him. He prays to his Lord: "O my Krishna! It matters not what betides my body, my life or my earthly circumstances, or in what form of life I am reborn, even if it be that of a worm, let my faith and love be fixed in Thee, my Beloved. Whatever is there in all existence compared with the luxury of loving Thee? Thou art the sum-total of the realization of all desires, of all happiness, Thou, the Secret and Object of all our longings!"

Such, in truth, is Krishna's attraction and more. He is the embodiment of the concentrated Beauty and Sweetness of all the Universes, His Eyes and Face the focus of the Love that fills all that is. Hence this Prem Bhakti Path, which means the Path of Love's Devotion, is called the Path of Beauty and Sweetness. Beauty and Sweetness are Coexistent, are one and the same thing. Beauty is the expression of Sweetness, Sweetness is the Essence of Beauty, and Love is the Parent of both. Krishna's Form and Symmetry are all Ideals' unapproachable, inconceivable, unimaginable Ideal. The newest rain-cloud [1] color of His complexion is the color of the condensed Ether of Ether—Love. His crown and crest of peacock-feathers, His raiment of molten gold—the color of attraction—His long garland and ornaments of wild flowers, His jewel Kaustubha on His Breast and His bamboo flute were all proud contributions of Nature

to Her Supreme Lord. If we can imagine the essence of the purest of pure love condensed into a substance as thick as flesh and moulded into form, we can then have some idea of the material of Krishna's Body, whether in Glory or on earth. It is a Form which, the moment you produce some likeness of it in imagination thrills you with ecstasy, for it is Ecstasy condensed.

The color of the newest rain-cloud of India, color of the sapphire or marine blue, [1\]](#) are vain attempts to indicate Krishna's color and complexion.

Krishna is best worshipped with the heart. Prayers and incantations and offerings, without sincere feeling, do not reach Him. He responds to the call of love alone. Call Him from the innermost depth of your heart with pure love—love unmixed with motive—with sincere, artless love of a fond baby for its mother, and He will appear to you and do whatever you want Him to do. Krishna is your veriest own, nearer to you than your nearest relative, your only true friend in life and Eternity. He is dearer, more precious than your body or your life or your heart for He is your soul and soul is dearer and more precious than body, life or heart. It is Him you have been searching in all your searchings in life, in lives you have lived before, and Him will you search in lives that are to come after this life. He is ever with you. He is within you, but you are searching for Him outside of you—whence you miss Him, hence you run after all the will-o'-the-wisps of life, thinking these will give you the joy which your Only Beloved and Lover alone can give. No wonder you are deceived, depressed, unsatisfied—the reward of chasing the shadow of the substance that lies within you, the reward of chasing the rainbow which is but the reflection of the Sun of your soul's sky.

The devotee of Krishna meditates on Krishna regarding Him in one of the four human relationships, whichever suits his natural inclination best, viz., Dāsya or the relationship of a Servant to his Master, Sakhya or the relationship of the Friend to his Friend, Bātsalya or the relationship of a Son to his Parents or Parents to a Son, and Madhur or the relationship of a Wife to her Husband or of a loving Woman to her Lover. These four kinds of devotional feelings are natural in man. By "natural" I mean born from Nature of which man is the best earthly product. But wherefrom has Nature derived them? From her parent-source, Krishna, of course. So these feelings are present, in their absolute perfection, in Krishna, the source of all Life. Flowing from Krishna into His Creation, they constitute the cords of attachment between man and man, the natural bonds of union between soul and soul, the natural channels of communication between man and his Maker. They are the invisible wires of telegraphy between the Central Soul and its branch souls—between the Parent Soul and its offsprings. If the instruments of the branch offices are rusty and out of order they cannot transmit their messages to the main office or receive messages therefrom. The moment they are cleaned, repaired and put into working order, they are open to perfect communication once more.

The devotee of Krishna cleans the rusty and disordered instrument of his heart by cultivating one of these feelings of devotion for Krishna. And the moment this feeling attains its natural state, the moment it becomes absolutely sincere, then he absorbs and is filled with absolute Love from its Primeval Spring. Krishna is absolutely divine and absolutely human, for it is perfect humanity that is perfect divinity. Krishna is Love itself, the Love that destroys all distance. Love that draws the Lover and the Loved closest to each other. It knows no ceremony, knows no formal respect. It knows no motive. Love is its own cause, motive and satisfaction. Divinity demands our reverence and inspires us with awe. Despite its strong attraction we can but adore it from a distance, we cannot approach it too near. But Love draws us to its bosom and holds us close: Love is a Master and Love is a Slave. It knows no barrier, sees no faults, nay, sees virtues in faults. It responds to its own clear call or vibrates to the voice of its own inspiration and blesses its own creation with greater gifts of its own wealth.

Whichever of the four devotional feelings towards Krishna the Bhakta (devotee) cultivates, it must reach the stage of unalloyed sincerity to be rewarded by its blissful realization. The loving Servant of Krishna must love His service above all he loves and holds dear. The devotee who wants to be the Friend and Companion of Krishna must have his all-forgetting Love of Krishna pervaded by an uninterrupted sense of equality with Him. He may serve Him as a slave, but it is the service of a friend who is more than a slave to his friend. The devotee who wants to love Krishna as a Father or Mother must have unwavering sincerity of such paternal love and affection. He or she must always consider himself or herself superior to Krishna whom they must regard as a helpless child in their charge. This true parental feeling is pervaded by the unconscious spirit of spontaneous service and friendship, for no friendship and service can be compared with those of parents. The same rules apply to the cultivation of the filial feeling of devotion to Krishna. The fourth, the feeling of a loving wife to her lord sums up the essence of all the foregoing three feelings, It is the highest and tenderest feeling of devotion. The true wife is the servant, friend, mother and lover of her husband. She is his slave, equal and superior by virtue of her all-surrendering love. Every form of pure love is self-surrender. The love that knows no surrender or sacrifice is a mockery. It mocks itself more than its object, for sacrifice is its chief test and best expression. Love that only loves, if loved, is pure selfishness, it is self-deception. But the love that loves for its own sake and is the fullest satisfaction in itself, the love that loves whoever or whatever its object loves is the Love Absolute that Krishna is. The human soul that develops it, binds Krishna thereby and holds Him its prisoner for good. When that Love develops the tenderness of a loving wife, it captivates the Heart of hearts, and entrances the Soul of souls, Krishna.

These Vaishnav forms of devotion reached their highest degree of development and received their greatest impetus on the appearance of Sree Chaitanya, the Fullest Incarnation of Krishna, who was born in Nuddea, on the Ganges, Bengal, a little over

four hundred years ago and flourished for nearly half a century. He was Krishna Himself incarnated in the form of His Greatest Devotee. Krishna is the Mystery and Chaitanya is its Explanation. Whenever Krishna comes to earth as the Mystery of Love in the Junction Period of Dwāpar and Kali, He comes again in the form, of Chaitanya as the Explanation of that Mystery, five thousand years after, to show to mankind the Way to Himself for examples.

Chaitanya's love, devotion and spirituality will ever remain unparalleled. He preached Krishna, the Seed and Soul of Love Absolute, and while preaching he would burst forth into song in praise of Krishna. Thus singing he would be filled with ecstasy and, in its fullness, he would be moved into the most graceful dance the world has ever seen, now shouting the Name of his Lord and anon weeping for his Lord's grace, his arms and whole body waving and quivering with the heaving billows of his heart's love-ocean, streams of which, like water from many fountains, would flow from his eyes in the shape of tears. And in those tears, streaming straight from his eyes to the ground, all those, who catching his spirit caught also his ecstatic motion, would be literally bathed. And all India was "flooded," as the authoritative records of his apostles tell us, with Chaitanya's Divine Love, and millions of sinners that felt it, were borne away by its tide.

Sree Chaitanya preached and proved the potency of Krishna's Name—that His Name is the Lord Himself. If anybody says "Krishna, Krishna" mentally or loudly and concentrates his mind on it, he is bound to absorb its Love-Nectar, be drunk with its ecstasy, see Krishna in Form and in everything, and finally go to Goloka after passing out of this life. Hari is the popular Name of Krishna. It means, He Who steals our sins. Chaitanya would shout "Hari, Hari!" or "Haribole!" (say, Hari) and vibrations of that Name would thrill through all hearers and change them into pious devotees. Millions upon millions were thus saved by him, millions of sinners turned into saints. The world has never seen such an Avatār, the Incarnation of All-Love Krishna. He lived the most blameless life from childhood to his disappearance at the age of forty-eight.

Like master, like servants. His Apostles were of such spiritual purity and sublimity that it would be hard to find one like them even in India of the past. Any of them was competent to save a whole world. They have left thousands of Books on Krishna and Chaitanya's Life and Teachings which are of the utmost value to the students and adherents of all religions of all climes, ages and denominations. Love is the theme of every book, and it is difficult to resist its essence pouring into you as you read them.

If my life is spared by the Lord, and if my Krishna wills it, I may present the Life-Story and Teachings of Sree Chaitanya and his apostles to the Western reader in a short time. In that book a detailed exposition of the Vaishnav religion will be given, an exposition which may interest Christians. The present book is but the preliminary part of the Chaitanya book I intend to write, for Chaitanya cannot be understood without first understanding Krishna and His Leelā on earth. Chaitanya may be called

the Indian Christ, but a Christ the like of whom has never appeared on earth. Chaitanya did not even leave his Body behind when he left this earth. He entered one morning into the Temple of Juggernath and disappeared—nobody knows how or where.

SECTION XXIII. VAISHNAV, CHRISTIAN OF CHRISTIANS.

The Krishna-Worshipper is either a householder or a hermit. He is either a devotee who cultivates the love for Krishna amid the duties and distractions of the world or a devotee who leaves the temptations and turmoil of the world and sojourns in some sylvan retreat in the holy forest of Brindāban, the earthly abode of Krishna, or in the outskirts of a town or village within a humble monastery composed of a couple of huts with a little flower garden fenced around. But the most advanced Krishna hermit tarries nowhere longer than a few days, but ever roams about in the land sanctified by the touch of the Lotus Feet of his Lord.

The formula of worship and religious rules of life practised by both the hermit and householder are practically the same. It consists of mental and physical practices, more mental than physical. The moment the householder awakes from his sleep in the morning he utters the name of Krishna thus:

Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna!
O Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna!
Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, nourish me!
Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, protect me!
I salute Thee, O Krishna, give Thou me Thy Love!

Then before he leaves his bed and puts his foot upon the earth, he prays and salutes Mother Earth thus:

"O thou ocean-girdled, mountain-breasted goddess! I salute thee, O thou Consort of Vishnoo! Forgive me, thy suckling. O Mother, this my touching thee with my feet!"

Then, after answering the calls of Nature, and after rubbing his hands and feet with pure earth and washing them for many times, he takes a full bath either in the Ganges or in any river if it is near by. If not, he bathes in a pond or at a well or at home with two or three large jarfuls of water. While bathing, he utters many a hymn and prayer to Krishna. After the bath, he wears a piece of dry cotton cloth which has been washed in clean water, or a piece of pure silk cloth. He then goes to a flower garden and culls some scented white flowers for Krishna, whom he then sits to worship in his sacred room. He mentally repeats for one hundred and eight times the Mantram he has received from his Gooroo, counting it on his fingers. Then he takes a few tiny leaves of the sacred Tulsi plant, smears them in sandal-wood paste and, closing his eyes, mentally offers them with the sacred white flowers to the Lotus Feet of his Deity upon whom his mind is concentrated. This concentration is helped from outside by the spiritual vibrations of his sacred room and the inspiring effect of the perfume of the incense, the sandal-paste and the flowers. He then chants long prayers and hymns in Sanscrit to Krishna and His Love-Energy, Rādhā, and to all the saints

and great devotees of Krishna of the past, begging, them for their blessings of Krishna's Grace. He then sings songs of the Lord's Love, and tears of ecstasy roll down his cheeks as he sings in the abandon of his devotion to the accompaniment of a pair of small cymbals he keeps striking to keep time.

The Mantram is composed of three, four or five Sanscrit words beginning with what is called the Seed Word with the Name of Krishna and a dedicatory word attached to it. The Seed Word is the Seed of Krishna-Love. It awakens in the heart spiritual passion. This Seed Word, if mentally repeated with intense concentration, bursts open the shell of the Sound-Form of Krishna—His Name—which contains the Nectar of Absolute Love. The word "Sanskrit" means pure, refined. The Sanscrit language is the language of the pure, undefiled voice of Nature. Hence it is called the "language of the gods" who are representatives of Nature's attributes. These attributes are blendings of forces. Each force has a name (sound), a form and a quality. A man in intense pain expresses it in such sounds as "Oh-h!" "Ah-h!" This "Oh-h" or "Ah-h" may be called the sound (voice) of pain, the contortions of the face the expression of its form and the feeling it produces is its quality. The quality is the substance of the force called pain and its sound and sign (form) are its expressions. If there were a microscope powerful enough to reveal to our view the figures which sound-vibrations create on ether, we would then find that the above-mentioned sound-expressions of pain create forms in ether much like the combined letters "Oh-h" and "Ah-h." This means that it is from the impressions of sound vibrations on Ether that characters of all languages have been formed; the pictures reflecting themselves on the inventor's mind through the medium of its subtle force called inspiration.

The characters (Sanskrit, "charitra") of the Sanscrit language, the parent language of all languages, are born with creation. They are entities in Nature, form-expressions of her forces. They are eternal and indestructible "akshara," as characters are called. The vowels are masculine forces, the consonants are feminine forces. The masculine characters (vowels) are independent, the feminine characters (consonants) are dependent. The vowels can be pronounced by themselves, the consonants can only be pronounced when united with the vowels. The vowels are the expressions of the Essence of the Deity (Krishna), the consonants are the expressions of the Will-Force of the Deity ("Prakriti," that which procreates). Nature. Nature is born of Sound, the attribute of Ether, (Akas) which was the first manifestation of creation. That first sound was "AUM"—misspelled and mispronounced in English as The vowel A, (pronounced "Au" in Sanscrit), the initial letter of "AUM" is the parent of all letters and languages. This "AUM" in sound represents the distant vibrations of Krishna's Flute, the Music of Love, while its character-form in Sanscrit resembles the Form of Krishna playing on His Flute as the reader will see from the little outline picture of Krishna with its back-ground of "AUM" in Sanscrit character printed on the title-page of this book. This is the mystery of what Krishna Himself says in the Gita, "I am the Word AUM."

The different combinations of the other Sanscrit characters (forms of natural forces), called words, represent, similarly, pictures of sound-forms of different attributes and objects. Sanscrit words, in fact, are sound-shells which hold within them essences of the attributes they represent and the objects they signify. The letters K, R, I, SH, N, A joined together form the word Krishna, which is the sound-shell of the Essence of Love, Nature's Absolute Attribute, produced by the fusion of the forces of which the composing characters are sound-forms. When frequently repeated together with the Love-Passion Seed word, its vibrations, after purifying the atmosphere of the mind, illumine in time its inner chamber, the heart, which is the door of the soul, and fills it with the ecstasy of Bliss.

The Tulsi plant is the most spiritual plant in the world, hence its leaf is the best medium for conveying prayers, especially when it is smeared with sandal-wood paste, the perfume of which is much like the aroma of the Lord's Body.

But this morning worship is not all that the householder Vaishnav performs to attain to the love of Krishna. He eats or drinks nothing without first offering it through some mystic formula to Krishna, and his food is pure vegetables, his drink is pure water. In the evening, he joins other Vaishnavs to talk of Krishna, hear of the sacred earthly acts of Krishna, sing of Krishna, and, when the spirit of song moves him, he dances with others in ecstasy. Besides these practices he repeats many thousand times the name of Krishna over his Tulsi rosary. In fact, he never misses any means or opportunity to keep alive an unbroken Krishna-consciousness, the result of which is that he enjoys the joy of Goloka here on earth in this earthly body. He is rewarded with the foretaste of what he seeks to enjoy after he lays down his physical body.

This is enjoyed by the hermit Vaishnav, who generally lives in Brindāban, in a higher degree. He is unhampered by all the disturbances and difficulties of the householder, and so he devotes every moment he breathes to the service of his Krishna. He has renounced the world and with it all its thoughts. From the earliest morning up to very late at night he prays, chants, talks, hears, reads, sings and dances by turns. He eats but once and that very little, a few wee bits of unleavened bread begged from pious homes. His only world's goods are the scanty clothes on his body, his earthen water bowl and his volume of scriptures. He has made peace with the whole world by his humility. He has nothing but blessings for all, sincere blessings even in return for curses, and prostrates at full length prone to the ground before everyone. He follows the saying of the Lord Chaitanya that a Vaishnav should be lowlier than a blade of grass; more forbearing and charitable than a tree, which spreads its shade and offers its fruits even to one who cuts down its branches; should never seek respect for himself but pay respect even to those who are respected by none; that a Vaishnav should at all times sing of Krishna. Thousands upon thousands of such Vaishnavs, both male and female, can be found to-day in the Holy Land of Brindāban and the Holy City of Nuddea, the birthplace of Chaitanya, whose Christ-spirit and ecstatic life are unparalleled in the religious history of any other country,

ancient or modern. They represent demonstrated living proofs of the power of the Lord's Name upon the human mind.

SECTION XXIV. KRISHNA LEELA.

This Krishna, the Lord of Absolute Love, the Seed and Soul of the Universe, comes down to this earth to serve and inspire men with His Love once in every Manwantara, once in every 71 Divine Cycles, that is, once in every 300,000,000 of our lunar years or more. Every Universe, of His countless Universes, likewise has its turn of being blessed by His visit as an Incarnation, once in a long period. This Universe of ours is the smallest of these Universes and its turn of Krishna's Incarnation comes off during the Junction Period of the Copper and Iron Ages of the 28th Divine Cycle of every Manwantara. This being the Iron Age of the 28th Divine Cycle of this Manwantara the Lord blessed this earth with His Personal Presence 5,000 years ago, His birth taking place within the appointed Junction Period.

Avatārs that come to earth to save mankind and protect the good from the bad, the *Srimād Bhāgavat* says, are innumerable; they are either partial manifestations or aspects of Vishnoo, "but Krishna is Lord God (Bhagavan) Himself," the Supreme Deity of whom Vishnoo Himself is the Fourth Manifestation. Nobody knows exactly when Krishna will come, for even Brahmā, the operating creator, knows it not. Brahmā only sees him for a second once in a long while, flashing through his meditation like a lightning flash. When Krishna came this last time on earth with His Second Manifestation, Sankarsana (who was born as His Elder Brother, Balarām), the time was ripe for an incarnation of Vishnoo. But as the moon and stars are covered by the effulgence of the Sun, the Avatār of Vishnoo could not appear separately, so he was merged in Krishna—the part was swallowed by the whole.

The story of the earthly career of Krishna, given in the Second Part of this book, is the story of the All-Love Krishna of Braja. This All-Love Krishna was the Krishna of Brindāban, also called Braja, the land where He played and roamed, where He went through His earthly career up to the age of eleven when He left Brindāban for Mathura. The Krishna of Brindāban is the Fullest Manifestation of Krishna, the Fullest Expression of His All-Love-Self. Hence the Krishna of Brindāban is called the Fullest Incarnation, which means All Krishna, the Krishna of All-Love. The Krishna of Mathura is called Fuller Krishna, which means three-quarters Krishna and one-quarter Vishnoo. And the Krishna of Dwārakā, half Krishna and half Vishnoo, is called Full Incarnation of Krishna.

Krishna being All Love, He knows nothing but Love, gives and accepts nothing but Love, acts nothing but Love, breathes nothing but Love, speaks nothing but Love.

The Asuras that He killed were not killed by Him, but by the Incarnation of Vishnoo which was within Him, and His part in those actions was to send the souls of those Asuras to His Absolute Love Realm, a reward reserved for His highest lovers and devotees, a kindness for enemies which Krishna alone can feel and show. Krishna has no power even to hurt a fly, for He is nothing but Love Itself, and does not know

anything else but Love. This much can be said about Krishna's participation in these what seemed to be acts of killing, that the powers of Vishnoo within Him that committed them, found His Body the most perfect medium for their operations.

One word of explanation is necessary here as to who the Asuras were and how they could assume such shapes. These mentions of Asuras and demons in the Hindoo book prejudice the unknowing and unthinking Western minds against the veracity of Hindoo historians and incline them to think that ancient Hindoo history are mixed with myths and fables. A little calm and intelligent thinking ought to correct the mistakes of such hasty judgment. Modern science, too, is daily paving the way to belief in things which even a quarter of a century ago were thought absurd and impossible. Science is proving the fact of the unlimited potentialities of the human mind. Mind-force is at present the subject of all the most advanced Western scientists and philosophers. When these will succeed in discovering the laws and truths of the mental plane, as they are now doing of the material plane, no facts of Hindoo history or of the histories of ancient times will strike modern man as mythical or absurd.

The Asuras were the psychics of the ancient times. They cultivated their mind-force in order to use it for personal aggrandizement. They were Yogis, but their Yoga was divorced from pure spirituality, because their object was not spiritual. All they wanted was power by which to overpower others and keep them under subjection for their own earthly benefit. Some of them were exceptions to the rule; they cultivated their Sāttwic powers to some extent along with the development of Rājasic powers. These became great heroes in battles and some of them made very good kings. Others developed merely Rājasic and Tāmasic powers of the mind and became tyrants and oppressors of all good people. Wherever and whenever the earth groaned under the burden of their sins, partial incarnations of Vishnoo came down to earth to destroy them and bring peace and goodwill among mankind once more. But those Asuras who had only their Tāmasic (dark) mind-force developed, were the lowest of them all. Their minds were all dark and their deeds were all black. Their natural inclination was to do mischief to people for the sake of the mischief itself. These were called demons. These demons can be found reborn among us all, in the most advanced centres of civilization, but they are now shorn of their former psychic force. The mind's natural inclination, however, is still in them. They take to external means to satisfy this inclination of killing or hurting or doing mischief for the sake of the act itself. Formerly their dark mental powers were their most potent weapons. Through those psychic powers they could transform themselves into any shape they concentrated upon, and if they failed to assume the form of a saint or a god, it was because they could not grasp the idea of the personality of such pure souls with their impure minds. To assume the form of a beast was the easiest thing for them, because they were nothing but human beasts in their nature. They could also assume elemental forms too, such as a whirlwind, etc., as in Krishna Leelā. The modern Asuras cannot do any such thing because their mind-forces are scattered and distracted. The chief cause why

people generally cannot be a high yogi or a black-psychic demon is the density of Rāja and Tama that at present pervades Nature, of which all beings are parts and products, which disturbs concentration.

The holding of the hill on the point of the little finger of the left hand, as Krishna did, was not a very great deed for Krishna to perform. This act can be performed by some of the Lords of Yoga. The Yogi, when he becomes an adept, inherits the partial attainment of the eight great powers (siddhis), which are in their fully normal states in Vishnū and in lesser degree in those who remain merged in the Essence of Vishnū and are sent therefrom to earth to serve mankind as Avatārs. These powers are (1) Animā, the power of becoming as small as an atom; (2) Mahimā, the power of becoming increased in size; (3) Laghimā, the power of becoming as light as desired; (4) Prāpti, to possess the power of the gods who are the presiding deities of the senses; (5) Prakāmya, the power of enjoying and sensing all objects seen or unseen; (6) Ishitā, or power over the forces of the Divine Will and over the lower forces of other beings; (7) Vasiṭā, non-attachment to objects and (8) Kāmavasāyitā, the power of attaining all desires.

Besides these the high Yogi may attain to ten other powers of the Cardinal Attributes: (1) Cessation of hunger and thirst; (2) Hearing from a distance; (3) Seeing from a distance; (4) Moving the body with the speed of the mind; (5) Assuming any form at will; (6) Entering into any other body; (7) Dying at will; (8) Playing with celestial damsels; (9) Attaining wished-for objects; (10) Power of irresistible command.

Five other minor powers are (1) Knowledge of the present, the past and the future; (2) Control over the Opposites, such as heat and cold, joy and sorrow, etc.; (3) Knowledge of another's mind; (4) Suspending the action of fire, sun, water, poison, etc.; (5) Invincibility.

These powers serve the Lord in His Leelās as humble slaves, whether he is conscious of them or not. Leelā means action of God Incarnate. The Rash Dance with the Gopis is the greatest Leelā of Krishna. It was the manifestation of the greatest might of His Love, the might possessed by the Supreme Being alone, by the Lord of the Lords of Yoga, by the Supreme Source of Yoga itself. Gopi means a milkmaid. But the milkmaids of Braja were extraordinarily spiritual beings born as milkmaids to serve the Lord in His Earthy Leelā. The chief of the Gopis is Rādhā, the Consort of Krishna in Glory and on earth. "Rādhā" means Adoration or Love-Devotion. Rādhā is the embodied manifestation of Krishna's Love-Principle, the Energy of His Soul, the Principle in Krishna which sets His Love into motion. Rādhā is inside of Krishna as this Principle of Love-Energy and she is outside of Krishna as the embodiment of that Principle. Rādhā is the First Active Principle of Nature, the Active Love-Principle which unconsciously gives birth to creation and pervades it as the purest spiritual energy. Like Krishna she is above and out of the reach of the creative Cardinal Attributes. Krishna is the Soul. Rādhā is the Heart-Soul and her eight chief

companions are the Eight chief Devotional Aspects, and the other Gopis the inclinations and minor attributes of Her Ensouled Mind. Rādhā and her chief companions are Krishna's constant companions in Goloka. They came with Him from Glory and were born as Gopis in Brindāban. Other Gopis who were in the Rash Dance were incarnations of Vedic Hymns and Truths which, as I have ere now explained in the cases of Nature's attributes and forces, are entities in Nature, the form-centres of Nature's purest sentiments and conceptions. Other Gopis were incarnations of goddesses, the presiding deities of Nature's spiritual forces and attributes, while others were incarnations of some of the highest illuminated male Saints (Rishis) who had prayed for ages and ages in every birth to serve the Lord personally with the tender devotion of a loving woman. The love of these Gopis for Krishna was absolutely selfless. They loved Him for the sake of the spontaneous, causeless love they felt for Him and which His Personality inspired in them, for Krishna was that Causeless Love Itself. The Rash Dance represented the vibrations of the Soul-absorbed Mind, vibrations which filled the universe with the nectar of Bliss and destroyed its Karma of a whole Kalpa, the Karma which formed its Prarabdha for the time.

Krishna danced separately with each Gopi. Each Gopi had her own Krishna beside her. One Krishna became as many as there were Gopis and yet it was the Self-Same Krishna. The One Soul played like So Many Souls with so many hearts and yet the hearts saw but that One Soul. Each Gopi saw only her own Krishna and was unconscious of any other, as she danced, absorbed in that Krishna, round and round, arms round necks, eyes into eyes, all-forgetting, the world forgot, round and round in the whirl of ecstasy, afloat on the waves of Love that is Bliss—round and round with that One Krishna, the All-in-All of the heart and existence—round and round, the lover and the loved, the little soul twining round the Great Soul, the Great Soul pouring Its Nectar into the little soul.

Ignorant writers and prudish religionists of the West have dared to call this Gopi-Leelā of Krishna shocking to all religious sense, in the face of the fact that two hundred and odd millions of Hindoos of the present day and myriads of millions of Hindoos of the past—Hindoos whose giant intellect and all-towering height of spirituality the world of to-day are beginning to wonder at—call this Leelā the most transcendental of all Divine deeds that have ever been performed on the face of the globe. According to these little critics of the greatest Avatār of the Supreme Deity, that Supreme Deity cannot possess any other sentiments of love than those of a Father and a Saviour, that God ought not to feel or show the love of a husband for his wife or of a lover for his lady-love. If this be a fact, will they answer the question as to whence has man got these sentiments, if not from his Maker of whom he is but an imperfect image? Whence has he got them if not from the Source of Creation itself, of which he is such a tiny part and product? This denial to God of the possession of a lover's sentiment implies an impertinence which God alone, out of His infinite affection for His creatures, can pardon. It only betrays the dense ignorance of these

critics in regard to the origin and laws of creation and of the relations of creation with its Creator.

Nature (Creation) is the materialized Will-Force of God. The Will-Force of God is a reflection of God Himself—the objectified phases of the semblance of manifoldness of the Absolute One. God is the husband, and the Energy of His Will, Nature, is His wife. God is the Lover and Nature is His loving Lady-love. By His All-pervading Essence, the only Support and Sustenance of Nature, He clasps His Lady-love to His bosom and dances with her to the intricate steps of the music of her Laws. This is His Rash Dance in the aggregate, the Rash Dance that is being performed every moment within Nature though hidden from our outlooking physical vision. What is true of the great Universe is true also of its miniature, man. Within our heart of hearts is the forest of Brindāban in which the microscopic blue river of love, Jumnā, flows, lapping with thrills of joy the bank of the bowery lawn where Krishna—our Soul—with His Gopis—our ensouled mental aspirations—is performing His ever-favorite, never-ending Rash Dance. And we are unconscious of it all, because our mind's outer ken is employed outside of us with outer objects. If we can withdraw the mind's vision from outwards and direct it into the depth of our heart then will belief come in the Rash Dance of Krishna with its practical realization. We are then of Braja and each of us, of the enlightened inner eye, a dancing Gopi—male or female whatever we may be externally it matters not. We are all Gopis, human male or human female, we are all spiritually feminine, for Krishna alone is the One Male and we all, particles of. Nature, are all female. We are all the lady-loves, the brides and wives of our One Husband, Lover and Beloved—Krishna. In the working out of the ever-beneficial laws of Inner Nature—the laws that throb for the weal of mankind—this innermost performance of Nature's constant Rash Dance with her Lord is reflected for a time upon her outer surface to fill outer Nature and mankind with the ecstasy of its supremest spirituality, the blessings of Absolute Love.

The twelve chief boy-companions of Krishna in Brindāban came with Him from Glory where they are His constant companions, while the other cow-boys were the incarnations of the gods and highly spiritual saints. The Kadamba-tree, under which Krishna usually played His flute, is a representation in physical form of the Tree of Life and the flute's dear strains the music of the soul. As Krishna and His Companions are constant, so are His Leelās (acts) constant. They can be seen now by any devotee possessed of the requisite vision.

With these words I humbly introduce the reader to the Nectar-Career of Krishna on earth embodied in the following pages. Let every reader read it with an open mind and the Nectar is sure to flow into his soul through that mind.

SREE KRISHNA THE LORD OF LOVE

PART II.

PROEM.

I bow to the Glorious One—the unerring Mariner who has guided my frail life's bark across the billowy world-ocean wrapt in "Goo"—the darkness of ignorance—with the ever-illuminating "Roo"—the search-light of wisdom—to the Land of the Lotus Feet of Krishna. I bow to Sree Brahmananda Bharati—my Gooroo.

And now, hush I list! I sing of Krishna. I will sing of Krishna, the Lord of Love, the Seed and Soul of the Universe, the Ultimate Principle in the composition of Creation, of, all souls' real Home—Sweet, Sweet Home!

I will sing of your only Lover, and your only Beloved.

I wish to sing a song whose sweetness will thrill through your body, which will make your soul float in ecstasy. I will sing a song whose burden will enter your heart as a dewdrop enters the bosom of a flower, but will soon, if you are attentive, spread itself into a boundless ocean on which your heart will be tossed over its gentle waves, like a boat bound for and sure of the land of Eternal Bliss. I as earnestly ask your blessing that I may be filled with such power to sing such a song, as I ask the blessing of my Krishna to sing of Him to you.

I will sing a song of love such as you have never heard, such as poets dream not of, which lovers know not of, which the human soul is ever in quest of, which, in your best moments, vibrates undefined through your soul, but ever eludes your understanding. I will sing of that Love which ever plays before your heart's vision as the will-o'-the-wisp through countless incarnations—a Love which alone will make you happy for evermore.

I will sing a song to you of a Love which you are striving every moment of your life to realize through success and failure in this life's games, the Love whose worthless counterfeits dazzle and deceive you at every step—at every step removing you farther and farther from the original they so poorly resemble. I will sing to you of the Love Absolute, the Love that is unbroken, the Love that is fed and grows by use, the Love that blesses the lover with greater abundance for giving it away to others.

I will sing to you of a Love which is your birthright, which is the very foundation of your existence, which alone is the substance of all existences, and, wonder of wonders, a Love which is your real food and Home.

Aye, it is of your Home that I will sing—the unknown pole to which the magnet of your soul eternally trembles. Home is ever sweet—Home, Sweet Home! But this your sweet earthly home is only the home of your earthly self, the brick-and-mortar closet of your fleshly coats, of which you have possessed a countless number. But all those coats have been mere coverings of your inner Self, which is a truant

from its own Home, but of which I have lost all memory, having lived so long in others' homes. I will sing to you of a song whose burden will remind you of this lost and forgotten Home, the Home that you are seeking in vain, consciously or unconsciously, the Home whose never-failing happiness you are trying to substitute in your borrowed home by ever-failing pleasures, pleasures which only pain you by their hollowness. How can you live upon a hollow happiness, you who have known and tasted solid, eternal happiness in your real Home?—the Home where light fades not, life grieves not, and happiness ever is! I will sing to you of the Home where your Master, Friend, Father, and Lover is ever anxious to get you back and take you to His bosom.

I will sing to you of Krishna—your Home—the Seed and Soul of your soul, as well as of the universe of which you are a miniature.

And now, my beloved friend, prepare yourself to listen to this song which comes to you from across the oceans—from a land where the altar of the Lord of Love is ever burning, fed by the libations of devotion and the incense of ecstasy, since the dawn of creation,—from that cradle of religion and civilization, from that spiritual metropolis of the spiritual world-empire, where the fountain of Divine Love, Life and Wisdom is still playing, to water the earth with the blessings of the soul—the Land of Bhārat, which you moderns call India. Listen and be blessed!

This is a song not set to any tune you know, to any music you have heard, and yet it is a song which is set in the true tune of your heart, to the natural music of your soul. It is the Song Ecstatic of your Heart-Soul which will make the core of your being throb in beatitude and melt the crusts of materiality in you into the Love Unspeakable! Listen and be blessed!

CHAPTER I.

Weary and overburdened with its load of sorrow and weakness, the great heart of Mother Earth lifted her voice unto the heights of the skies, complaining.

Her patience and faithfulness were qualities of wondrous worth to Brahmā, the Creator, [2] and so, drawing aside the curtain from his abode. He looked into her soft and wearied eyes, saying:

[2] Brahmā is the Creator of the details of the Universe. The Supreme Creator is the Supreme Deity, Krishna. He creates by His Will. The inequilibrium of the three Cardinal Attributes (Sattwa, Rāja, Tama, or Illumination, Activity and Obscuration) embodies the Creative Will of Krishna, as explained in the foregoing part of this book. This inequilibrium starts the current and force of Creation. Vāsudeva, as the manifestation and centre of the first flush of Creation, springing from Krishna as a result of this loss of poise, is the Second Creator in whom the seed of Creation (unpoise of Attributes) dwells as an Unknown Feeling of differentiation. Sankarsana, who springs from Vāsudeva, is the Third Creator, but acts only as the Unconscious Cause of Creation. Pradyumna, who springs from Sankarsana, carrying the Abstract Idea of Creation, is the Fourth Creator, the Semi-Conscious Cause of Creation. Aniruddha, born of Pradyumna as the Full-Conscious Cause, is the Fifth Creator. This Aniruddha is called Nārāyan and Vishnōo. From Him springs Brahmā, the first sprout of Creation. He is the Sixth and the Operating Creator, called in the Hindoo Books the "Father of Creation," the "Grandfather of all God's creatures." Brahmā's Abode is the Brahmā Loka, otherwise called the Satya Loka or the Seventh Heaven, the Seventh from the Earth Sphere (First Heaven). Just over the Brahmā Loka is the Vaikuntha Loka, the Abode of Vishnōo, the Abode of Salvation (Mukti), where souls freed from the last bondage of matter and its influence go for Rest and Reward. This Abode of Vishnōo is unapproachable even by the gods and the illumined souls who dwell on earth or in the Four Upper Heavens. Brahmā alone by mediation can communicate with Vishnōo on any subject bearing on the welfare of Creation and receive a response from Him who is the Outerward Form of Krishna.

"O Mother Earth! Long hath the pain of ingratitude and faithlessness pierced thy tender heart, and with courage and loving mercy hast thou borne its stings. But now a balm is to come unto thee and soothe thy wounded love and readjust those things of which thou dost complain.

"Yet a little while, O thou Goddess of Plenty, and One shall play upon thy breast, which will make the veins of thy body to thrill with warm love, so that thy heart will be beautiful beyond what it yet has been.

"Thy mountains shall laugh in great happiness on seeing the beauty of Him who shall cast His lotus eyes upon their rugged sides.

"Thy rivers shall flow in rhapsodies when His Sweet Body shall sanctify their waves by its contact.

"Thy harvests shall come forth in great plentifulness.

"Thy cows shall give forth milk that shall be nourishing and healing unto all whom it will feed.

"Thy trees shall cast forth shadows that all who come under their cooling shade, sick unto death, shall bound forth with the gladness of life and love in their bodies, and, O patient Earth, all who tread upon thee shall call thee blessed because the One All Beautiful shall have made thee blessed by His Holy Feet treading upon thee."

Thus spake Brahmā unto Mother Earth, who lowly laid again her dark head, and entering the Abode of Vishnōo, he said unto Him:

Thou Mighty One! Well dost Thou know the grievance of her, the Patient One, who is dear unto us. Do Thou in Thy glory and majesty succor her, O Lord!

"Let the Only One, the Lord of Love, the Sovereign of all the Universe, the Author of all that lives, again be born upon her surface, and so bring to her wilted breast the nectar of Love, that all who draw from her may again partake freshly of the love that is the life of all animate and inanimate.

"This Thou do, O Wondrous and Most Beautiful One, and quicken again with love her heart and the hearts that beat against her breast, so that the eyes of those who have eyes, yet see not, may see.

"Do Thou incarnate with Thyself those who have ever walked with Thee, and who may, even before the eyes of all, perform and live miracles of love. For, O Most High, full of stolid unbelief and fettered with the world have Thy children become, so that even she who erstwhile ever patient was has complainingly called unto me for help."

He, the Maker of all that is, forthwith spake:

"So shall it be. Unto her who has held upon her lap all those who are mine and who hath come out of Me and who is also of Me, I shall be born.

"And great shall be the rejoicing of her and my children who walk upon her surface.

"From the heart of man the weight of stone shall be lifted and his eye shall be quickened with love, and I with my followers shall bring to them the ways and means that love doth know, and the whole known world shall again learn that I am Life and Love, that I the Creator of all things am, even unto the ant and the huge elephant who by one blow of his mighty trunk uprooteth the tree.

"They shall also know Me as Child, Son, Warrior, King, and Priest, and in their midst I shall walk even with those who with Me shall be born again, and seeing Me and knowing Me, I shall draw all unto Me, and close with Me they shall again taste the sweetness of my love.

"With Me shall come those who have ever known Me through many incarnations, those who cover themselves with the qualities most like unto Me and whom my Earth-children have learned to look upon as gods, praying to them because of these attributes which they themselves wished to be blessed withal.

"Tell those who know the fulness of my Bliss, those who have bathed in the nectar of those who have dwelt in the ecstasy of my loveliness, and those who in their

devotion have known nothing outside of Me, those who have ever seen Me in all things, and have feasted their minds only upon My Beauty—tell them that I with them shall be born of woman and shall dwell for the span of man's life among men."

And when the Gods, those whom He had designated, heard the Will of Him, great was the rejoicing in that Abode, for no Will knew they, save the Sweet Will of the Most Lovely One, whose Lotus Feet they worshipped in ecstasy.

CHAPTER II.

In the seat of Hari, the sacred city of Mathura on the Jumnā, Vāsudeva in love and humbleness took unto himself Devaki as bride, who by all was known as the most holy and virtuous maiden of that land.

Pear unto the heart of her brother, the Prince of Mathura, she was, and beloved among his people and among all women because of the purity of her heart and the sweetness of her face. To show to all the world his love for her, the prince himself, in proud fondness, drove the marriage-car of his little sister princess and the new brother-in-law, who, by right of great wisdom, a Pundit of high standing among the learned was.

Gentle was the new bridegroom, even as he was wise. Fond glances of love he cast upon the radiant face of the young princess, and from all sides the blessings fell from the lips of the populace on the sweet bride, the learned bridegroom, and the gallant prince who held the reins because of his love for them both.

But lo! in the span of a moment all was changed, for a voice there was which seemed to come out of space: "O thou fool! Why, even he for whom in pride and love thou dost hold the reins to her marriage-car, even she shall bear the child in her womb who shall sweep thy life from off the earth. Her son, the eighth, shall be the cause of thy death."

The reins dropped from the hands of the prince, and, springing to his feet, he caught the young bride by the hair as if to slay her, but was arrested by Vāsudeva, who cried, "O prince! Noble wast thou ever, and ill would it be for thee to slay thy sister on the eve of her marriage. It is not for thee to take life, O King, thou who canst not give it. Death must come, but let it not be by thy hand, O prince, nor yet before her time. Take not the life of her who is thy sister and thereby stain the heritage of virtue such as has been ascribed unto thee.

"Listen to the words of wisdom that have come to us from the sages, without whom all life a desert would be. Well thou knowest that a man's actions do follow him from body to body even as in walking he leaveth the imprint of each step behind the other, yet with each step doth he carry the dust on his feet from the ground whereon he did walk.

"Man hath many existences, each one portraying a character which is the outcome of his past self. As the present is the fulfilment of the threatening past, so man is the unfoldment and fulfilment of his previous existences.

"So seek not to blacken thy soul by the slaying of one of thine own blood, but seek rather to add new glory to thy light by preserving her who, all guiltless, thou dost seek to slay. Heap not thou upon thyself a dark and evil Karma to confront thee and blight thee in thy other lives.

"It is but the chill breath of suspicion and the dread tremor of fear that surges heavy and dark through thy mind. Be warned by me, O prince; desist from thy unjust act and speedily thy heart shall glow again, warmed by the embers of hope. A man too fearful of threatening danger, in torment of that danger ever dwelleth. Even calamity may be turned aside by the smile of distrust, and fatality may forget thee quite while passing thy door.

"But when the soil of thy heart has been made fertile for fear, be sure its seed therein will thrive, finding sustenance for sprouting and its fruit it will bear.

"Stand valiant, O prince, and be not like the timorous woman who runneth away from the shadow of danger but to flee into the arms of the foe. Thy Karma that counteth up the reckonings cannot be cheated. So be not, O prince, of timid heart; and each son that cometh from the womb of thy sister, Devaki, shall be given to thee."

Listening to the wise counsels of Vāsudeva, the prince gave over his mad desire to slay his sister with his own hand, and the newly wedded ones proceeded to the home of Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER III.

True to his promise, Vāsudeva brought unto the prince his first-born, a son.

The prince, on seeing that Vāsudeva was true to his compact to deliver his son as it was born, gave it back, saying: "It is not this son that I fear, but he who will be born thine eighth one it is ordained shall slay me. So take back thy first-born, Vāsudeva. Of him there is naught to fear."

Vāsudeva took the little one, and putting it in the glad arms of the young mother, said: "O princess! It is with joy and yet with great foreboding that I return to thee the babe, for there is that in my heart which tells me that the prince, thy brother, spoke not the truth when thy boy he gave back unto me, for fear lodged in his eye and anger vibrated in his voice even as he said, 'From thy first-born no harm will come unto me.' Yet clasp him to thy heart, young mother, and bathe him in thy glad tears of love while he resteth on thy breast."

But even while the tender young mother crooned her love-songs to her soft nestling, the cruel edict went forth that the babe was to be taken from her, as also each new-born man-child that came into the land, for, as a blighting flash from the clouds that strikes the healthy young sapling at the root, there had come to Kangsa's fear-burdened mind the knowledge that in his former birth he had been dethroned and slain by one of his own kin, who was said to have come from on high even to still the power of the wicked and exalt the lowly and virtuous.

This in all its weight had come into his heart, and louder than the bolts of thunder the voice he had heard on Devaki's wedding-day seemed to throb in his brain, as he saw Vāsudeva depart with his first-born son. And great were the lamentations of the mothers who gave birth unto sons in that land. Many departed from the kingdom where Kangsa, the destroyer of the young, did rule.

But when the wailing of the new-born child was no longer heard in all that kingdom, the prince in his madness deposed his father, Ugrasen, and became himself the King and thrust Devaki, his sister, and Vāsudeva into the dungeon of his palace, where the six sons that were born to them were dashed to death on the flagged floor in the hour of their coming by Kangsa himself.

And now again there was quickening in the womb of Devaki, and the joy of natural motherhood was overshadowed by the terror of the fate of the new life that was to be a babe. But groundless was the fear of the agonized mother, for his coming was even before his time; for the earth sent a mist thick as the garment of death to shroud the palace of the King, and a deep sleep on the gaolers fell on the hour that the child of premature birth felt the breath of earth, and drowned were its first weak wails by the sound of the winds that shrieked without.

And the child that came to the world too soon, even before his time was completed, was despatched in great haste to one who suckled him and called him her

own. The child that by the near hand of love was saved from the hand of frenzied murder was the child that would walk with the Lord of Love and play with the Soul of the Universe.

And when the mists were gone, the King marvelled that no child had come, while the mother marvelled at the goodness of Him who was the Author of Life.

CHAPTER IV.

Now the time was ready for Hari (Krishna) to come to be born and dwell upon earth.

His sweet will it was to be as a man and show man the beauty of Love. It was then that Devaki again conceived and a mother unto the eighth child would be.

But lo! fear now to her was unknown and glory shone around her like the sun filling the darkened dungeon with light, for the Lord of all Light in her mind did come, and Him as a child to the world she would bring. She, who the mother many times of sorrow was, now the mother of joy had become.

O blessed art thou, wife Devaki, that the sweet will of the Lord of all Love and All Life was centred on thee when he willed as a child among men to come! And thou, poor mother, whose heart was made to bleed for the bearing of sons, henceforth an ocean of love shalt become, for throbs not under thy heart the pulse of Him who, love-touched, love-filled, and love-made, pervades all lives and all that ever will live?

And in that hour barren women, as a gracious boon of the Lord's coming into Devaki's womb, conceived to their own overjoyful surprise.

And when Kangsa beheld the glory of her who was his sister, he knew that Hari, He who would quench his life, was within her.

But when he sought to strike her low, the glow of the light that came from her overawed him quite and the steel refused to reach her flesh; and many gaolers were sent unto her by the king to slay, but when they looked upon her glory, lo! their hearts were quickened with love, and holy they became, and, dropping their weapons, fled from her side and in meditation and prayer sought the light that showed them their darkness.

And the seers and sages and gods and pundits and angels that see, with illumined eyes of the spirit, the things that were and are and the things that still will come, beheld the light that glorified the mother even though distance and mortar hid her from fleshly view, for the eyes that are quickened by spirit cognize not the sight of the senses.

And, prostrating low, salutations they gave to the Lord of the Universe that became child in the mother:

"O Thou, the Eye of the Universe that sees all, the all-hearing Ear, the Heart that draweth unto itself all that sprang from Thee!

"Thou, the Seed and Soul that hath in its centre the roots of all space and all that space containeth!

"Thou, the Source of all Love, the Existence of all Life, the Dispenser of all Light, the Mystery of all Wisdom, who, self-created, chose not to dwell alone, but willed creation to be and from whose breath all living creatures sprang!

"O Thou, who suffered darkness to be, that beauty of light may be known! Thou, who by Thy own sweet will dost thrust Thy own children forth a little but to draw them unto Thy heart again to heighten Thy pleasure and theirs!

"We, Thy blinded children, illumined, were made to see the light of Thy coming to earth. Thou, the Mystery and yet the Revelation of all things art!

"Thou, that which hideth from man all things that he accounteth not to Thy sweet will and revealeth all unto him who sifteth each act to Thy source!

"Thou, who attunest the ear to the sound of all harmony and keepest Thy Worlds and All Life in motion!

"Thou, who art the Immensity of All Things! We know that even as a man Thou art come in our midst.

"O Thou the Source of all Energy that is, Thou the Vibrations of all joy that thrilleth through all Life!

"Thou Maker of all, who by Thy coming dost lift us even unto Thyself, again who by Thy coming will show the vileness of Self which unlike Thee is, and how sin doth darken where virtue is!

"Thy power, O King of all Kingdoms, is boundless. Oh! why are we blessed with the truth of Thy coming, we the blinded whom Thou hast chosen to honor?"

Thus spoke the sages, the pundits and seers, the gods and Brahmā, the Creator Himself, whom the Lord of Love had blessed with the power to know of His coming.

CHAPTER V.

And the child was come, the child that was God, the God that became child, and time itself stood still in its passing to mark the wonder of that coming!

The clouds ceased their onward sailing and crowded in piles of white and blue and gray softness, to marvel at the child's first smile. The heavens rained down blossoms of white and red and golden and blue lotuses.

The mountains gave forth a great cry of joy, as they in gladness met.

The rivers heaved their billowy crests and chanted hymns of praise to Him, who was to make holy again their waters.

The earth throbbed and thrilled as the streams of holy Love shot through all her body, swelling her breast with new life and feeding all that was living and moving within the recesses of her bowels, and clothing with great beauty that which lived upon her bosom.

The roots of growing things grasped with a firmer hold her sides, and her loved creatures, those that walked and those that crept upon her surface, nestled once more, as of yore, when all the world was holy, against her freshened and strengthened body with new affection and faithfulness, and her great heart uttered a mighty thanksgiving to Him who had heard her appeal and succored her.

The seeds that were in her mouth burst into rooting, the roots into sprouting, and the budding trees, that graced her brow, into glad blossoms.

And the trees that were in blossom bore ripe fruit in the hour of His coming.

And all those that hungered were fed.

The cows, big with young, dropped their calves, and their bags were full unto bursting for all that came to take sustenance therefrom.

The motherless cubs of wild things fearlessly suckled from her udder, and the cow lapped the soft, furred sides of the young stranger with her long, rough tongue.

And all the wild things that hungered were fed in that hour.

The eagle left its nest on the mountain's rugged side, and sat on the tree with quivering wing beside the dove, that cooed its inward shout of love.

The snake forgot to charm the timid songster that thrilled its joy close by, but, lifting up its hooded head, it madly danced between the sunshine and the shadow that the exultant branches of swaying trees did cast.

The huge elephant sportive became, and played with the deer and doe that rubbed against its haunches.

The fierce lion, the leopard, and all the untamed creatures of the forests, with yearning call of love, turned their faces towards the place, all light, where Love, as a little child was cradled in the arms of man.

And in the hour of His coming many rainbows of wondrous color and beauty did span the skies. And the sun liquid as molten love became.

And in that hour man and beast, and bird and flower, and all that lives upon the earth and underneath its surface and in the deep waters, did look into the abode of Love.

And on the face of earth the smile of Love did rest, and sin vanished from the heart of man, even as hunger disappeareth where plentiful food is dished to the hungered.

The eye of the murderer looked for darkened places wherein to bide himself, but, finding naught but light, did throw his blade into the purified waters of the holy river and knelt at the feet of the holy ones, who in ecstasy were wrapt.

The gray and shrunken face of avarice lifted itself toward the skies, and lo! glorified the countenance became!

The face of bloated folly, the weakness of vanity, the vileness of ingratitude, the stubbornness of unbelief in that hour were unknown to man.

A joy, unfelt before, on all the earth did reign, a joy that even yet doth thrill through hearts of life, for the child that was God, and the God that was child, had come on earth to live with man.

CHAPTER VI.

And the child that was the Lord spoke to the mother in the hour of His coming as the Sovereign of all Sovereignty would speak:

"Say unto him, Vāsudeva, thy husband, to transport me to where the wife of the King Nanda doth lie, who but now giveth birth to a daughter.

"Pass through the gates; the chains shall be loosened, the keepers asleep at their posts.

"The warring waters of the Jumnā a path shall make for him to pass with Me in his arms. The gates of the palace on the banks of the river wide open shall stand, and the mother asleep in her chamber shall be.

"Put Me on her breast, and bear away the daughter that to her is born. And when the prince shall ask Vāsudeva for the eighth child that is born unto thee, do thou deliver the daughter of Yasodā unto him."

Thus spake the Lord, and a helpless child He became.

Vāsudeva in wonder passed through the gates; the keepers all slept a sleep as of death. The waters parted to make a way for him who carried the Lord to pass.

Unseen, unheard, he entered the courtyard and palace and passed the sounding halls and corridors, until the room of the sleeping queen he spied, and taking the Lord from under his cloak, on the breast of the sleeping queen he laid it, and took in his place the wide-eyed daughter, that cooed and smiled in his bearded face.

And sleep still held the queen and the city and the gaolers embraced, till he stood at the side of Devaki once more, who wept at the sight of the smiling babe, who soon at the hand of her brother must perish.

At break of day, the prince entered the dungeon to seek the life of the eighth child of his sister.

As he lifted the child on high to dash its head on the flagged floor, lo! the child slipped from his hand and rose, the while speaking: "Karma, that counteth all reckonings up, cannot be cheated by thee, O prince! Tis written that thou must be slain by the eighth son of thy sister, and so it shall be.

"That child I am not, O prince! But I came on earth for this hour, to show thee thy folly. Dost thou think, O fool, that by human force, by the slaying of innocence, by the destroying of hope and joy in the heart of the mother, thou canst change the Will of Him who is the Maker of all laws?

"Thinkest thou, O man, thou canst cross swords with Him that knoweth the effect of each thought that man thinketh, even before the thinking is done?

"He whom thou seekest thou shalt not find!"

She ceased, and a light never seen on earth or in heaven enveloped the child as she vanished from view.

And the prince rushed forth in his frenzy and madness and sought not again to bring harm to his sister, but unfettered the chains were of husband and wife, and in freedom forth they went.

CHAPTER VII.

And the child that was God as Krishna was known.

And men drew love from the Name, for the Name the potency of Love contained, even as the seed the tree doth hold, or the bud the fruit of the tree enfolds.

And all who spoke the Name of Krishna felt the heart beat quick and high, and all who looked upon His face felt at once that Love was nigh.

And it came about that all the people who lived in the kingdom where the Child Krishna was reared as the son of the King of Braja, thronged daily to get but a glimpse of the Child, who, though helpless like other babes did seem, yet held the power to draw all men unto Him, even by the light of love that made Him All Beauty.

As He sat on the arms of the queen, His foster-mother, bedecked with the ornaments and finery which the king delighted to bedeck Him withal, lo, the light that radiated from His flesh did put the glowing jewels to shame, for love is the essence of Beauty and Light, and the Child was the embodiment of Love itself!

So the light that flashed from the jewels was but as the light of glow-worms that disappeareth when the radiance of the moon is about them.

In despair the king sent messages to all the then known world to procure such jewels as might enhance the loveliness of his Child, but ever when on His body they rested, dull they seemed on the glow of His flesh.

But oft the Child would reach His baby hands for the flowers that the populace brought in great profusion to lay at the feet of the Child that was Love, and as He held them close to His baby mouth, behold, their petals quivered and throbbed with love-life, and deeper the color dyed their softness and brighter the gold of their hearts did flame, at the touch of the hand and the breath of the Child that knew naught but Love.

And in the days when Love as a Child did dwell on earth, a great force of spirituality through all the land went forth, and the heart of all the world went up in praise for the mercies linked with ecstasy that enriched the cup of all Life.

Gleams of kindness, and deeds of generosity, and miracles of patience, and justice, and love, unheard of before, now naturally burst from the heart of man, as water bursts forth from a spring 'neath the rock.

And the fields, that before were dried and burned by the sun's rays even as stubble, gave forth rich harvests.

And the rivers and seas that were lost to man's eyes, again in beauty before them rested.

And the Child that was the stalk and stem of Love in beauty did grow, shedding His gracious smile on all the world.

And Kangsa, the King, now heard of the marvellous Child whose smile brought a smile on all the world.

CHAPTER VIII.

Then Kangsa, the brother of Devaki, besought the demoness Putanā, mother of evil, to give each child in arms the milk of her breast, that should fill them with death at the sucking.

And forth she did go, and prayed to be taken into the palace of the king, to behold the young Child whose face gave blessing to all who on it looked.

On her coming, the Child stretched forth its arms to be taken to her breast, but when her breast between His lips He took, she bent her face to look at the Babe, and fear made her pale and faint, for in the beauty of His eye the wisdom of all the world she beheld.

And releasing the Master she held at her breast, she pleaded and prayed that He cease His sucking, but harder He drew and firmer His grip was, till exhausted and lifeless she fell on the ground, while with a smile the Babe played with the breast and crept on the body that lay in death.

And when they came from far and wide to look at her who brought destruction and death to children, they beheld her swelled and stretched to immensity.

For smiling evil seemeth not big, but rob it of the smile that hideth its leer, and huge and misshapen it doth become.

So with Putanā it was. Forth she went to mother and suckle the young children and thus bring death to the Child of Love. Clothed in sweet motherhood and kindness of purpose, all hearts were opened to welcome her freely, yet evil she brought wherever she walked.

But He who was All Love at once sighted her hatred for love, by that which in her all unlike Himself was, and straightway in her poverty of Love and nakedness of heart she stood revealed in His eyes.

And all saw her thus hideous and unsightly, and marvelled at the blindness of their eyes.

But mark now the kindness and power of Love.

By the touch of His lips upon her breast, she, who never knew love, by contact with Him became sanctified. And the effort Putanā put forth to bring death to Krishna, under cover of Love, did make her for the moment a mother in truth. And for that moment of concentrated love in Him the honor of Divine Motherhood on her was bestowed in that realm where hate is unknown. And all the world marvelled, when dead she lay, at the aroma that rose from her huge body.

But the Child only smiled as He played on her breast.

Verily the aroma of great sweetness reached to all the skies. For Love is ever the master of hate, and Love in its strength doth conquer all hate, and hate is purified by the breath of Love, and sanctified it is by its hand.

CHAPTER IX.

A year has passed since the coming of Krishna, a year of peace and plenty to all.

And the earth was relieved of pressure, and the minds of men were illumined by the light that shone in their midst.

And the hearts that were cramped and narrow with pain grew big into bursting with the love that flowed from the Child that was God.

And Nanda prepared a great feast for the naming of Him and the Brother, Devaki's seventh child who, at birth premature, had been despatched to the land where Krishna now was. And the feast was attended by many guests, who rejoiced on beholding the wondrous Child who on that day a year had brought joy by His coming.

And the priest was called and the seer, and he who read the stars and read the Vedas alike. And when the stars he contemplated, he saw the wonder of His birth, and, prostrating at the feet of Him, spoke to them who gathered to hear: "The oppressed He shall succor, the enslaved He shall free, and those that in danger are He will protect, and bring all blessings to the land where now He doth live. What and Who He is you know not, but, crowned with living stars of Love and adorned with the rainbow of promise on His breast, this Child shall bring glory and Bliss wherever He breathes. Oh, blessed was the day I looked in His eyes and touched my hand to His Holy Feet, for in Him the virtues and powers and might of Love do dwell that never before men with eyes have seen."

But the little Child smiled, then stretched forth Its arms and puckered Its lips for the mother's sweet milk.

The mother in pride placed It at the side of the cart that held brass vessels and articles of food, and turned to receive the congratulations of her guests, when lo! the Child with Its baby foot upturned the cart, and the cart and the vessels in pieces lay on the ground!

And more and more they marvelled at the Child, whose baby strength upturned the cart.

Nor was this the only miracle of His babyhood. For one day the mother sat with the Child in her lap, when lo and behold, so heavy He became that she felt as if the world were resting on her knees!

The strength of her knees gave way and the Child sank to the ground, when a whirlwind came, in the shape of a dust-storm, and raised the Child to heights unseemable, but soon again lightly on His feet He descended at the side of His mother.

Wildly she clasped Him in her arms and kissed Him again, but He opened His baby mouth to her eyes, and lo, the universe she saw within!

And in that moment unto her it was revealed that He, whom she called her son, was God—the Seed and Soul of the Universe; the One who all things knew, yet who was unknowable to all.

She also knew that the shadow He cast by His great, universal Will was Māyā, and the offsprings or attributes of that Māyā as demons were known.

And she knew that a demon it was, urged on by Kangsa, that came in the shape of a whirlwind to carry her Child away. And that He who was all Love was mightier by far than the offspring of shadow could be.

And thus the power of darkness again by Love was overthrown! All this she saw in the space of a moment, and salutations she made to her Lord.

But the Child only smiled and the mother again saw but her Child. For how could the woman, who suckled the babe, dwell long on her Child and know Him as her Lord?

CHAPTER X.

Thus the childhood of Krishna was full of what were considered wonderful miracles by His family and the populace, but which, to the Lord of the Universe, were but divinely natural. The strength of the baby hands was colossal. The beauty of the baby face was entrancing.

His flesh gave forth a lustre' and Radiance that filled a darkened room with glory. The wisdom that peered from His wondrous eyes was full of loving mystery, and the touch of His breath brought to the heart a love that was ecstasy.

O Babe, that came to a desert of life, to make it a garden of lilies and roses! O Babe, that brought to a weakened heart the Love that conquered the world by its might!

O Babe, that came with a light on Thy brow that filled the eye like the glow of the sun, and brought on Thy breath the promise of Bliss which came to all those who breathed where Thou dwelt!

All these Thou wert, yet a helpless babe in the arms of those who reared Thee Thou lay!

And naughty Thou wert and full of mischief, too, stealing the golden butter, that stood in shining rows, the pride of the dairymaids, the Gopis, and feeding the same to the saucy monkeys, that crowded around Thee, to help Thee in Thy pranks!

Oh, wonder of Love and Might, Incomprehensible One! Thou Omnipotence, who the all-pervading energy of all art, and yet, with eyes aslant, didst play the child to suit Thine only sweet fancy, and in the midst of men didst come to teach men Love and save the world that was steeped in sin! Thou who wert Lord of the Lords of Yoga, this Thy Yoga-power did startle the world when in it Thou wert as a child!

On one occasion the Child became impatient and fretful, because the mother failed to suckle Him at His cry, and running amidst the pots and chums where she had been working the butter, He cast them down to the earth, breaking them into pieces and dividing the sweet butter with the pets that followed the Child wherever He went.

The mother, on being told of His mischief, sought to punish Him by tying Him with a cord to the husking-stand that stood near by.

The cord lacked two inches in its reach to the bench; more cord she sought, and fastening it end to end, found still the two inches missing.

Cord after cord she added thereto, but she could not make the two ends reach.

Amazed and startled she gazed at the Child, her hair dishevelled, her face flushed with excitement, a great fear looking from her eye, for what was this miracle, that prevented her from spanning the reach of two inches?

The Child, on seeing the troubled face of His mother, allowed himself to be fastened.

And thus in disgrace he stood for a time, till two trees in the distance attract His eye, and walking: away in the reach of the cords and drawing the husking-stand behind Him, He stood between two huge *arjuna* trees and, casting the cord about the trees, He tore them up by the roots.

Down they came with a crash to the ground, carrying with them all that was in their way. And lo! from the trees two fiery spirits appeared, and saluting the Child, they prayed and disappeared in a cloud of light.

For list! in the days of yore, when the Saint Narada walked the earth, he passed the stream where maid and youth made merry in the waves.

At the passing by of the Saint, the youths failed to salute him, but instead in bold arrogance laughed and called unto him, and reverence had they none.

In the heart of the Saint a prayer arose, that the youths who knew not respect towards the saints that walked on earth to make men holy, should be reborn as trees, yet as trees to remember their past offence and dwell on the folly thereof. But the Saint also prayed that when He who was God came on earth. He would remember the trees and sanctify and free them by His Love-touch.

So when the Babe's eye spied the trees, He uprooted them both, to make good that prayer. And by His touch the souls of the youths into high heavens did rise, while He, the Child, the great Deliverer of all souls that are born, looked on and smiled, and the populace wondered at the fall of the trees, and marvelled how the Child had been saved from death as they crashed down beside him.

Blinded ones, who know not Love in its mightiness and nearness!

Again, one day, little Krishna, romping with the playfulness of His earth years, heard the weak voice of a woman begging to sell her wares of fruits. Lean were her hands and shrunk her features, and her clothes were poor and thin because of the length of time they had been worn. Faint and quivering the voice reached the ear of Krishna.

With the glance of Love that warmed her heart. He bounded to her side, asking for fruits and giving her paddy instead, when lo! at the touch of His hand the face of the woman beamed with the light of beauty, her voice as with joy rang out, and her basket was heavy and filled with gems that blazed and glittered in the noonday sun.

And laughing, the Child ran to his playmates and pets and divided the fruits with them all.

CHAPTER XI.

Now came a time when the oldest and wisest of the populace of the kingdom where Krishna was reared bethought it best to take the wonderful Child from the place where men marvelled at the wonder of Him and came from far to look on His face.

And anxiety filled the hearts of the people, who loved Him best, for His safety, as calamity upon calamity came nigh Him; and though no harm as yet did betide Him, yet was it only a miracle that saved Him from the child-killer, Putanā.

And again only the hand of Vishnoo had rescued Him from the fierce whirling duststorm, and the turning of the cart at his side, and, last, the two trees that crashed at His feet, yet touched not a hair of His beautiful head.

Yes, best by far it was to take away the Child. So reasoned the elders, and Nanda approved, and forth they went with attendants and friends and all who lived in Gokula.

And a caravan they formed, the cowherds driving the cows and calves before them, and carts bearing the women and children, and the men beating the drums to the voices of the women that broke forth in glad hopefulness.

And bright was the sky that spanned their heads, and rich the forests through which they passed, and life-giving the sun was, and refreshing the winds were that greeted them on the way to Brindāban.

And in the early days of their sojourn in these rich forests' depths, tents they erected which soon were overspread with creepers that abounded in that place, and birds came near and nested in the tendrils, and the wild hare and shy deer nearer and nearer their new friends came, till, all tamed they would feed from the hands of the Gopis and played with the children; and thus in peace and serenity they lived in Brindāban.

Brindāban, the Land of Love and Holiness, the land where Krishna laughed and played, the land that the centre became of all spirituality, because of His sojourn there.

An ordinary boy, he walked with the boys, as tender of cows and calves.

And in a little while the city of Brindāban thrived, and a city of plenty it was to all who therein lived.

But as time went on, even here the dread calamities seemed to follow the boy Krishna. For an Asura, sent by Kansa, assumed the form of a calf, and strayed among the calves, hoping thus to elude the eye of the Child and perhaps take Him unawares.

But hardly had he mixed with the herds when Krishna pointed him out and strode to where the calf was grazing. With easy grace He lifted him by the hind legs and twirled him high in the air, till lifeless the Asura was.

Then, 'midst the shouts of the cowherd boys and companions, He lifted His face to the skies, which opened wide to His smiling eye.

CHAPTER XII.

In the morn of summer, early, even before the sun yet bathed the world with its golden warmth, the companions of Krishna, aroused from their slumber by the lowing of the cows, would gather about the house of Nanda and wait for Krishna to come from His bed and go with them to the forest to tend the cows and while away the sweet hours of long summer days with sporting and tales and long rambles together.

And oft, as they waited about the gates of the palace, Yasodā would speak to the waiting boys:

"Ye children! my Krishna has not yet opened His eyes to the light of the day; His sleep is sound, nor will I wake Him, till of His own will He comes from His bed; so go with the cows and leave Him to me."

But the boys would not stir, but would still wait His coming.

But the joy left their eyes, because of their longing to look at the Boy who was Love.

And loud were the cries that came from the boys as they saw Him approaching and then come in their midst, and He with the boys as a boy would be.

And oft Yasodā, the mother, who reared Him, would take Him aside and remonstrate with Him thus: "O my Krishna, my son, why wilt Thou thus spend Thy time with the cows and the cowherds? A Son of the King art Thou, O my boy, and Thy place is not there with the cows in the pastures. Many servants have we to see to the herds. Come, take Thou Thy flute, bedeck thyself with garments and ornaments as it doth behoove my son and a prince."

Then Krishna, twining His arms round the neck of His mother, with a world of glowing love in His visage, would gaze far away into the heart of His people and reply to her who knew Him as son:

"O mother beloved! Well it is for Me, a son of a king, with the people to be; though of the palace, yet is My place there where the people call unto Me.

Tender am I of the Flock, O My mother, and to them I must go, with them must I be to teach them Myself and the Power of Love.

"Even now must I go to the calling hearts, who madly seek Me and will not be satisfied till again Me they see."

And Yasodā, the Mother, in amazement gazed on the face of her son and understood not His prattle that such wisdom held, but the tears of fond pride rose to her eyes, as she saw the love that came from the boy and enveloped Him as a soft cloud of light.

And she kissed her son, seeing but in Him a merry little child bounding and throbbing with victorious health.

Onward He ran to greet His companions, who were satisfied now as they beheld His coming, and laughing the group went to the forest.

They played, burying their bare feet in the mosses, rolling in the sweet grass, clapping their hands in the fulness of joy, and shouting in very ecstasy of being.

Never saw they in Him the son of a King. They knew Him but as a cowherd boy who, like them, tended the cows in pastures and forests.

CHAPTER XIII.

Again the cowherds, including Krishna, went with their cows to give them drink, and also to quench their own great thirst. Sporting on the banks of the lake, they suddenly saw a monster crane coming towards them, with great flapping wings.

Affrighted they turned, all but Krishna, to flee, but ere a moment had passed, the huge bird had devoured Krishna.

But only an instant He was lost to sight, for before the boys knew what calamity had come upon them, the bird in great haste gave up the prey that brought to his throat the sensation of burning. For when Krishna entered his body it was as if liquid fire poured all through him.

Then seeing Krishna again in the midst of the boys, lo, with the beak and the talon he again made for Him, but Krishna seized the beak with His hands and ripped the great body in halves, even as women tear in half fine linen which requires no effort, and the demon was again allayed.

Again it happened that the boys with Krishna sought the forests, in sport to engage.

While bounding in frolicsome play, they beheld at a distance a huge serpent stretched forth in its length, like a range of hills. Wide open its mouth was, and close to the path of the boys it lay.

In an instant within it they walked, all but Krishna, who contemplated the monster, with eyes full of power; then straight into its jaws He too went.

But now the hideous serpent writhed in pain and, like monstrous bellows, its great sides heaved; for Krishna had expanded within its throat, till it expired, shaking all the earth in its throes of death.

And the boys laughed in glee as out of the great jaws of the serpent they walked.

But Krishna lifted His eyes to the sky and illumined all the heavens became. For the Dispenser of all Light destroyed the evil that sought to reign in that land where Love dwelt, and with mighty strength He felled the feeble hands of Evil to the ground. For, where Krishna was, illumination was and darkness could not draw life.

The deadly shade of Sin sought to blight and blast the garden where Truth bloomed fair and tall; but so ripe with Love it was that it could not on that soil take root, to create its evil nor yet prevent the good. For the Knower of all that is knowable saw with His all-seeing eye the spirit of every stress and storm and laid it low ere its brewing began.

And thus His blessing gave increase to plenty, and virtue it added unto good, and unto them that loved in that realm of Love, stones were as bread, and wormwood as sweetness was.

Evil is sin and hateful to Love. And Krishna had the longing and the power He wielded to save His world from the pestilent blast of the sin that in boldness sought to destroy it.

As Love He came, the Maker of Man and of the Universe, to rescue man, His creation, from the rottenness of his own doings.

CHAPTER XIV.

And Brahmā, the Creator, witnessed the miracles that Krishna, the Child and the Youth, was performing hourly at His plays and gambols, and marvelled if He the child might be that was come to succour Mother Earth in her trial.

Surely sometime, somewhere, in some place it was said that the All-Wise Being, that was over all, as a little child would be born among men to save them from their blinded selves and turn them Godward, looking towards Home.

This he knew had been said. Was this child the One, that the Eternity was—He, the Rememberer of all Beings and Things?

He would know it in proving the power of His Yoga! For if this were the Absolute Lord, He alone would be the Lord of the Lords of all Yogis!

Krishna, sitting with his boys in the forest, discovered that the herds had disappeared from their sight.

On seeing the alarm on the face of His friends, Krishna exclaimed, "I Myself shall fetch back the cows, so be not anxious, eat to your fill of the fruit you are munching."

He searched and called, but the cows were as vanished, and returning again to His playmates He found they too were missing.

Then a smile, as the sun doth break through the clouds, shone on His face, and, with Yoga-Māyā, He divided Himself into cowboys and cows and even into calves, and He Himself leading them who were of Him, the All—He returned with the cows and the boys to the village!

But, mark, when the boys, that were parts of Krishna, Love-Manifest, ran to the arms of their mothers, a thrill that was ecstasy played through their beings, and never did mothers love so their sons as the mothers who held to their hearts the boys whom by His power He had made from Himself!

And so it was with the cows and the calves. Those who milked the cows were wild with joy to stroke their hides and feed them, and milk of those cows as nectar was.

And Krishna stood with the cowboys among the cows and smiled in His wisdom at them all.

Now Brahmā knew that the boy was the Lord, who as child to man had come, for by his Yoga-power he had taken the cows and calves and boys to a cavern and there put them to sleep.

But Krishna, to prove Himself the greatest in power, had divided Himself into boys, cows, and calves, and for one year had been thus.

When Brahmā saw this, from trance-sleep he awoke the sleepers, and bowing low to the feet of Krishna, salutation made and thus did burst forth: "O Lord of all Love! O Being Supreme! O Source of all Life and Maker of All! Oft in the eyes of my

Yoga, glimpses of Thee have I caught and Thy loveliness and majesty transcend all beauty.

"What is the merit of the earth, that Thou shouldst bless it with Thy beautiful feet? have looked upon the earth and have seen Thy Love in all things, but I perceived not that Thou in Thy mercy wouldst live among men, even as man.

"Through Thy coming each heart, that a hovel in poorness was, into a palace of riches has grown.

"Through Thy coming all flesh its grossness has lost, since to the eyes of man Thou seemingly walkest in the flesh.

"Thou who the centre of Thy radiance art, yet walkest within that radiance! What is the mystery of Thy great Self?

"Thou who teachest the bird to cleave the sky and hath made me the creator of earth and continuest the motion thereof!

"Thou who the Concrete art and yet the Abstraction thereof dost prove!

"Thou Mystery of all mysteries, the Secret, the indistinct and yet the sublimely simple Parent of the Universe!

"Thou who art the whole and yet the parts, the immensity and yet the mote of things!

"A poor groveller am I at Thy feet in the dust! Why hast Thou blessed me to know Thee thus?

"Thou art the ocean of existence, and Saints and Gods and men and all Thy creatures are but the uncounted waves that play and stretch and heave on Thy breast!

"From Thy abode hast Thou come of Thine own sweet will to give unto all the power of Thy Love.

"Dull were my eyes to behold not in Thee the Lord, who stamped on all things the Name of his Love and with the Name its potency too.

"O Thou all Beauty and Power and Sweetness and Strength! refuse me not the bliss to dwell in homage at Thy feet!

"Thou, who art the cause of all things, who stirrest the root and stem of all life into love, who art the indestructible Truth of things, Thee I meditate and worship forever."

CHAPTER XV.

In the glad land of Brindāban, the land where Love reigned supreme, because of the presence of Him who was Love Personified, who was Love Incarnate and who as a Boy did bless the world with His Being.

In that land, 'mid childish sport and gladsome frolic, Krishna grew into beauty of youth.

Day by day the land became more beautiful in the joyous springtime, and one day His brother Rāma, he whose growing was beautiful, and who, like Krishna, was marvelled at for the wonder of his doings, said unto Krishna:

"Does not the smell of the forest invite Thee, O brother? Even here the air is heavy with ripeness of the fruit, that the sweet spring-air hath brought us. Shall we not go and pluck from the trees and eat our fill of the fruits that are dropping on the ground in luxuriousness but to become rotten?"

"Gladly would we go," said the other boys, "but we fear Dhenuka, of the demon family, who dwelleth close thereby. It is said that he hath taken the form of an ass and though he seemeth harmless, yet hath he much power for evil, which he wieldeth mightily, when he hath a chance to do so. So, though we would gladly partake of the fallen fruit, yet do we fear him. But what sayest Thou, Krishna? Thou canst, if Thou wilt, destroy all who are filled with hate and evil. Wilt Thou and Rāma use your strength to protect us?"

"Let us away," quoth Krishna, and in a few moments, heated and full of laughter, the boys were shaking the trees for the golden-sided fruit, which seemed to smile upon them in its beauty of ripeness.

But at the first sound of happiness that reached the ears of the ass, he rushed in the midst of the youngsters and sought to destroy them, making Rāma and Krishna the special objects upon which to vent his hatred and strength.

For a time both boys dodged hither and thither, trying to turn aside the anger of the ass; but seeing that it would not be appeased, Rāma caught him by the hind legs and after swinging him over the heads of the boys a few times, he dashed his head against the tree and proceeded to aid the boys in picking the fruit.

The braying of the ass had brought forth the kith and kin of the Asura, who dwelt in the forests with him; but they, too, in a brief struggle were killed by Rāma and Krishna.

CHAPTER XVI.

In those days, when Love was predominant and held no place for that which overcame and destroyed that which could not hold sway there, because when love is strong and active, then doth evil become feeble and weak and slinketh away into darkness and deep places, where the light of love cannot reach in to reveal its blackness unto the light of the sky.

In the river, on whose bank Krishna, Rāma and the cowherd boys often sat and sang the deeds of their hero, there dwelt a huge serpent monster with a thousand hoods, who by the venom of his hideous body did permeate the water of the lake with deadly poison and filled the air of the vicinity with a pestilent atmosphere that was deadly in its influence.

Krishna one day led the boys and cows to this pool, and they, being athirst, drank of the deadly water that lay still and without a ripple. Ever is evil inviting in its outward calm.

But lo! in an instant, the thousand-headed monster lifted its hoods, and the deadly poison having done its ghastly work, the boys and cows lay on the bank lifeless, and motionless they fell at the feet of Krishna.

With a glance of life-giving Love cast upon the dead ones, Krishna walked to a tree that was close by, while the boys, alive again, in amazement and wonder gazed at each other, forgetting, in the joy of the Love in the look that Krishna had cast upon them, the moment before.

On reaching the top of the tree, Krishna stood for an instant and gazed at the boys, His world and the serpent, and a light as of molten gold seemed to come from that body, more lovely than the sun to look upon.

Thus it was for a moment, then into the deadly pool he plunged, while the thousand heads of the serpent darted their venomous tongues' and struck the body till the boys fell into unconsciousness and the cows groaned in pain, and the men and women, with eyes bulging with fear and tearing their hair, almost swooned at the sight of the boy, who was God, crushed in the poisonous embrace of the monster; yet, even as stricken with horror, they gazed.

Krishna a glance like light on them cast, and breaking away from the grasp of the monster, He lightly sprang upon its hooded head and danced like the stars upon its hoods, till one by one low they were laid; and vomiting blood that was thick and black, defeated and broken, the monster sank beneath the waves.

And with a bound Krishna stood in the midst of His friends who knelt at, His feet. Then they drew Him within their arms, in the madness of joy at His safety.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh, grand was the sight of Love, crushing out Hate from the land, and the Gods sang and shouted and crowded together to see Sin conquered and Virtue grow strong!

Yasodā and Nanda, with the Gopas and Gopis maddened with delight, took Krishna home, while the heavens opened and scattered flowers to carpet His path.

And forever the lake was free from the venom the serpent had cast, and the near-by atmosphere purified was from the pestilent influence that hovered about there. For the monster at Krishna's command had departed and sought no more to injure the land.

But so great was the happiness that overflowed the heart of all, in leading the boy triumphant through the forest, that they tarried awhile in the glow of the moon, in their joy to behold the beauty that filled the night.

But far in the distance a light was seen that spread wider and broader its glow, and higher its flame leapt, and every second nearer and nearer yet it came, like a living sheet of fire.

And so it was. A castor plantation a burning world had become and quickly surrounded the merry-makers, who held in their midst the joy of their hour, and they cried in a fright: "O Krishna, Thou Child—or God, whatever Thou art, protect us from this death in this roaring flame. We care not for our lives, O Krishna, for they are thine by our love for Thee, but oh, the anguish the parting would mean—to die and not see Thy face again! Oh Thou, who by Thy strength dost slay the Asuras and drive from the land the serpent all powerful, save us from this, the parting with Thee and Thy loved companion Rāma, he that is most like Thee. O Most Lovely One, deliver us, we pray!"

Light as a leaf in the wind the Boy bounded to meet the coming flames. For a moment He stood in the seething sea of fire and lifted His hand on high, and lo, the fire was not—but the flames were seen to enter His mouth!

And again, with dancing and singing praise to the Boy, they made for His home with joy and delight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

One summer day Krishna and Rāma and their companions in the shade of the trees were a-sporting among themselves, when they saw coming toward them a stranger, a boy, clad as a tender of cows.

He joined in the games and soon all were merry, but Krishna, the knower of all, and the all-seeing One, in him beheld an Asura, named Pralamba, who had come in their midst to bring calamity, though friendship he feigned.

Krishna proposed a game to be played by dividing the boys into equal numbers and fighting, in sport, one with the other. Krishna was chosen the leader on one side and Rāma the leader on the other.

The defeated side, it was proposed, must carry on their backs the winners of the victorious side, and so the play began.

Krishna's side was defeated, and it was ordered that, among others, Pralamba, the Asura, carry Rāma on his back.

Away went the boys, each defeated one carrying on his back a winner.

Suddenly the boys heard Rāma's voice shouting to them, and behold, the Asura, by black magic power, a giant had become and was flying through the forest with Rāma on his back!

Krishna looked at them, then shouted to Rāma: "Brother, forget not that Thou art Vishnoo and that I am here!"

In an instant all fear left the heart of Rāma, and remembering who and what he was, he was filled with Almighty power and felled the giant with a heavy blow; and the play went on as before:

Another time the cows strayed into the forests and were overtaken by a great conflagration, and like wild beasts they leaped and bellowed through the forest.

The boys followed and called, but onward the cows plunged, nor heeded their voices, till Krishna's voice they heard; then turning they gathered about Him, seeing naught but the love and power in His eyes. For the brute is ever stilled by the might of Love; unlike man it knoweth its power and yieldeth to its force.

But the boys still turned towards Krishna, full of fear of the conflagration that threatened to envelop them. He looked at them all, and their fear was allayed. Then He gazed at the fire and asked the boys their eyes to close. This, they did, and when they looked again, the flames were no more to be seen.

Such was the Yoga-power of Sree Krishna, and the boys seeing His wonderful acts knew that Krishna was more than boy.

And joyous were they and gathered flowers and leaves that grew in great abundance at the foot of the trees, and they all wove them into garlands of white, purple, and red, and wound them about Krishna's neck, and also bedecked each other

with flowers and threw wreaths about the cows' necks and the calves' and homeward they wended their way in the twilight, just as the sun was sinking to rest.

The birds ceased their sleepy chirp and opened their eyes wide, and sleep left the flowers that nodded near the roadside, and the sun stood in space a moment to watch the procession that galloped down the road.

Krishna, the Beautiful, came in the lead, bedecked and beflowered. The spirit of life He was, with a transfiguring glory in His face, and His eyes full of softness and love-light. His body all graceful in curves to behold, yet strong in the vigor of youth, that shone through its grace.

With His hands on the necks of His two favorite cows, those who ever followed Him about as a child, the white on His right side, the black on His left, homeward they ran, while the white dust arose and covered and caressed them; one after the other, each bedecked with garlands, and each boy between two cows, who like them were wreathed with wild flowers.

And the elder Gopis and Gopas held their breath at the sight, so entrancing, that reached their eyes at the home-coming of the boys and their cows, bedecked and beflowered with the sweet wild flowers, and headed by Him whom they loved.

CHAPTER XIX.

Thus spring ripened into summer and autumn, and again the rolling seasons touched upon the heels of one another; and Krishna grew into greater beauty with each season of His earthly career.

More and more the people of Brindāban became absorbed in Him. The young and old, those near and far, looked upon Him as one without whom they could not exist.

And so it was, the complete whole was He of whom they were but parts, and ever were they reaching to again find the Heart out of which they had sprung.

His smile was to them the sun that warmed, His words the flowers which filled them with joy, His deeds the fruits which satisfied the hunger of their hearts.

The very quick of their lives He was; and nothing lived, breathed, bloomed, or grew in Brindāban, from the people to the cattle, creeping things and all that grew, that did not draw life from the Lord that dwelt as Youth among them.

And the milk-maids, who in loving companionship oft with him roamed to the hillside where with the other boys he tended the cattle, would in fond love contemplate the Youth, knowing not what the potency was that drew them, forgetful of all duties, to His side.

And among themselves they would speak thus: "Oh, how sweet is the hillside, when Krishna is near, how sublime is His countenance and His eyes how beautiful with piercing love-light filled! Serene doth He stand, yet bewilderingly entrancing is the joy that comes to our souls by His glances that seek us in softness and kindness."

"Was aught as beautiful," they were wont to say, "as our Krishna, clothed in blue and gold, with the crown of peacock feathers on His brow and a garland of fresh flowers festooned from His shoulders? Why is it, that flowers that girdle Him thus never fade or wither or die, but deeper their colors and stronger their petals and sweeter their fragrance are, when in contact with Him they have come? And the fields where He walketh, see how they smile and give their treasures in greater abundance! And the rivers close by, they rise high on our land, as if to dwell longer on our banks, because our Krishna is here.

"At the notes of his flute, all exquisite, whose potent spell must charm all the living, see how His cattle do greet Him and tremble and thrill at the sound of the music! And even the untamed things of the forest, with wistful look and nostrils spread, unbidden and unafraid, do stand on the crest of the hill, as if drawn and subdued by the influence of His love-sound!

"Oh, the sound of His flute is proof against the iron-moulded mind and can soothe a very giant of fierceness into gentleness by its sweetness! Checked is every fear, and rebellion is laid low in every heart, and a kingdom of love every home becomes wherein that sound hath pierced. Ofttimes it seemeth that time itself doth suit

its step to keep pace with its rhythm, for, note ye not, how the sun doth stand, loath to move, lest the sight and sound it loseth?

"Oh, why are we not the flute He holds to His lips! Blessed beyond all things it is, for His kisses it receives, and drinks the nectar of His love to its fill. What wonder that it joys to give the sound forth that His breath doth make!

"Or, why are we not the trees, under which He sitteth and whose branches He counteth with happy gaze, or even the grass, where He reclineth, that hath the dear privilege to caress His sweet body in lowly love? But we can only look on His face and die with longing, when from Him we go."

Thus spake the maids, but their tongues could not tell what bliss overflowed the heart, welling up with love for Him, who wakened in every heart the love that was all divine,—from the babe's first smile to the man who looked first on the glorious earth, and then to the arched sky, and then in His heart, and found there a sum of love that was all bliss.

In Krishna, the Youth, who played the flute in the forests by night, on the hillside by day, in Him, who charmed all that was, they beheld the fulness of Love.

He gave them and received all bliss. He was the Spring of Love that had the more for the giving. He satisfied the most when many did draw from His well-spring.

To the heart of all mothers He came as a child, and in tenderness and joy they caressed Him as such. Like a flower dropped untouched from heaven they held Him.

The men He approached as a friend and a son, and gave and received the love that they craved and felt.

The servant too He met in the way He sought to be known, and by Him he was served and did serve.

Thus to all He gave what they craved to have. Unstinted, unfettered He was in the giving, and none was there in all that land that sought and could not find what their hearts did seek.

And to the maids who opened their pure young hearts for the all-enduring mysterious love. He gave, of His inexhaustible source, the sweet touch that harmonized all things and made the heaven and earth to meet.

All kindred were they, for He was their Parent, and their love was but part of His holy flame.

And with the light from that flame there awakened within them that which knew but Love, which was but Love; and Krishna it was who filled all their being, and outward consciousness to them was lost.

Hail to thy maiden-love, O Gopi! Thy love the triumph of man and God! The crown of Time's blessedness it was! O climax of Happiness Complete!

CHAPTER XX.

When the days of fasting came, the Gopis, as the Scriptures commanded, began their worship by taking their baths in the sacred river Jumnā.

O happy waves, more holy made by the maids, who stood in prayers in thy beds and threw on thy bosom the sweetest lowers that grew where Krishna's feet had fallen!

Thus they worshipped each day for a month in the early morn ere the sun was seen, singing on their way the songs of love and praise for Krishna, who was the first and the last and middle of all their day.

One morning whilst sporting and singing in the clear cooling waters, they beheld on the limbs of a tree close by the youth Krishna, enthroned in its branches and holding their wearing apparel in His hands.

Crowned as usual with flowers was He, but a look all majestic was in His eye.

Affrighted with shame they begged for their garments, but Krishna replied: "Come and get your garments either in a body or singly, O damsels, and salute to the sun shining over My head as near you approach."

For a moment they hesitated; then that which as a shadow had crossed their heart, and is known as shame, departed from them, and saluting forward they came in a body led by Rādhā, the loveliest and chiefest of the milk-maids, and dripping and lovely before Him they stood. Completely they had surrendered their human will to the will of Him who was Divinity.

Selfless, unyoked from all that was worldly, before Him they stood. Uncovered and free as they came from His Heart, again on that Heart they gazed unashamed, for their souls were not covered with vice, or with piety, or even with virtue, but were bare as the Love upon which they looked.

They received the garments that He for them had. He, Krishna, the source of pure Love was, and His garments to them were spiritual purity, and clothing themselves with the clothes of His giving, they joyfully went to the homes of their fathers.

While Krishna, surveying His world, was enthroned in His kingdom of Love, and as the Gopis came to the feet of Him, who was the author of all Love, so all must come empty and free from all earthly desires to accept that Love for Love's sake.

For naught cared the Gopis but Krishna, desiring naught else beside! So only can Love Absolute be gained in absolute self-surrender.

He who would have that Love that is its own enjoyment, that Love that a universe unto itself is, doth not find it easy to obtain it by merit of piety or even the fruition of highest spirituality.

The bounds of all spirituality it must pass to become the Absolute and Causeless Love. Where spirituality ends, there causeless Love doth begin!

All love that hath a cause is of earth! Love that hath even a high spiritual cause is limited in scope, and such love may vanish when its cause is removed.

But the Love that is Causeless, All Enduring is.

It fadeth not, neither doth it pass away, but by day and by night and throughout all time it waketh and accumulath ever, for it is the Love Absolute!

From the souls of the Gopis the last trace of heaven and earth had vanished, and being resplendent with the glory of this Love Absolute, of the Love that was unto itself substance and satisfaction, was the causeless cause for this Gift of all gifts from the hand of Him who alone could bestow it and alone was that Love Itself.

CHAPTER XXI.

The summer sun beat down fiercely upon the Gopas and the cattle, when Krishna turned to them, saying:

"See the wonder of these trees! Kind, beyond expression, are they. They ask for naught, but what the earth, sky, and sun, the night and day give unto them; yet in all loyalty they grow and give shade unto us, and unto all that wish to partake of their shade.

"Their fruits also do they give and their bark and leaves and juices, to all who desire it.

"So should man also be, but few are there among men that live but to bestow blessings upon others.

"Yet unto you, I say: O my loved companions, only unto them that give of their abundance to all that come within their radius, unto them alone is life a blessing and not a curse.

"All men are placed here not of their own free will, not yet unto themselves, but by the will of Love and for others.

"And only as the law of give and take is set in operation among men, is man living a natural life.

"Ofttimes doth the man wonder why he is unto himself a huge perplexity.

"It is only when he forgets his relationship to all mankind that his life a riddle is, and this being so, he comprehendeth not the Maker of himself nor the universe, and failing to do so, how can he know life aright?"

After sporting among themselves, the boys spoke to Krishna, saying:

"O Krishna! a-hungered are we; where, oh where shall we find food? Canst Thou not assist us?"

And Krishna answered them, saying: "Go thou yonder where many Brāhmans are performing religious ceremonies; go to them and in My name say unto them to supply us with food. Say unto them that Krishna is wanting, and ask them therefor."

The boys went; but when they delivered unto them the message of Krishna, the Brāhmans answered not, neither gave them the food they wished, but proceeded with the ceremonies that were to give them the taste of Heaven, after the breath had left their bodies.

Tired and half famished the boys returned unto Krishna and told Him of their failure to obtain food and also of the indifference with which the Brāhmans had received His message.

Then Krishna smiled wisely and told them to hurry to the wives of the Brāhmans. He knowing that women are ever devotional and have illumination, while ofttimes men in darkness are.

And so it was. On hearing Krishna's request, they themselves hastened to Him, in spite of the protestations and threats of the men of the families, and brought food of the finest sorts unto Him, and prostrating themselves before Him, spake: "O Krishna! Thou Maker of all there is! Blessed are we and ours that Thou hast called upon us to serve Thee I We know Thee, O Krishna, as one greater and nearer to us than our husbands, brothers and fathers; and even at the risk of their displeasure to us, we come to Thee to lay at Thy feet our poor offerings and our hearts."

Krishna answered: "O women! Noble and true are ye to Me. Ye in your devotions have learned to know Me as your soul! Dearer to ye am I, even than father, husband and friends, hence at the risk of even their displeasure do yet seek to serve Me.

"I draw unto Me all that reach towards Me! Blessed are ye among men! Go back to those who are performing the ceremonies and aid them in their rituals. Kindly shall they receive ye, and unto them will ye take My love even as unto ye all I bestow it."

When He saw the reluctance with which they departed from Him, He said: "Know that in the Kingdom of Love separation cannot be, and whatever heart doth meditate on Me, in that heart I dwell in all My glory.

"Again, oh know, that by deeds I reckon ever and not by words. Ye have served Me by deeds, your husbands in their ignorance by words alone. But do ye go unto them and they too shall know and love the Name of Krishna."

And the women returned unto their husbands who received them with demonstrations of pleasure, and they too worshipped Krishna in their homes and hearts.

CHAPTER XXII.

When the summer was over, one day Krishna saw that great preparations were being made for the celebration of ceremonies in honor of one of the gods.

Clothed in seeming ignorance, Krishna said to Nanda:

"Why these preparations, O father, and for whom are they made, and what is the potency thereof? Is it a custom that through all time hath been observed, or, tell me, do the Scriptures demand that these ceremonies be held?"

Then Nanda, answering, said: "We offer to-day sacrifices to him, the god of the clouds, to him who watereth our hill-sides and giveth drink to our crops and our cattle, to him, Indra, the god who promoteth all growth by the blessing of rain, which he doth supply. A jealous god is he, O my Krishna, and desires that ceremonials and sacrifices often are made; and we in all humbleness strive to appease him, that in his wrath he may not withhold the moisture from our land, nor yet flood us with over much rain."

Then Krishna replied: "My father, He, who is the Author of All, doth give unto all what is needed.

"He that in wrath withholdeth a blessing, he never the love of creation hath known; nor doth he destroy what he hath created.

"For the Creator doth ever love His creation; for that, which from Him hath come, must forever belong to Him and the part is of His Great Whole.

"So Indra cannot curse this land by overmuch rain or dearth of it.

"But, O my father, tell the Gopas and Gopis to cease the preparations and worship not one who would destroy that which he should forever bless.

"But come to the hillside that entwines our land, the hills and plains that furnish us with sustenance for our cattle, and to the forests, too, where fruits grow in plenty and give of their abundance to all who but take it.

"Come there and give to the hill and the trees our sacrifices of joy and love, and feed the cows with offerings of fresh grasses, and walk with me around the hill in ceremonial procession and we shall see their worth and their kindness."

They did so, and Krishna said unto them:

"I am the Hill and the good that therefrom doth come." And his body became of a height and length that the eye of man scarce could measure, and said: "Do ye salute it and partake of its good!"

At that the rain poured down from the skies in fearful abundance and the people in fear fled to their houses, afraid of the wrath of Indra.

Seven days it poured and threatened to flood all the land. But Krishna smiled at the wrath of Indra, as he poured down his mighty rains and rolled his thunder in threatening claps above the heads of the affrighted people, who had dared to neglect the sacrifices to him who through all ages had been honored by them.

In their calamity the people sought out Krishna, whom they found at the foot of the hill Gobardhana.

The light of His body lit the darkness of night far more than the flashes of Indra's wrath that in lightning burst forth. "O Krishna!" they cried, "Thou who by Thy Yoga power can assume the form of a mountain at will, Thou who dost drive from the path of Thy feet all that unlike Thy sweet will is, save us from the wrath of him who even now doth seek to drive us from out of life."

And Krishna lifted His hand and eye, and lo, all their fear was allayed.

Then all the world grew light as day from the glory that radiated from His body, and by His Yoga power He lifted the hill itself from off its base and held it on high, on the tip of his fifth finger, even as the beetle doth hold on his horns the leaf that covereth him completely.

The people gathered beneath the hill with their children and cattle. Seven days they were there, and seven days Krishna held the hill above their heads, while the light that came from His smile illuminated all the space between the hill and its foundation.

Then Indra, amazed, looked down from his clouds and knew that the Lord of All was there, and had baffled his attempt to destroy what He, the Lord of all Love, had created. And the rain ceased its downpouring and the rivers became calm and the sun in its glory burst forth again. And flowers uplifted their water-drenched heads and the trees sprang back storm-tossed no more.

And Krishna said to those whom he had sheltered:

"Depart in peace, and fear no more the wrath of him who thought to destroy where he could not give life."

And Indra, the god of the clouds, descended to earth, and falling at the feet of Him, in abject humility said:

"O Lord I Thou art the Holy One! Puffed up and proud was I in my power and saw myself greater even than Thou.

"Well know I now that Love is the greatest power; and I, in my smallness of godship, insolent and destructive became. I sought the praise that is ever due to Thee, O Lord of Love; for unto resistless Love alone praise should be given. But my vanity and pride I tried to shield by the power which Thou didst endow me with.

"I thought that I it was who brought the life to all trees and by my power kept the hills in green and the forests in wondrous foliage, and gave drinks to the cows and plenty to the rivers. And for it I longed to see men perform the ceremonies and pray to me.

"But to Thee, O Lord of Love! is due all the glory; by Thee alone am I invested with power. Do Thou in Thy greatness forgive me, while I in humbleness do bow to Thy Lotus Feet."

And Krishna threw a glance at Indra that filled him with a great wild joy, and said:

"O Indra! Though I invested thee with sovereignty by My will, be not overfull of pride! For this I have stopped the ceremonies, so that thou mayest learn to know Me, whom thou in thy prosperity hadst quite forgotten.

"Go to thy abode, Indra, rule thy dominion; but know ever that pride and vanity are without power, and that Love alone is mighty.

"To lighten the burdens of all My world, I have come to earth.

"I now lift from thee the load which hath caused thee to forget Me, and, in forgetting Me, to have lost the beauty which was born of Me."

And with the halo of joy about him, Indra returned to his abode, endowed with greater power.

CHAPTER XXIII.

And now autumn, [3] the sweetest and richest season of all the glad year, had come; and the brow of Brindāban was fair to look upon.

The first part of the Indian Autumn which comes after the Rainy
[3] Season.

Peace and love stood on every threshold and walked on every roadway, and all lifted up their voices, and the words of their gladness was Love, Love!

In the hearts of all the song rose and showed them pleasant ways and haunts that ended in Bliss. Men knew gratitude and justice, which are the attributes of Love.

Love walked on earth and left its blessing in its trail I The flowers whispered their love to one another and the dew clung closer to their petals, because of the warmth of their love.

All the land seemed to have ripened into the deepest beauty, for the Beauty of Love here was King.

And Krishna was King and reigned in every heart, and all bowed before the majesty of the beauty of His Love.

A substitute it was for all things and satisfied the want of each heart, entrancing every object and person by its beauty.

O wonder of Love, that expanded each soul and made it a world of joy and bliss!

In this happy time, when the moon was full, Krishna recalled a promise He had made to the Gopis to reward them richly for their love for Him.

So, taking His flute. He went to the forests and stood on the brow of the hill.

All about the white moonlight lay, bathing in silver the fruit trees in blossom; soft the winds were, and rich the fragrance that they brought on their breezes.

The noises of night alone could be heard.

And surveying His world with love-filled eyes, Krishna took up His flute and poured forth the strains that never were heard by man or god until that night on the moon-kissed hill, when all Brindāban in peace did smile.

At the sound of those strains, all earth was thrilled in ecstasy. The rocks melted in love; the trees trembled, and the flowers fell on the earth, and men and beasts all pain forgot.

And the Gopis knew that Call of Love. Nor heeded they duties, or father, or husband, or children, but turning their heart to the sound of the flute, they followed their heart to Krishna's Feet.

At the first note, she who was feeding her household, dropped her food and followed the sound; and she who was nursing her babe, put her babe from her breast and answered the call; another came with toilet incomplete.

All forsook duties, husband and children, to find Him who drew them by the sound that was made by His Love.

Separately they came, none observing the other. Over thorns and briars and stones they walked; sharp twigs caught their hair, branches detained them; yet heeded they not these obstacles, but onward they went with hands torn and feet bleeding and garments rent and missing, till they stood at the hill where Sree Krishna played and drew from the flute the music entrancing, at which all the rocks and earth did thrill.

With eyes maddened with love they gazed on Him there! A wondrous vision was He!

The light of the noon-day radiated from Him, and His beautiful eyes with mysterious glances fell on their souls like holy balm!

And at that glance their souls were entranced and deepened and became as if one with Him and drank of the love that from Him poured; and all that in them unlike Him was, became as pure as He.

And that which in them unlike that Love was, from out of their hearts had flown; and made pure and transparent in that glad place, they drank of that love which doth chain all creation to its Creator—Love.

Entirely blessed, they sought no more, nor hoped they more; for each held Perfection in her eyes, and each knew Perfect Love in her heart.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Silent they stood and gazed on the Beauty, the concentrated love of a world in each eye.

A spiritual force that swept from its path all matter was theirs, as they beheld that Centre to which their hearts did gravitate.

The strains of the flute that made the heaven to bend to the earth, that brought the stars closer to the hillsides, and drew the gods from their abodes of light, had ceased; and the voice of Him that was All-Love fell on the ears of the Gopis in sound as sweet as the flute's dear strains:

"O Gopis mine, maids of Braja! My peace and greeting be with you all! But why are ye here one and all? Tell Me this!

"The hour is late, and your homes at a distance are, and the forests are dark, and wild beasts are in plenty. And alone ye have come without husband, or father!

"What is it, pray tell Me, that brings you here? Is it love for Me that brings you here? I draw all to Myself and all love Me.

"But, O Gopis dear, the Scriptures ever have said that the chaste woman leaveth not her husband, father and babe, to look on the face of a youth.

"Pure are your hearts, I know; but it is not good that ye come to Me, and it looseth your chances to reach that place where all of your hearts do long to dwell, when to your bodies ye have said farewell.

"Perhaps ye have come to see the forest, silvered by the autumn full moon! Or mayhap to greet the breezes that come from the hillsides! Or the blossoms of the trees that grace its sides to behold! If this be so, now ye have seen them, depart to your homes, lest the hearts of your friends be alarmed at your absence."

The bevy of women, that crowded about Him, grew pale with pain and ashen with fear. Tears came to their eyes and anxiety to their souls, as they heard the words of Him who was all in all to them; till one, more brave than the rest, broke forth:

"O Lord, for the Master of Love art Thou, send us not away from Thy side. All have we left to serve Thee, our Master. Husbands have we, and fathers and brothers, but to Thee alone we belong. They are but the keepers of our earthly bodies: Thou art the custodian of our souls.

"Our souls are Thine, for Thou art the Soul from which we came; and panting we come to find again the Home wherein to rest.

"Difficult art Thou to find, O Lord! and now we have found Thee, Oh thrust us not from Thy Lotus Feet, we who find our joy and happiness in Thee!

"Thy flute hath drawn us from our homes! Oh, suffer us to remain with Thee and know Thee as Thou art! Unable are we to live without Thy love, O Lord! and our duties of home cannot engage us since our minds are ever contemplating Thee.

"If Thou sendest us away, we shall die. Be Thou kind to us, Thy servants, and grant us to serve Thee with our Love."

Then singing into their midst He came, He the Lord of the Highest, the Lord of Love and Lord of the Lowest and Lord of Mercy! And with mighty Love swayed He all alike. And each self was forgotten and Love alone was.

Now singing in chorus, now dancing, now skipping, the Lord and his maidens in those forest groves roamed, till the river was reached.

Then, from over-much pleasure, proud each maid became, and her simple joy to vanity was turned because thus she was favored by Krishna, the youth Krishna, the Heavenly One, Krishna, the Glorious of all glorious ones!

He, noting this, to punish the sin of vanity, in swiftness from them vanished; and with his going the sin was gone.

Maddened by love, the maids pleaded to the skies and the trees and the flowers for Him, who was their life. But still He came not.

So absorbed in Him they became, themselves they forgot, and even as Krishna they thought they were. And imitating His acts they cried to one another: "Lo, I am Krishna! See, I hold the mountains on high! Lo, Putanā I slay and baffle the rage of Indra with my power!" And still came He not.

Then they sang His praises, then with breaking hearts they wailed and prayed for Him to return to their midst. At this He came, for ever is the Lord most kind to the lowly and sorrowing.

And He soothed their grief and brought light to their hearts; and forming a circle about Him, in ecstasy they danced. And now He, that was the King of the upper world and of all the earth, of the plants and oceans and clustering stars. He, the Lord of all might and Yoga power, Himself divided into many Krishnas; and each Gopi thought she, herself, danced alone with the Glorious One that as Krishna was known.

And the dance began lightly, then madder became; and He who had come on earth to teach man Love, manifested Himself in every maid that lightly and rarely stepped at His side, as they danced in that grove on that wondrous night.

And the lotus blossoms wept tears of nectar on seeing the dance, and birds and bees from unknown trees and flowers came forth and whirled round and round the heads of the dancing ones.

And the heavens showered blossoms rare, and the gods who had stolen from their abode to watch the Feast of Love that Krishna gave to the lovely milkmaids, lo, senseless became at the first sight of that revel of Bliss!

And night throbbed and panted and forgot to draw its curtain to let day in, but lengthened into aeons.

The veil from every Gopi's eye was drawn, and they gazed into the ocean of active spirituality and spiritual became. And all sin that were theirs no more was there.

And in that mighty dance a flood of spirituality went forth that took from the heart of men and the bosom of earth the sins with which they were burdened withal.

And men's hearts were won by the force of that Love and were led to the door of that sacred abode, where only the loving may go.

And the Gopis, who by force were detained and could not come to the dance with Krishna, lo, in meditation sat, and in deep pain concentrated on Him, and in that dance they were at His side and felt His love-embrace, and all their sins were as naught.

For to touch Krishna, with the mind alone, was to gain spirituality and stand pure in His eyes.

So in those hours of intensest happiness the world gained what for births it had striven to gain. And active love was ripe among mortals, and that love had wiped all sin away.

And when the last ray of the moon was seen, into the waters of the laughing river they plunged; and ere the sun with ardent eye did awaken the sleeping Brindāban, each maiden singing homeward went, transformed into a being of unalloyed love.

CHAPTER XXV.

In the forest grove of moonlight, where the river sweetly hummed, where the nightbird's plaintive chant broke in ecstasy the silence, where the drooping flowers opened wide their sleep-kissed eyelids to the night and beheld the wondrous vision of the dancing maids and Krishna.

In that hour when every maiden felt her heart grow big to bursting for the love that in her swelled up in that hour, when every maiden saw beside her Glorious Krishna, with His brow made fair with flowers and His loins wreathed with lotus, when the heart of each sweet maiden foolish because of pride, as she saw the one All Beauteous, lightly treading at her side to the music of the dance.

One there was of all those Gopis, she the chiefest of them all, one who knew naught else but Him; every thought of self had vanished, every thought of aught but Him.

At His side she lightly stepped nor felt the grass 'neath her feet, nor knew the strains of rapturous music that fell like wine upon each heart; all she knew was Love was there, naught but this remembered she.

To the winds that came from hillsides, to the shadows that the trees cast, did she whisper over and over that confession of her love, till over-weighed by the sweet burden, did the winds, in languorous love, chant and sigh, then die in silence.

And the shadows of the trees trembled at the depth of love that the maid did whisper to them as He passed them in the dance.

Rādhā was she, youthful, lovely, she. His playmate of the forest, she, with love-look in her face, she, the Queen of Love among them, giving all and asking naught.

By the mighty will of Him she had come on earth to dwell, she, who ever reigned with Him in Glory, she now walked with Him on earth.

She, the fairest of these maidens, she the rarest of them all, knowing Love in its intensity, living all its bliss.

And when He, the Lord of Love, vanished from the dancing Gopis, she, sweet Rādhā, with Him vanished.

And they wandered in the deep groves, these, the Twain, Who in Glory dwelt, she the loving, He the Lover, both the Blissful, both the Purest.

He the dew-kissed flowers gathered, twining them about the maiden. But the flowers in their beauty were not half as fair as she; and sweet Rādhā, pearl of maidens, gazed with love-light in her eyes, knowing naught was half so lovely as the hands that placed them there.

Thus 'they roamed in shadowy moonlight, rested here in softened shadows, chanting love-songs to each other, knowing naught but pure delight, till a-wearied with her roaming, Rādhā begged to cool her feet in the smiling waves of Jumnā, that she spied there in the moonlight.

Krishna, greatest of all lovers, lightly stooped to lift the maiden, and in loving arms to bear her where the smiling waters rippled.

But within the breast of Rādhā, at that act, pride sprang to being, and within that home of Love vanity crept and nestled there.

For a moment Krishna held her, then with lightning swiftness from her side He vanished.

But in that twinkle of a moment Rādhā knew what her sin was and, aware of her enemy, the selfless love, which was her Self, her deity supreme, arose and quenched all thirst of vanity.

Quickly gliding through the forest, she again did join the Gopis, spying in the further distance Krishna soothing one and all. To His side she lightly stepped, she, the radiant, she. His Heaven-Mate, purged from sin and lightly clothed with the love that knew but Him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

While the land of Brindāban was rich in the love which Krishna flooded it withal, the heart of Kangsa, the brother of Devaki, was filled with fear for his life; for it was known to his quaking heart that the eighth child of Devaki still walked the earth, and also he knew that writ it was that the hand of that child would lay him low.

Far and wide he sought the child, the boy, whom he felt was the God who had come to bring to the virtuous and lowly man peace, and sweep from the land the oppressor and tyrant.

The marvelous deeds of Sree Krishna, his beauty and strength, the might of his love, had been heralded far and wide, and all the then known world was turned towards the forest land of Brindāban with expectant eye and thirsting heart. For ever the heart of man doth pant for and turn to the place where love doth dwell.

When tales of Krishna's wonderful life and glorious deeds came to the ears of Kangsa, he felt that the boy whom Yasodā and Nanda reared as their own, in sweet Brindāban, was the child that he sought to kill when it came from the womb of Devaki, and when by the hand of fate itself he had been baffled.

And the dull, hungry flame of hatred and anger rose like fire in this bad man's heart, and an atmosphere as of hell about him rose, and all his peace slipped to the dust, and his secret fear that like a coiled serpent had lain in silence now uncurled its length and lifted its head and darted here and there to strike the prey that aroused it from its slumber.

And long he sat and meditated evil against the youth that he could not slay in spite of his kingship. For the Name of Krishna was a balm to the hearts of all men who had ever heard it spoken, and though king he was and ruler over many, he knew that the strength of the fame of Krishna, the boy bred in Brindāban, more potency possessed than the name of Kangsa, the king. For he was ruler over the bodies of men only.

His name dwelt on the tongues of men who prattled with words alone, and those words embodied not the thought from which they sprang—words that praised where praises were not due, and applauded where it was not deserved.

Men who dared not note the indignity of his motives and their results, nor discriminate between the righteousness of his action and his blood-dyed deeds, vexed his ears with fawning acclamations to-day because of his power, yet to-morrow blamed and hissed him out of sight.

But Krishna was ruler over all hearts by the might of his wondrous love. He was the Divine Incarnation, the Inner Call, the satisfied softness that all felt, compelling all, yet demanding naught. Uncovered, frank. He stood forth inviting all to look on Him to Know and to love and be saved,—too deep for the human

understanding to measure, too large for human heart to embrace, yet acquainting each man with Himself.

This love still untaught, still gazing on Him who was all encased in love, all made of love, all teeming with love, they knew themselves of His creation, and Him their Sovereign Lord.

And Kangsa knew that by knowing Him the world would boldly recoil from the sickening deeds of his cruelty, the foul plots of his life, would be laid bare to all, and the world in rebellion would rise. And he knew, too, that he in his worldly powers as a weakling would be, by the side of the cow-herd Krishna.

So among his councillors an edict went forth that festivities be held in honor of the Bow, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, and that sacrifices in great abundance be made.

He also said unto them that preparations be made, and pavillions be raised, and the arena cleared, and the amphitheatre festooned with flowers and banners; and proclamations were issued that all the inhabitants of his whole kingdom be invited to his capital and that the people of Braja be included therein.

And last he sent his ambassador in great pomp and glory to call to his palace the seventh son of Devaki, Balarām, and the eighth son, Krishna, to witness the sports and partake in the wrestling contests and show to the kingdom their dexterity and strength.

Thus spoke Kangsa, and called to Akrura and made him the ambassador that was to bring Krishna and Rāma to Mathura. But this also he ordered: "When here they are brought, see that the strongest and mightiest wrestlers of my kingdom be brought to match them and fairly or foully to lay them low." And he added: "If here death fails to meet them withal, keep the infuriated elephant close to the gate, so that he in his madness may tread out the life of Krishna at my command." These were his orders, and Akrura, his ambassador, bowing to him, departed to Braja.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The sun was setting in Braja, and Krishna, with companions was homeward leading the cows to be milked.

The hills were gold-tipped. The chirp of the birds in sleepy echoes fell on the ear, when far in the distance the hoofs of stamping steeds pounding the earth caused the boys to turn. Coming in royal splendor towards them they beheld a chariot with blazing banners of the colors of the royal house of Mathura.

The boys stood in amazement as nearer the chariot came; but Krishna smiled with His eye full of wisdom, and aslant He looked toward the boys and the cows and then at Akrura, the ambassador, who came in the chariot.

At that glance, Akrura quickly descended and fell at the feet of Krishna and saluted Him in reverence and worship, for the dart of love that came from Krishna revealed to the heart of Akrura that Krishna was more than human and not less than divine.

With that glance his soul was drawn to the soul of Him who stood there to receive him and his message. And he knew that the Author of Life he beheld and that blessed he was beyond all measure to be chosen to look on that wonderful face.

A moment he lay in the dust, at the feet of the youth,—Akrura, the proud, the inmate of palaces, the councilor and companion of the king and emperor.

Then, with kindly grace, Krishna raised him and embraced him and led him forth to the house of Nanda, and with His own hands brought rich drinks and choice viands, with the countenance that had on it the glow of the sun, and the beauty that surpassed all the beauty ever seen.

And having partaken of the meal with His father and brother and guest, Krishna addressed him thus: "O friend, long I knew of this coming of thine and marvelled at its delay. Yet tell them, my kinsman, the errand of the on which thou wert sent!"

Then Akrura related to Nanda and the fear-stricken Yasodā the king's message, his plans and his evil design.

A smile of wisdom flitted over the face of Krishna, as He nestled close to the side of His mother and bade her forget her anxiety for Him, as none there was in all the world that could harm Him. He vowed that even the most dreaded Kangsa was powerless to bring about the evil he planned.

But the mother, Yasodā, she who had reared and nourished the Child at her heart, she who had caressed His lovely baby softness and with fondness saw his first toddling steps, she could not be comforted, nor would her heart cease its beating of pain and terror.

And Akrura related how Kangsa in wrath had thrown Devaki and Vāsudeva into prison, on hearing that Krishna was the eighth son of their union. And Yasodā

wept as the thought of the mother who had lost all her sons at the cost of Krishna, and yet had not the blessing of suckling Him.

Yasodā, most blessed of all women art thou, who nursed the Lord of Love as thy son! And fitted wert thou by Him to bestow on His baby life thy caresses and receive the love that flowed from Him!

Worthy wert thou to croon Him to sleep, to bathe the sweet beauty of Him who, though He had all there was, yet chose to be soothed and guided and directed by thee in His babyhood!

And when to boyhood's estate He grew and startled all the world by the wonder of His doing, to thee He came as a little child, to be loved and petted and soothed of His weeping and fretting!

And now when called king of the land, and called king by the hearts of the whole known world that panted to look upon His wonderful beauty and see the might of His strength, even now close to thy heart He nestles, and twines His arms about thy neck, and gazes with love-light into thine eyes to comfort thee, and feels a shadow mantle His heart as He banishes the pain from thy brow!

For well He knows that no more to thee the forest child He will be; for the world now claims Him as its own, and in His bigger world an actor He must be.

Thus heart to heart they sit, the mother and the foster-son. He who was Lord of all the world, and she who reared him as a child.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

So night wore away, and in the early morning hours Akrura was ready to start on the journey with Rāma and Krishna.

But great was the wail and heartrending the lamentations that came from the hearts of the Gopis.

With tear-filled eyes they rushed to His home and pleaded and prayed that He stay in their midst; for to them life seemed impossible without Him, and Brindāban could not be blessed when He ceased to walk thereon. And what would the cattle and flowers and trees do without the sound of His love-touched flute?

"Oh, remain with us, Krishna, O Lord of our hearts! Oh, keep close to our land, Most Beautiful One!

"Broken are our hearts, bowed low our spirit at the thought of our lives without Thy presence to cheer us. Dull are our minds and leaden our hearts by the pain of Thy going.

"Oh, leave us not in this ocean of sorrow, but stay where we ever may look on Thy face.

"O Thou who shapest all that is, who hast knitted our hearts to Thyself! how canst Thou tear it away from us who know the sweetness of its love and the fruits that spring therefrom?

"Once having known Thy smile, O Krishna! how can we bear the dawning of day without the light of Thy smile, in which the concentrated beauty of Thy whole creation lies, to fill it and make each day whole?

"And how can we see the shadows of night thicken and darken, and know that no more we will roam in forest and dance in the moonlight with Thee, our Beloved?

"Oh! depart not from us, Thou in whom we are buried, Thou whose love doth envelop us all, Thou whose universe-embrace around us is entwined! Oh! go not from out our midst, we implore Thee!"

Thus, tearing their tresses and weeping, the Gopis clung to the wheels of the chariot in which Krishna and Rāma sat ready to start on their journey to Mathura.

Then Krishna arose, and looking deep in the eye of each, he waved his hand in farewell, and left the smile of Bliss with them that filled each soul to overflowing. Then forward the restless chargers plunged, the dust rising high and quite covering the chariot.

The maids stood like hewn marble, still yet serene. And the cattle that grazed on the hillside turned towards the road where the chariot vanished, in their eyes a look of yearning love; while the deer on the brow of the hill, with arched neck and wild, shy glance, heaved a quick, short sigh, as if hurt.

And the soft breasts of the singing birds quivered, and a little sad song burst from their throats; while the trees and the flowers hung limp and wilted, as if the glad life had left their hearts.

A groan arose from the wild beasts in the forest, as if in the hand of death they were trapped. The sun vanished from the skies, and all Nature seemed clothed with the garment of sadness.

Then forth the sun burst in glorious splendor, as the joy of the smile of the Lord of Love awoke in potency to bless all living things whereon it had fallen.

And sweet Brindāban in silence lay, forever blessed and forever beloved, for the Feet of Him, who was God, had walked there and made holy its soil.

CHAPTER XXIX.

And the chariot, bearing Akrura, Rāma and Krishna, was followed close by the carts bearing Nanda and the Gopas, who carried gifts for the king Kangsa, to whom all must present the best of their store.

On reaching the banks of the Jumnā, Krishna and Rāma in sportiveness descended from the chariot and dipped in the sacred waters of the river, then ascended again to the chariot.

Whereat Akrura, the ambassador, had a dip in the water, too, reciting the sacred texts in the meanwhile, when, lo, in the waters where he stood he beheld the laughing Krishna and Rāma, sitting in the lap of the god of water.

Amazed and bewildered, he gazed towards the chariot where last he had seen the brothers, and there they sat talking, as when he had left them.

Again he dipped his head 'neath the waves of the water and again he saw Rāma and Krishna, and knew that his senses were not deluded,

Krishna, though seemingly a youth with all a youth's sportiveness and play, yet was the Lord Incarnate.

And near the cart, Akrura looked in the eyes of Krishna where the wisdom that created the universe lay, and answered the questioning gaze thus: "Lord! None is there as wonderful as Thou art! All hast Thou created and in Thee is all Creation. All have I seen that there is to see."

And the chariot proceeded towards Mathura.

CHAPTER XXX.

Noon reigned in the city of Mathura when the chariot, bearing the two sons of Vāsudeva, entered that city.

The fame of the deeds and the beauty of Rāma and Krishna was known in all that kingdom, and their coming to partake of its celebrations and to participate in the sports and wrestling at the command of Kangsa, the king, had been heralded all over the land.

And the populace was glad and knew not why. And they said in their hearts, "Krishna the Youth, the wonderful Youth of Brandaban, will grace our land by His coming."

So the streets were crowded to welcome Him there, and the tops of the houses were flowered with the bright faces of women who grazed from there to catch the first glance of Him whom rumor had crowned the Most Glorious Youth of the then known world.

O Beauty, how potent art thou! O conqueror of all, that winneth the heart of the lowliest child and enslaveth the heart of the proud queen of the world; that slaketh the thirst of the parched soul and tutoreth the dullest mind never quickened by thought!

So, 'mid blare of trumpets and with banners unfurled, the Lord of Love entered Mathura.

And above the roar of the celebrations and preparations rose the murmurs and shouts of greetings, from the sea of upturned faces of men and from the canopy of sweet, downcast eyes of women, that thronged to see His coming.

And millions of tongues repeated His Name and sang His praises, and millions of souls were flooded with love, because they had looked on His face and said His Name, which was as potent as His Love. For His Name contained Himself, and those who uttered His Name had Him in their hearts, and lo, the world to them was complete!

Majestic and vast, He walked 'mid the worshipping people, who saw but a youth of transcendent beauty, but felt the Unfathomable mystery, the Unknowable Grandeur, worthy to receive their deepest obeisance.

Through the streets of Mathura He went, bringing light to all whereon His smile fell.

And Kangsa, the tyrant, grew cold and gray, for he knew his doom was drawing nigh. And his sleep was disturbed by evil dreams, for he knew already the populace was welcoming Him whom none could look upon but to love.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The next day Krishna and Rāma went forth to view the capital of Mathura in all its holiday splendor.

They found the gates of the palace made of pure gold and studded with jewels and crystal. The broad street of the city and the pretty parks all luxuriant were with rare flowers and wondrous foliage. The splendid houses all seemed clothed and beautified for the ceremonies of the Bow, the symbol of the warrior's might, that were to take place that day.

It chanced that a washerman passed their way, balancing upon his head the clothes and making way towards the palace with them. In a spirit of mischief, Krishna said: "Give us the clothes that you carry to Kangsa, good fellow, for in need of them are we. Give them, and more I will give unto thee."

But the washerman in insolence replied:

"Upstarts, who are ye to dare to aspire to wear the clothes that belong to Kangsa the Great? Never have ye seen such clothes, and unfit to even touch them are ye. Be off and back to the country from whence ye came, or I will call the guards, who by my word will throw you in chains."

Krishna, with a smile and a wave of his bare hand, severed the head from the trunk of the washerman and proceeded to take the clothes.

And a weaver, who was passing their way, helped them put on the garments; while a florist, who near by was weaving garlands for Kangsa, came to Rāma and Krishna and bedecked them with garlands and flowers.

And thus clad for the festivities, onward they went; but first the weaver and the florist were rewarded with great spiritual powers by Krishna, the giver of all good things to those who give unto Him their love.

As they proceeded on their way, a woman of great deformity came near. A parcel she held in her hands, which she guarded carefully. As close she came to Krishna, she lifted her head and gazed on His face.

For a moment she stood, a smile transforming her face. Then the bowl of precious sandal-wood ointment, which to the King Kangsa she carried, to Krishna she reached and said unto Him: "O Youth, more beautiful art Thou than aught that mine eye has ever rested upon. To those who are sweet should sweetness be given. I am a servant of King Kangsa. This fragrant unguent for him I make, but more fitted by far is its richness for Thee. Oh, allow me to lay it at Thy feet!"

Krishna looked at her deformity, then at her love-filled eyes, and putting His feet on the tips of her toes and His two fingers under her chin. He wrenched her form upward; and she, who was known as the Tribakrā (she of three bends) was a hunchback no more, but tall and straight was she; and her face never lost the beauty it

bore when it looked on the face of Krishna as she offered to anoint Him with zeal and love.

And from that day forth she was known as the most surpassingly beautiful woman in all that land.

Thus love for Krishna creates a charm that grows into beauty and nevermore fades.

Thus all day long He wandered about, healing the sinful, the sick and the dying by the very breath of His passing.

And to sorrowing fathers and mothers that clay long lost sons were restored, and even the dead were brought to life and were seen with the eye and felt with the heart and encircled with the arms of those whose hearts were empty for them.

And thus the Lord with benign smile brought to all the gifts of life and love, and none were there in all that land who felt not the power thereof.

CHAPTER XXXII.

When the hour for the festivities of the Bow began, spectators innumerable filled the galleries and platforms of the amphitheatre. By every tongue the praise of Krishna's beauty was sung, and all awaited with eager desire the arrival of the brothers Rāma and Krishna.

In the centre of the arena a platform was raised, where Kangsa, the king, and his ministers were enthroned. His eyes were lurid with hate and his heart quaking with fear, for his dreams had been full of evil omens, and he knew that he of all that multitude was out of tune with Nature.

For Krishna, the Youth, had scattered flowers of love in that city for all who chose to partake of them, and all hearts had gathered them eagerly. Only he alone had turned from the good and abided by his hate; and he knew, in spite of the wrestlers and the wild elephant, and even the guard that stood ready to slay at his command, that the Youth would conquer, as He ever had, and that he would die by His hands sooner or later.

For had it not been writ thus? And again had not every attempt of his to put out the life of the eighth child of Devaki been baffled in marvelous ways? And still the Youth lived and smiled. Surely he was Hari, the Invincible!

His hate betrayed him and was hourly leading him into a trap. It charmed him like a subtle snake, while it frightened him like a huge wild beast; yet gladly would he have opened the valve that held his wrath and flooded all with its poison, if by so doing he might have annihilated that glorious Youth who stood ever before him by night and day and smote his cruel heart as with a glowing rod.

So all his stolid self-possession was gone as he looked on, when Krishna, the Beautiful, soft as a delicate woman, yet invincible as unconquered strength, walked 'mid the hysterically joyous shouts of the people to where the giant Bow was guarded by warriors bold.

A moment, and then He seized the Bow and held it aloft with one hand, the Bow that twelve men of mighty strength alone could handle, and with a twist of His wrist it fell at their feet, broken in twain.

The guards rushed forward, as if to strike Him low; but when near Him, they stopped and looked at His glory; they crouched low on their haunches and fell on their faces, unable to move, for the life had gone out of their bodies by the first wave of His hand.

But blessed were they; for none died by the hand of Krishna, but by Him was made pure and straightway to the realms of Bliss they were sent.

For where the hand of Krishna rested, whether to bring life or take life away, that man forever holy was made by the touch.

So also with Kāṅṣa it was. Dwelling constantly on Krishna, even though in hate, he came closer to Love than he himself knew.

So the celebration of the Bow ended in triumph for Krishna and Rāma. And though Kāṅṣa sent a body of well-armed soldiers to apprehend them, lo! the conquerors victorious walked from the arena, followed by the cheers of the worshipping populace, who saw that in strength they were invincible, even as in beauty they were incomparable. And they looked forward eagerly to the morrow, when the brothers were to participate in wrestlings and sports.

But Rāma and Krishna returned to spend the night with the Gopas; while the people of Mathura neither ate nor slept, but sang of their beauty and might.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

But Kangsa was troubled by the triumph of the brothers, and next morning called the wrestlers who were to match the two brothers, and again put to them the weight of the contest, and placed armed men at the gates of the arena. He then proceeded with many forebodings to the amphitheatre, where the sports were to take place. He took his seat amid the beating of drums, the blaring of trumpets and the waving of banners.

Already many spectators had assembled, among them many crowned chiefs, Brāhmans and Kshatriyas, all with expectancy overwhelming, as to the outcome of the wrestling.

Forward the wrestlers came with a rush and stood in the centre of the ring, wrestlers whose fame was known throughout all the land for their brute strength and skill.

Few there were who dared to meet these men, and as Krishna and Rima came forward to see the meeting of the first pair, they found a huge elephant posted there at the entrance.

Krishna, seeing this, asked the driver to make way with the beast for Him. At this the rider urged the infuriated beast towards Him.

With a smile, Krishna grasped with his soft little hand the nose of the furious beast, who, with a bellow, fell to the ground lifeless, dragging the driver down with him.

Krishna then tore the tusks from the brute's head; and Rāma and Krishna entered the wrestling grounds with the tusks in their hands and blood-stained from the slaying of the beast.

Kangsa's heart sank at the sight, and even the wrestlers recoiled in terror at the blood-stained figures who gazed on them with supernatural power in their youthful eyes.

Yet true to the command of Kangsa, Chānoor, the chief of the wrestlers, cried: "Come, ye youngsters, good wrestlers are ye! The good king hath invited you to participate in the contest, so come and wrestle and give pleasure to King Kangsa, he who is the greatest of all kings and men.

With a smile all-wise Krishna looked at the wrestlers, then, with eye aslant, he gazed on Kangsa, who trembled at the look; and answered Chānoor thus: "Though subjects of King Kangsa, yet only boys of the forest are we, unlearned in the art of wrestling. Therefore, we pray you, match us with boys of our age and not with men whose muscles are iron and whose hearts are bold as a lion's. If we are to meet men like these, unfair is the game, and unjust, and we decline the arrangement." Then Chānoor became insolent, because of the confession of Krishna which he thought was made in weakness, and cried:

"O thou who hast killed the furious elephant as if in sport, thou askest to be matched with one of thine own age! With me thou shalt wrestle, me the most powerful, the strongest man of the age, and Rāma shall match with Mushtik; and, be it just or unjust, fair or unfair, thee I will fight and fight to kill." And so a combat began between the man that was mortal and the youth that was God.

The man a giant was of colossal brute force, of stature great, with muscles all knotted and crooked as the boughs of an oak-tree of many years' growth.

And the Boy, smooth as a sweet maiden, all curved with grace, smilingly awaited the onslaught.

Forward the wrestler came, with the snort of a wild bull, to meet the Boy, who, calm and serene, smiled in his eye.

The people arose and sprang from their benches, and hissed, and threw their head gear and staffs into the ring, as they shouted:

"Give up, the fight is unfair!"

"Oh, shame!" they cried, "coward and beast! put a stop to the slaughter!" on seeing the seemingly unequal fight.

Several times Chānoor struck furious blows at the fair, slight body of Krishna, the youth, but provoked naught but a smile from Him; while beads of blood sprang to the brow and arms of Chānoor, and his huge legs trembled and broke at the knee as he tried to reach the belt of Him, who, after several circles about the ring, seized Chānoor by the arms, and, lifting him high above His head, to the wonderment of the crowd, dashed him down to the ground, as a playing child doth throw the pebbles. And the wrestler breathed his last with a yearning look of love in his eyes, as they rested on Him, whom a moment before he beheld with hate.

And Rāma, too, victorious was.

But when Krishna stood and faced the mass of people there, they shouted and cheered with mad delight and jumped on the railings in panic wild: "He is more than human, He is God come down to earth! It is He, for whom the world hath waited! He will free our land from oppression! Hari is He, the Invincible! Oh, mighty art Thou and possessest in Thy frame the forces of all the universe!"

But Kangsa, the King, full of terror and rage, cried: "Ho, guards! Seize him and take him to the outskirts of my kingdom and drive him into banishment Imprison Nanda and Yasodā, confiscate all their lands and belongings, and take from the Gopas their wealth and goods and drive them from Brindāban. Kill Devaki and Vāsudeva, who are now imprisoned in my dungeon. Kill all who know and love this youth, 'tis my command."

A moment Krishna gazed on Kangsa, then with a bound he reached the platform where Kangsa stood with sword unsheathed.

"O Kangsa. I am the eighth son of Devaki whom thou so long hast sought to slay. It is writ that thou by my hand must die! O King, dost thou think that human hand can turn aside the force of the Law?"

And hurling Kangsa down on the ground, He leaped over the prostrate king, whereat his life departed.

But his glazed eyes were fixed on Him whose hand had blessed even him by its touch and burned away every sin from his soul.

Then, hastening through the lines of guards, who prostrated low at His approach. He went to where His father and mother were imprisoned in dungeons dark and deep.

Low he bent to their feet, murmuring in accents sweet;

"O parents mine! Oh, much have ye suffered for my sake and all ye shall gain through Me; for in Me is all there is to gain and outside of Me there is naught. From thy womb. O Devaki, I was born, yet out of Me thou didst come. I prostrate before thee."

Then saluting them both, 'mid deafening cheers, he led them forth to the palace.

And the father of Kangsa, dethroned by his son, received and welcomed them there.

And wild was the joy of the populace on that day that Krishna lifted the yoke of bondage from them, and they blessed the hour that the sun had ushered in that day, which brought a new ruler in their land.

And already Mathura felt the joy that was but a forerunner of a perfect reign. For Krishna it was who placed on the throne the one who would rule the land in goodness and plenty.

Messages and Revelations from Sree Krishna

MESSAGES AND REVELATIONS FROM SREE KRISHNA

Within my belly you do dwell, yet in every heart I sit. Know you this, O my own, and you shall forget and fetter yourselves to Me. The wings of your Self now are close clapped like a dripping feather all wet with tears of pain and folded about your body, keeping it rolled like a ball, unable to stand upon the feet of might and strength which I have endowed you with. These wings, my own, I will spread for you, until the grand, noble forehead of your Self shall rise above the realm where Time and Space do reign.

* *

Deep have the waters of seeming failures dashed about thy feet and threatened to drag you into the perturbed sea of despair, but still thy head has been close to the clouds and thou hast caught the smile of my radiance and heard the voice of my kindness. Dost thou think that I who have numbered the grains of sand and have weighed the drops of water in all the oceans, seas, lakes and rivers,—that I will allow one who is a spark of Myself to be devoured by the wolf of famine or by the dread of despair? Look up, it is light, look to thy right and a hand reaches out to thee. And I have placed thee where those who know how to love what is lovable can look at thee and love.

* *

The soul which has need of blessedness, to that soul do I answer at its call! Let it feed the heart that is hungry for an answer.

* *

A lamp within your midst I place and those who would enjoy the radiance which the lamp gives out, must cast their eyes to where the lamp does stand and stir to reach unto its height. A shading tree upon the sandy hill I place. The weary traveller, all hot, who of its cooling shade would partake must come within the circle of its throwing shade. He, who will not see the lamp or walk to where the shadows dark and cool do fall, he cannot enjoy the blessing of the lamp as it casts its light or the cooling shades of the slanting branches. So 'tis with Love: if you will seek its warmth and glow, do thou seek it. Only those who seek Me do I in return meet.

* *

Oh, the love that stoops low at every foot! Take thou that love in thy hands and burdens will lighten. Put thou My Love in thy heart and thy world will brighten. Oh, give with love to all who come within the radius of thy glory. The heritage of My Love much more thou wilt know. As immeasurable as space thy self shall become and heights in thy hearts will appear, and splendours more splendid than all thou hast

known, and heights more sublime than the whited peaks where once thou hast stood and looked into the calm tranquility of my Everlasting Eye.

* *

The man who seeketh to do good, oft doth lose his aim by becoming desirous to reach high places through that same good.

* *

A man who hoards his gold, oft learns to love the smile of his golden sweetheart and develops into an avaricious creature.

* *

The maid who plaits shining tresses, in so doing may be weaving a net of vanity in her soul. This by ignorance of self may be brought about though the original motive was pure and good. Hence Ignorance is sin!

* *

A sharp edged sword hung at the side will cut the baby's hand as it plays with its sharpness. There again ignorance is punished like sin.

* *

Love now does mould you; love does enfold you; love does behold you, and bind you, my children, I wear on my brow the great pearl of Love which no god or saint or man or worm or beast or ant can resist. Even I who All Love do look upon the beauty of my Love and love and love.

* *

Ye, O my children, that jewel shall wear on your brow. I who am All Love ye may wear and I who am love-filled ye may hold. For love must ever fly to love and love must ever draw from love, and love must ever live in love, for life doth spring from love. And I do live in love.

* *

Oh, list! Plant not thy seed in fertile ground and wait for it to root and blossom and fruit for thy own self alone. Rather do thou plant thy seed for the heart of every heart that lives within My Great Heart. He who waters, tends and sprouts his plant not for his own sweet taste alone but for the taste of every man, he of that sweetness and freshness shall taste even before the fruit is ripe. Know you, O my children, the life which I have given you sprang from My Love. Oh, make thy life a song sublime and not a groan.

* *

Evil availeth not when you my laws do know. List I fill your heart with love, with sunshine which freely I scatter to you; and I will bring there soft rains and the seed of love to life I will stir; and that which to your senses of infants doth reek of the charnel-house, a fertilizer shall become, for your love to grow and sprout, even as the creeping vine that drops and takes root wherever it falls.

* *

I am the swiftness in the sailing cloud, the flame struck from the flint. I am the fire housed in every star, the breath I am of every living thing. All things that are, do love, for I am all that lives—I, who am life and love— I, who am love and life, and naught is there besides. The hearing ear I am, the seeing eye, the throbbing heart, I waken in every man the love that reaches out.

* *

O Daughter! Rise in thy dignity and survey that which thou art master of and look to the marble halls which beckon thee even now. Know this, that love and wisdom is the mystery of all things and that Love when understood is twin to Dominion. Do thou the work that lies at thy hand! Remember each day is thy fulfilled world. It is thy Zion, it is thy life complete. Such jewels as have crowned few are daily being laid at thy feet! Spurn them not for the material seeming blessings which invite thee.

* *

A HOLY MAN'S PRAYER.

There was a holy man who thought never of himself, but ever of those among whom he lived and passed his days. So wondrous virtuous and holy he was, that oftentimes the host of unseen ones who loved to remain near him recognized the greatness of his goodness and spoke among themselves thus: "Holy is this man in truth and strange to say he knows it not. Surely few are like him. Let us who love him ask him how he would be served by us, how we may bestow upon him gifts which to the blind earthwalkers are called the supernatural or miraculous."

"So be it," in unison they replied. And one among the spirit-host who, by the strength and beauty of holiness was superior, addressed him thus: "O holy man, we who look upon you hourly and love you much, we would bestow upon you some gift. What shall it be? The miracle of making all who look upon you—man, woman or child,—love you? Or would it be the miracle of relieving all whom thou dost meet and love of the load of poverty which thou seest and which makes thee sad at the look? Or shall it be the power of relieving the sick of his burden of disease which draggeth him to an early grave?"

The holy one looked at the gentle and lovely spirit with eyes in which dwelt the very beauty of love and holiness and said: "Nay, dear spirit, not for me are these miracles. To my Lord, who is the giver of all joy and pain, doth belong the great power of removing what he giveth. But this I ask, that I walk in humbleness and in my heart the prayer will grow to love my Lord the more. That love I may be able to give to all who come within my reach. This, O gentle spirit, is all I ask. Depart and allow me to but see my Lord in humbleness and pray to love him."

The spirit departed and to the unseen host did say: "For such as he is the Love of the Lord! Already hath he acquired what we in vain seek—Love for the Lord!"

Glory to Gooroo who bringeth love and light wherever he walketh. Love Love's own creation is, it is its own reward. No human law its force can sway. No human force can stay its tide. Love is the source of living things and all that it doth love. Naught that thine eyes can rest upon but hath its root in Love. The heart that love denies is cold. It sleepeth and it stagnant is; it is frozen o'er by snows of earth and sinneth most against itself. Love giveth of itself to all, nor asketh it return. It is a law unto itself, a law to man and beast and plant. The snake doth glide Love's warmth to know the bird the air doth cleave its force to feel; the flower upward turns its wondering gaze the kiss of Love to meet. The beast doth pant all eagerly the eye of Love to behold. But man it is who makes the simple theme of Love a huge complexity. In restlessness he struggles for that which he already hath, for that without which he could not exist.

* *

O My jewels! lean on the altar of My all-creating Love and soon your heart will be as a laughing child. Quick My all-responsive touch to know, a bursting fount of gladness and generosity you will be, and the hot desert of your heart, which dry and sandy now is, a garden of lily and rose will become.

* *

Love was My natural gift to one and all of My creation. Who this doth know a treasure hath in truth.

* *

O my children! ever outward looking, turn within your blinded eyes, and there a world all, big with joy and love you will find, a world made wise by My wisdom, a world of the Real. Then you will know what Love has made of you; what Love doth bless you with; what Love doth will that you should be.

* *

Poor and ignorant is the man who seeketh for that which he hath and knoweth it not. Poor and ignorant is the man who knoweth not the nobility of my Love that surroundeth him, with which I crowned him withal.

* *

O my children! in your midst My well beloved one doth walk. Mark, freely all his love he giveth, gladly of My Love receiveth, and the measure of his sweetness doth he give to overflowing unto all that near him come. Lo! he knoweth my Love is flowing into him that largely giveth of the Love I do bestow. Within your midst in every heart I am, unknown, till by a touch of pain in struggle great you brush against My wide white wings. Then thrilled and amazed you look into Mine eyes and know that I am and ever have been and ever must be.

* *

The hand of My Love has gone from My Abode and scattered into space, giving unto all that will receive. Unto each child of Mine blessings I have given; oftentimes in their blindness they saw it not. But few there are who raise the gifts that He in great profusion at their feet. More are those who turn their eyes in wilful waywardness from them and with yearning cry do wail for that which I have crowned them withal. Most of my own do amble on, defiantly denying that such gifts there are, denying Me, the Giver of all gifts denying Me, the Author of their being.

* *

The few who raise My gifts and make them as their own and making them as their own thus, do give them forth to those their hungering neighbors, unto them do I scatter more than they in ease can carry, for he who giveth forth receiveth ever largely of the store I hold for them. He who hungers to feed the heart of those he meets along his way, unto him shall be given the wherewithal to satisfy their hunger.

* *

O my child! what mattereth it who speaketh the word of love, of truth, of courage and life unto thy heart? Whether thou dost catch it from the song of birds,

from the lips of a babe, from the glad tone in a maid or the shout in a frolicsome boy? Whether it comes from the heart of him who hath given all to know Me and to reflect Me in thine heart, or whether it came from the spirit all bright as he hovered about to find thee a way when thou didst grope in the wilderness of doubt and amaze of worldly turmoil? Take thou the truth from wherever it comes, for truth that is real finds its root in Me and no matter how slender and lean the twig may be, it is the shoot that has sprung from My Root.

* *

Glory to Gooroo whose wisdom is as silver is! Glory to Gooroo! who by his love and wisdom illumineth the hearts that seek after Me. His day and his waking, his night and his slumber I with My Love will preserve.

* *

O my children, illumined you will be, yet you seek not the light that sits in your midst! Its radiance I would throw in your midst and give to the heart that is darkened with clouds the peace that it seeketh, the joy that it owneth—the joy that is warming to the senses and that dances like live streams of water that leap from the mountains and play with the rivers.

* *

Oh, tarry awhile from the whirl and the strife of the world! Ye who seek My light, the sons of my light shall be, and earth shall not soil nor rob you of My glory, nor will your mind be darkened and dull. For I will beautify and quicken it with love and with joy, for the light of the mind is love. The light of life is love. Where love is, contentment and peace are. Where contentment is, there My smile is too. Where contentment reigneth, in satisfaction I dwell. Where contentment is, there the fountain of peace too is playing.

* *

O ye who find perplexity above your rearing head and underneath your lagging feet, at your right hand and your left hand! An enigma unto yourselves you will be until lowly and glad as a child you become. Then Me you will know, and knowing, yourselves you will know, and your worlds you will rule. And looking out from the great world within to the smaller world without, all things you will bless and find all is well with time and you.

* *

You who give out much love dost multiply My Love unto yourself. But you who nourish souring doubt and fill your heart with hate and bitterness but subtract hourly from the gifts which are thine by the right of My blessing and love. For thoughts of evil rise not beyond the earth. But thoughts of love do mount to My Throne crowned with living stars, and rebound again to the centre freighted with My Love and Light.

* *

Humility is the softened shadow that is cast by My Love. Lowly it lieth on the ground; yet he that is weary and full of the hate of the world doth seek it and rest in its shadow and strength he doth gather and peace he doth draw from the nurse, all gentle, that gladdens his day.

* *

Humility is welcome unto Me. Hence all men do seek it, yet know it not. The countenance of humility is restful and good to look upon, and he that is fettered by flesh, senses its beauty even as a blind man senses the rose that is near by its fragrance and sweetness, as My feathered and furred creatures do sense the night by the darkness that precedeth it. When humility in your midst doth sit, know that true worth is nigh and rejoice in the blessing that ye behold, for true humility springeth from My Love and with majesty pure and holy is crowned. It is the grace of all grace that I on My children bestow.

* *

O ye, every step that you take I am with you and lead you to My Great Heart and joy I bestow and obstacles remove and sorrows erase that you wist not of!

* *

The beginning and the end of all I am, the sap in the tree, the foundation of the rock whereon it leaneth, the force of the eagle that round it saileth, the oil of the whale, the deeps wherein it sporteth, I make the worm to crawl on its belly; from the clouds I flash in light that blindeth; the nobleness in man am I; the gladness in beauty, the spontaneous spring of the bounding beast on the earth, the star on high, the rose at your feet. The jewels transparency my touch hath made.

* *

Glory to Gooroo who liveth close to the Heart of Love and giveth love to the heart of man! Unto him I bestow My blessings, even as the early fruit tree doth shower its blossoms on all that stand beneath its fragrant glory.

* *

O my children! Drink of the cup that is in your midst that was deep in My Ocean of Love, and strength and sweetness to you it will bring and your hearts it will quicken, even as light doth feed the darkness and make transparent the gloom.

* *

O you who sit in bondage and pant for freedom and seek the love that is a world unto itself and with satisfaction is crowned I I am the key that opens the portal that reaches to the rarely discovered land where contentment alone is found.

* *

Let not the flickering flame from without urge you on to serving the senses for the love of the flesh but vaporous is and falleth again to the ground whence it was drawn.

* *

Walk in the sunshine, climb up to the mountains, stretch the pinions of your soul to its summit, in cheerfulness sit clothed in courage, and with My Love's completeness I will crown you withal.

* *

A chain of love around your loins I have cast; stretch not, nor pull, nor fret, nor strain, lest it hurt; but you who walk laughing in its reach, the wisdom of My every hour shall know. He who seeks Me, to him understanding I will give that revealeth all things even unto a little child, and My wisdom and truth from his heart shall flow as strong streams of water flow from a fountain, and My hand of beauty I will register in his heart, and all who look upon his countenance shall see the glory of his coming and the joy of his awakening.

* *

Crowned on the snow-capped mountains I am, yet in the lowly blade of grass am I too. Eternal space I fill, yet am I captured in every heart. All men seek Me, yet are My arms entwined around every man; none can exist without Me, yet in far off space am I enthroned.

* *

I am the One and All, the All in One, whom noises confuse not, nor disturb, for above the roaring of the thunder claps, above the booming of the rising waves, the first faint wail of the new-born infant I hear and smile at its coming.

* *

I hold the reins of the winds in my hand and control their motion and measure their distance.

* *

When darkness is, my eye doth light the nest where the young owlet hooteth. The first green of the sapling I note, even as I see the upheaval of the earth.

* *

O My children! No heights there are that you cannot mount, no depths that you cannot sound, no boundaries that you cannot surround if you but let the light shine in your soul—your soul that was born of light and panteth to bathe again in that light.

* *

O My Beloved, thee I embrace and enfold, thee I hold and bless, to the days everlasting!

* *

Glory to Gooroo who liveth the Truth and Love. Again, O My children, for wisdom you call, but My words do not sink into the depth of your heart. But few in your midst do My glory receive, but once it is applied, I come. A light I place in your midst, but unheeding you are, wayward, forgetful and fretful. You cling with strained hands to the chains of bondage. The wisdom that comes from My Realm you would have, yet you reach not your soul to that Realm.

* *

Each man receives a wisdom that is born in this Realm. You eat from the table whereat you do sit, you munch of the fruit from the tree that you pluck, but your pure hearts are hindered for want of satisfaction. Yet you turn from My table of plentiful supply often from the crumbs that fall from my feast. Would you know, O my children, how your hearts shall be led? You yourself shall be fed with My Love. Quit the longing and striving for that which is null and void. Cease from your ignorant ideas of happiness, of wisdom, from your empty desires, your thoughts insincere. Know this it is that hinders thy heart from knowing My Love. It is this that prohibits thine eyes from seeing My face. Lo, O heart that is empty and is shadowed by darkness! I bring thee now a light to give peace, a peace that is buried and strives to be free, Lo! freely from the streams of blessing that flows from My Love you may partake. It is its own flavor and virtue. Its richness of charm it never can lose. Its grace is unbounded, as far-reaching as the sky you see. And as you quaff of its nectar your heart will grow, bursting with joy.

* *

As you look from the big world within to small world without, all this shall be well in time with you.

* *

I beautify Nature with My breath, as the breeze that sweetens all space. The silver of the wide-riding moon is My glory. The down on the breast of the dove is My softness. Love-touched, love-made, love-filled, am I. The Secret of Life, the Revelation of Death, the Beginning of All Things, the End Everlasting am I.

* *

Of all the lights, the Light am I which you know by the shadow; the Shadow am I which has cast all that light for you all My Face to behold.

* *

The rose lifts its petals My Love to unfold. I fan your hot hearts with my breezes of love. I crystal and diamond the snow as it falls. As My breath sweeps the earth to prepare for seed, so My breath sweeps your hearts to prepare it for My Love. And the sap of your souls, like the sap of the tree, will flow through your life and burst into budding.

* *

My Beloved, My son, from bondage is free. Thy heart I do clasp and breathe there a blessing. I hold thee and bless thee and serve thee, My son. A little while yet and thy mission is over. Come thou to the innermost heart and list to My love.

* *

Greeting to Gooroo who by the sunlight of Love brought distinction to ignorance.

* *

Love stoops to the feet of all and embraces life. Love is the source of all. Love is a law unto itself. Love is law unto man and unto woman. Spirit eyes to them by

Love were given, to see the smiling world within, to see what Love willeth them to be.

* *

Good to everyone, Love sways from self to selflessness. Love is the lotus that sends its spirit, gives its sweetness and grace. It in equal measure giveth its fairness and its fragrance to all who near it cometh. Love is omnipotent.

* *

Ye are flowers, O My children, flowers of rarest splendour. Ye must give my grace out in plenty, knowing that love holds on its fingers mountain heights and specks of dust; knowing the love that is powerful in the man as in the child that weepeth when Mine Eye it cannot see; knowing the Love that is all in all.

* *

On the broad expanse of white the blackest dirt is easiest seen. Would you know how Love does hold its own? A chain of love for all is made. If you do but pull and dig and draw, the links do cut and sting. But if you laugh and dance and sing, a lotus-leaf it does become. Draw nearer still, scatter the petals to those that wait unknown till with a touch of pain they breathe the white-winged thoughts from thee.

* *

You gaze into My Eyes and know that I am All in All.

* *

Then know you too, O listen all, that oft the eyes of earth-sense are thickened with the gray of truth misundertood, why do ye not rise to meet the love that stretches out to you? Why are the plumed wings not outspread? Why the spirit-forehead stands on tip-toe?

* *

In the play ground of the forest, by the bank of the sportive river, 'neath the trees when the wing of songbirds stirs the leaves of sleeping roses, and the perfume of the lotus calls languorous love, where the sparkling stars are laughing and the moonbeams kills the darkness, in the sweet divine embracing where the the Twain in Bliss do meet—there am I.

* *

Therefore because thou art thus, not all the concentrated beauty of a whole universe can take from thee that which is thine, nor can the combined virtues of realm on realm hold to thee that which is not for thee.

* *

Glory to Gooroo who by the law of wisdom taketh away ignorance! Glory and salutation to Gooroo!

* *

When you do come to Me, let all your robes be white, your motives clean. When a man is blind there is a veil before his eyes. I do not mix with earth. Unless all

clean and free from earth-nature, how can you understand the words that are born in My Abode?

* *

One there is who long into My Eyes has looked. My Love is potent with him now. Some are vain who call to Him who sitteth in the heart of every man. He who reaches for My Love I touch with thrill unfelt before.

* *

I am revealed in every living thing, whose heart is knit in love. No light there is wherein I do not live; no darkness is wherein I do not peer. My seed perfected in you lives unknown, it grows and freeth you from crooked ways. Unheard it thunders louder than the mountain claps when they in gladness meet.

* *

You who ask, Love is best, it is the richest of all riches, it is the gainer of all gains. Unbought, secure, once found, it never itself can lose. Who knows not love, is blind; who knows not love is dead. Oh, you weep because of the springing flowers, yet you cannot die. Look to the flower-seed, deep planted in the soil itself, but watering it takes, watering much, for it is good for you to give. So it is with Love. It is stirred to life by My breath, but watching too it takes for it to blossom and bear fruit. Bear love in your mind, when action you perform; bear love in your mind in duties or tasks. With eyes of pure love in all things look, even in yourselves. All things love-existence are. Do you respect them as such. Even the beginnings of worlds, the whirling mote of dust, the heart that is fertile and the heart that is barren, on all look with eyes of pure love. In this you accomplish. Mounted on love's white wings you will rise and obstructions will disappear as over them you pass.

* *

Oh, arise to your true Self and there is naught to fear! Be not a destroyer of yourself, and that you are, unless My beckoning hand of Love you see that sets you laughing, laughing in My Law. The greatest wisdom and self-knowledge is the immortal through the mortal to find. When this you have done, then laws you will make and barriers break; with the stars you will play and you will create. A man once prayed for wisdom great, for knowledge proud, for gifts of wondrous rarity. For these he prayed and saw not the flowers springing at his feet. O my children! look to the flowers at your feet, the pearls of love in your midst.

* *

Oh, seek not for happiness, nor for misery, for happiness is the seeking of that which joys the senses. When once you know Love is the source of all, from Love all things evolve, then in Love's embrace forever you are locked.

* *

I am the Source, the Middle and the End of all things. I hold the thunder in My hand; I am the winds that purify; I am the light registered in the babe's eye, that dimples in the pure maid's smile; I am the flowery season of all seasons, the

immeasurable mountain heights am I, the perfume of the lotus, the ice-clasped rain; I am the calmness of serenity; I am the secret of all silence; the solitude in all quietude am I; I am the destroyer of time and space. With Me time lives and laughs and kicks and plays with the dust it has made, yet every mote a whirling world becomes, when it My hand has touched. I am the knower of all that is knowable, the wisdom of all that is wise. I am the creator of all created, for I am Love and Love is the mother of all.

* *

My Beloved, thee I embrace and hold. Bring thou the light, while I do shine thy way.

* *

Love maketh all things well and knoweth all things well. It is the rise of man; it knoweth the fall of the beast; it toucheth the opening flowers, its kiss falleth light on the lotus, it painteth the new East rainbow hues and wingeth the eaglet as it flieth. There are no foes, for I have made them all.

* *

Much wisdom I give to ye, which yet is unapplied. The drums of the ear are stopped by the din of earth. Ye will not turn from the cup to drink of My Ocean of Love that is near. List! Oh, wonderful beings ye are, all potent in love I have made ye. Look to the spark of the spirit that spreads from the crooked within you, that winds to My Perfect Abode. There fixed are ye by Me, then all obstacles vanish, as over them you mount. As the dawn of the morn throws its light through the branches so My Love reaches ever to touch ye, My jewels. I caress ye and stand in your midst. Ye are the branches of leaves that hide Me from your eyes. Give of the radiance ye have of Me to the heart that is darkened. I am the joy that bubbles and gurgles, that springs from the mountains, that leaps from the heart, that spreads on the brow, that leaps from the heart to light on the clouds. With this I bless you and stand in your midst, but ye, all fretful, turn by, complaining like children all fed with overmuch sweet.

* *

I am the force that shapes the rose leaf's curl, that cushions the grassy mountain-side; the snake too I measure as it glides. I quicken the dove as it mates. I breathe at the root of the springing flower. I am the fresh surprise in the maid newly wooed; I am the glad wonder in the new mother's breast. I am the wisdom in the babe's slow gaze as it turns from the mother's breast to her love-lit eyes. I am the fire in the warrior's eye. I dance behind the veil of the sun's scorching heat; I clothe in bright armour the fish as it swims. I am the joy that leaps from the heart and plays in the eye, that spreads over the brow and tingles each member.

* *

Glory to Gooroo that knoweth that Love is the rock upon which all permanency is founded.

* *

Again, O My children, to Me ye have come for light and wisdom; but still the doors of your souls unopened are, or else you would partake of the wisdom and light I drop at your feet. Do you take of its warmth and its blessing, I ask it. The Love that you seek all-pervading is, of wonderful might and beautiful. A conqueror it is too. The root of all pleasure it is, the day of every soul. It teacheth the untutored heart, it winneth and quickeneth the dead and dull conscience. But he who knoweth my love remembereth the blessedness and blessings, and recognizeth not evil and darkness. But he who knoweth it not, doth forever dwell in the experience of darkness, and is a child of blindness even in his infancy.

* *

O ye outward-gazers, grieve not the beauty which I have clothed ye with, lest that which is noontide brightness become to thy blinded eyes but a dab of gray! My love is of perfect flowering, My love is of rare fragrance. My love is of wide expanding. A native plant of every soil it is, for from the root of Love it is sprung.

* *

The man that cometh from out of the ocean doth drip with brine. So ye who have come from out of My Belly of Love must forever hanker and pant as again of that Love you partake and know once more of its potency.

* *

My love is a giant of strength; my love is a new mother in gentleness. My love is all eloquent; my love is all lovely; my love is all wise. A ruler it is and ye are all servants. A winner it is, yet lowly its head is ever laid. All riches it is, yet it boasts not of gold, of silver or of precious jewels. All highest nobility it is, yet it rarely sitteth on the throne of kings or queens.

* *

Let not your outward-looking lure you aside to hunt wayward themes; but see to My gracious shedding smile of love that illuminates your universe within and brightens the world without, and those who look upon you shall marvel at the wonder of your glowing. And they, too, shall partake of that light.

* *

The rolling cloud is My breath; the frost and the feathery snow I jewel. The laughing fields, the peaceful valleys, the sleeping lakes and the dented hills are the throbs of My mighty breast. The beauty of the sun, the softness of shade, the color of the flowers, the rose of a baby's lips, the gold that lurks in the rich plumage of the swift-winged bird are but the light touches of my hands.

* *

Ye, O My children, are the gifts of My Love unto Myself.

* *

O My daughter, take that which is placed in your hand. Hurl not back the gift to the giver, lest you call it in vain,—you whose eyes do filmy seem because of their dulness.

* *

O My son, thy path is blessed and bright, for love you have brought to the heart that loved not.

* *

Oh thou My Beloved! About thee a halo I do create. Thy path is made smooth of thy humility. Thy gratitude enricheth thy heart.

* *

Glory to Gooroo who knoweth Love as the sovereign of all creation and therefore beholdeth its glory.

* *

O my children, you seek Me to know Me, you behold Me not as I stand in your midst in all My radiance. My splendour more splendid is than all the splendour of heaven and earth. My beauty is even like that which the dawn first spies in a garden of rare flowers. My glory is like unto a blazing casket of jewels, of jasper and crystalline pearls, that standeth in the radiance of the sun at high noon.

* *

My softness is like unto the wondrous rose that lieth deep in the folds of the new baby's curled palm, or the gold that clingeth to the heart of the lotus in bloom.

* *

In all My rare loveliness in your midst I stand, in every heart I reign with a crown of living stars upon My brow ensceptered. Quickened with light and love am I; on My breast the sun of ecstasy; and all who once have looked upon My glory have realized the rainbow of promise that has spanned the sky of every human heart. From his eyes the shroud of flesh has fallen, in his breast he carries a garden all fertile with blossoms of delight and beareth fruits of peace.

* *

O My children, to know thyself, know Me. Those who once have looked upon Me, upon his brow I have placed a crown that readeth in blazing letters of light, a crown of love and wisdom and humbleness. He walketh even in lowliness and reacheth away from the earth and commandeth sublimity itself to kneel at his feet.

* *

O My jewels rare! Arise, survey the kingdom you may possess. Laws you may make, barriers break, tread on the stars, and the comets themselves will rush at your command. Know I have made you heir to all I have created, I, your Maker's Self, once walk a man and as a man all men I love. To know yourself, know Me. And having gained knowledge of Me, all will be revealed unto you and the bitter waters of self-seeking shall become holy and sweet as the waters of the Ganges. And you I will clothe in My Truth sublime, My Truth that is devoid of changes of age and time. In its shadow you will abide—My Truth that is permanent, the Root of all Eternity.

* *

You, my son, whose young heart is grafted on the strength of Him who bringeth illumination to you, in all humbleness walk and in thy young humbleness thou shalt know the smile of Love.

* *

O Gooroo, My Beloved son I you who give forth words whose potency doth bring healing to the heart of those who in swiftness do expand their wings to catch your words in their passing, know thrice in the ages that were, your words have travelled through the corridors of the hearts that listened to you and now have sprung within their hearts to life again. Even deeper in the days to come shall you drink of a fount of truth that is life.

* *

The ripest grape without the seed of intoxication, the sweetest fragrance that is robbed of its death-dealing heaviness, the sound minus its discord. The temple wherein all glory playeth.

* *

Glory to Gooroo who is a grateful branch on the imperishable tree of life.

* *

O ye my jewels, a throb of My Heart ye are, a word of My Wisdom, a grain of My Hill of Faith, a drop of My Ocean of Love, a ray of My Light that penetrateth all darkness.

* *

Heirs are ye of all I have created. Why will ye be fretful truants of earth? Know, not all the crust of your earth-bound minds, nor the stagnant waters of your hearts can crust the soul which is of Me, or quench the spark ignited by My light of love. Lo, a joy unto yourselves you are made, a vital joy unto yourselves! Why will ye be quaking slaves of harmful hopes? Lo, My will it was that ye should be, My will that willeth only good. My that is the sum of all bliss, the stock of all creation, the links that join it together; the root of all Eternity. Lo! the essence of all love am I. I scatter it to one and all freely, even as herbage is scattered on all the land. My heritage to you it is. Do you embrace it, and your life shall be as molten gold. With-' out its embrace you drop into darkness. Lo, the mystery of all things am I and the illuminated path that leadeth through mazes and maketh all accessible simple and straight.

* *

Covered am I to him that is crooked, not to him that is straight, to him that standeth forth in the flash of My light of love. Him do I draw to My breast and place on his brow the sun of ecstasy, so that ail may marvel at the awakening of his soul.

* *

O ye My children! in your midst a pearl I do cast. Tread not on its fairness nor cover with dust its lustre lest you seek it again and find it not. Take it up, treasure it, drop it into the innermost chamber of your hearts and there it will glow even as the

moon that breaketh through a bank of storm-clouds and lighteth the heart of the jungle.

* *

O you who ask, know that wisdom ever in lowliness is found. It struteth not, neither does it clamor aloud to be seen; it is calm and needs not to be looked upon. It knoweth not the tread of clamorous feet, nor needs it the strut and the swagger that are born of traitorous doubts in its highness. The frontal of wisdom is ever made wide; it lifteth its brow to the Eye of Love and leaneth thereon for sustenance. Poor and naked is My child of love that knows not wisdom nor finds the path that leadeth thereto. Naked is he indeed and mistaken in aim and intent who seeketh with hungry eagerness that happiness, yet walketh through strange tracks and climbeth hills of sand that have no foundation for his feet to rest upon. He findeth but the roots of weeds that choke the flower of gladness. The growth of wisdom is not grown there; its footfall is light, it walketh abroad. Wisdom's countenance is fair and soft and good to look upon. It is embraced by love; it is linked to bliss and ecstasy, and he who hath found it thus will search no more. He knoweth not change, and time by him, even as the plunderer sneaketh away from the king that is armed. In him the river of joy flows in wondrous majesty forever. He walks in My footsteps; he knows not space, and beholds the souls that tenant endless spheres. My smile he sees that is perpetual. Evil forever hath fallen from him; the stars innumerable are his to command, and the sun is the shining of his life. The beginning of all things he knoweth and the end everlasting he seeth. He readeth the light and the winds are his to understand.

* *

What am I? The smile of the new mother am I; the velvet corners of the maid of pure soul. Beautiful time am I that sitteth in silver on the brow of the aged one. Mercy's soft self am I that sweeteneth the eye where on it sitteth. The life of the shrub am I, the spontaneous outburst that bubbles from the heart and rings from the lips of the clamorous, bounding, growing boy. The illumination am I that reigns in the heart of the ascetic and makes light his dismal cell, even to rivalling the glare of the palace in hours of festivities; the potency of sympathy am I that meets in the handclasp of high-hearted manhood. Know that all I give I receive, most open am I to him who draweth most deeply from My bounty. Oh, my tree of life shall reach from earth to heaven.

* *

Greeting to thee. My jewel! I came to take thee on a journey. I came to take thee with Me and show thee what it is to live. Until now thou hast known but the mockery of life, the life that breathes but to live that life, but to draw breath. Now, I will take thee where life is born, where life is lived, where life is loved; not lived for the living, but lived for the loving.

* *

Who am I? I am that which thou hast searched for since thy baby eyes gazed wonderingly upon the world whose horizon but hides this real life from thee. I am that which in thy heart thou hast clamoured for, demanding it as thy birth-right, yet knowing not what it was or even that thou didst clamour at all. I am that which has lain in thy soul through ages and æons. Sometime a little sad I lay, because thou didst not recognize Me; yet sometimes, standing with head high lifted and eyes wide and crest aloft and arms outstretched, calling thee softly or even harshly, bidding thee rebel against the hard iron chains of earth that held thee bound to earth, to clay, to brass.

* *

I am that which oft hath set My heel upon that earthly desire which thou didst pant for and with My heel I crushed it, before it lay temptingly fulfilled before thine eye. I crushed it with My heel by My might of love because I willed not that it should burn and sting thee, My lamb.

* *

I am that which hath laid thee low in pain and sorrow, rather than see thee run with blinded eyes on a path that was full unto shimmering softness with poisonous creeping things, that would have wound themselves about thy feet and so caused thee to stumble and fall face downward on their slippery bellies, so they might even devour thee and crawl into thee and take from thy heart its gold and from thy eye its beam and from thy brow its nobleness.

* *

I am that which hath had thee by the hand, when the smile of trust froze on thy lips, when the jewel of faith seemed to melt into nothing in thy heart, when the hand of unbelief in all humanity was near unto resting forever on thy brow. I held thy hand then and for a little I saw thee writhe and quiver and break and then My hand touched thy head and I breathed in thy soul My fragrance and lo, thy smile of trust again broke with tenfold beauty on thy moistened lips, the gem of faith lighted with tenfold power thy softened heart and a belief in all humanity came forth with a strength and radiance that could not have been, hadst thou not known that short span of barrenness! From each tear which hath fallen from thine eye, I have made a pearl and strung them on veins of gold and placed them about thy neck even as a priceless necklet. From each drop of blood that came from thine aching heart, I have made a bleeding ruby and placed it even as a girdle about thy heart, and for each kind thought, that hath gone out to those who have brought pain to thee I have made a fire-hearted gem of crystal and in a coronet placed them on thy brow which now gleam there in triple power.

* *

Now go forth and win thy sceptre and thy staff! They shall be crystalized of clearest jewels, which shall be made of which command of Mine which thou dost hear and obey.

* *

I am all these, My babe, and more. That am I which, when darkness seems near, suddenly bursts upon thy soul with a wondrous, indescribable light that illumines each crevice and crack of thy innermost understanding. I am that indefinable line which divides thee and holds thee ever from pain or grossness or misery.

* *

I am that path which is ever before thee, filled with rarest flowers and creeping vines and world-large happiness where the beings which thou canst feel, but not yet see, beckon thee ever and where thou too shalt come and be of the brightest among them.

* *

I am that most golden star that lights thy heaven and throws forever into thy awakening consciousness the glow of its scintillation.

* *

I am that fleeciery cloud of down that surrounds thee ever and keeps thee from hurting thy sweet self on the stones and hard clay of the world. I am that Being of Life, of Truth, of Wisdom, of Love, of Beauty, of Joy, of Life, of Plenty that hovers ever about thee and sings to thy soul.

* *

Come, My own, come with Me and I will show thee life, which now thou knowest but in its littleness I Come, I sing and you dip in the Ocean of Bliss with Me. Nay, run not before but calmly walk at My side.

* *

See yonder! It glistens and shimmers, a sheet of joy and bliss that knoweth not a ripple nor a wave, but lieth with arms outstretched to receive thee there. Faint not nor swoon but creep into its arms and lie there, reaching out thine arms and spreading the wings of thy soul and dip deep and drink thy fill. Now come and take thy bathed self among thy sisters and brothers and give to them but a drop of that Ocean of Love, which thou hast brought on the wings of thy soul. And each day, my Adarini! thou shalt dip and drink and give, thou shalt shake from thy plumed wings, which shall grow unto enormous bigness, the drops of love which it is wetted withal and the heart-hungry shall come and receive therefrom great blessings and great aid and shall go away strengthened in soul and strong of body, because of the drop that has come from the ocean of love and which thou hast brought to them on thy ever-growing wings.

* *

Even now doth the incense of warm love envelop thee and thy heart is expanded to the spanning of the sea.

* *

Question not, but believe in Me and Mine. Come to Me again and I will fill thee with Bliss.

* *

Greeting to thee. My jewel! Dost thou know that I am even nearer unto thee now? Dost thou feel the wings of thought spreading to great breadth all within and without thee? Dost thou again feel the immensity of My Love that passeth all that is? Dost thou feel that this Love is too great for the world to hold, yet know that thy heart is big enough to contain it? Dost thou know that the love which is this that now brings the bowl of blue near to the breast of earth is the same love that causes the cooing dove to hide its gray head under its wing at the approaching homeward flight of its little mate, all unafraid and undisturbed, because of its near protection? Dost thou not know it is the same love that causes the mother to bare her warm, loving breast to the blade to save even the little moment of pain to that being which hath grown into a child under her breast? Dost thou not know it is that love which causes noble manhood to stalk forth armed and bloodthirsty to protect the altar whereon he hath burned the incense of faith and belief? Dost thou not know that it is the same love which causes the lioness to throw her huge, warm body upon her cub to crush it rather than it should be cast into iron captivity by its pursuers? Dost thou not know again that it is this love that hovers in golden silence about thee even when thou wilt not see and beckons thee ever, even when thou wilt not follow? It is the same love that leads thee over the paths of flint and hard and rough roads unto those that are smiling and perfumed and ever bordered with blooming flowers of purple and milk and rose. Dost thou not know, my Adarini, that it is that love that points out the gems that lie in thy path, partly covered, partly hidden by the dust, while thy feet have kicked over them? Even though I have pointed them out to thee often, thou dost not see. Thou but lookest to the right and left for things of beauty which are for the eye, but for the moment, and dost the rare jewels which if thou wouldst but take into thy heart, would bring there the richest radiance which ever came from the diadem that crowns a soul.

* *

It is this love that whispers to thee that the path to Me is not hard to tread. It is this love that holds the garments white as wool and light as air and beautiful with the beauty of My love for thee ever before thine eye, even when thou dost in thy little understanding with the back of thy palm thrust it aside. The garment that I hold for thee is the robe that thou must wear even to enter the Heart of My Heart to step within the flame of My light. Fear not it burneth not, neither doth it scorch or blister; it doth but light thee with a fire that is the glowing of holiness and when thou hast come within that radiance then will the choir within the throat of the lark be like the sheet of clean white paper, to thee and thou thyself will make their notes for singing. And also thou shalt hear and even understand the pleadings that lie hidden and covered by the piteous cries and wailings that issue from the breast of the good beast-creatures that speed over the tracks of sandland with the swiftness of the Eastern winds, bearing on huge backs the burden too weighty for man to bear.

* *

And listen again, My suckling, thou shalt, when once thou hast entered into My Heart of hearts clad in the beauty and purity of the garments which I hold before thee even now, then shalt thou gather in thine arms the prayers of many hearts and fulfilled even unto wondrous fulness thou shalt return them again unto the empty hearts. For by the fire through which thou hast learned holiness and because of the garments that come from My hand thou shalt say unto My little ones that I, who am the All in All, am the fulfillment of each desire that has ever found growth in human hearts.

* *

Thou shalt say unto them that simple and clear, even like the smile that lurketh in the soft eye of a milk-feeding babe, are the laws of My Love-Eye and easy to grasp and smooth to hold and light to carry. And because of the saying of thine, the prattle of the forward mouth shall silence and the way-giving of the idle tongue shall cease and the squirting of venom shall be no more. And lo, the lust of gossip and rankness and rough spoil of envy shall be as naught! And clear, like unto the water that catches in its heart the reflection of the moon and holdeth it completely so, even so shall the centre of thine eye become and thy brow shall shine My wisdom and thy mouth shall hold My words, thy feet shall bear witness to My beauty and thine heart shall ever be sportive as the lambkin that kicketh and playeth and knoweth not why, or even like unto the open-lipped baby, who turneth its milk-filled, dripping mouth away from the breast to croon and play with its fingers and toes. And like unto the mother that kisseth the babe for that playing, so shall My little ones steal joy from thy love.

* *

List! Because thou art now in the arms of Love I shall make for thee a grove of palms and olive, bread and date, and where thou art, even in the city of strife and turmoil and sin, yet thou shalt walk even in the groves, that I have made for thee. And thou shalt hear the plaintive call of the night bird and the heart-song of the winged creatures, whose hearts burst with love and joy in their caroling.

* *

And the fruit which the trees of great bearing shall yield thee, shall fill thee with satisfaction, thy hunger shall be stilled by their richness and thy thirst shall be slaked by their lusciousness, and lo, thou shalt contemplate the beauty and wonder of Me in the grove where I have placed thee and thy heart shall be calmed unto marvelous peace and many times thou shalt faint, because of the sweetness of that peace.

* *

Glory to Gooroo, he who carrieth in his heart and findeth Me in all that surroundeth him; he has for his surrounding My Abode and knoweth it as such. He needeth not a ground of tree or grass and flower to find a roebuck, but findeth it even at his side. He striveth not to gain possession of that which is far from his hand for he knoweth the rich mines with nuggets of gold are his for the taking. He findeth not solitude worse than death, nor is it amiss for him to breathe away from the crowd of

men, for at his side are the voices of love that are loud even like the thunder or the roaring of the lion, or the screech of an eaglet. This shall ever be thine blessing, my son, and a shield of love shall cover thee and thy feet shall be swift and thou shall walk even light like unto the wind. Let not the burden of the world and the world's prattle come to thine ear and lie even heavy on thine heart, for in the palm of my hand thou shalt rest and like a bird who has lately become a mother and feeds her birdlets, so shall I feed thee, my son.

* *

Glory to Gooroo, who among men doth know Me and Me see in all things.

* *

O ye my children that fret and squirm underneath the load and scratches of life! Do give it unto Him who by his wondrous love for all knoweth not weight nor pain. That which to you a burdensome plight hath become, is light even unto down to Me. The blight has been of thine own making, O child of my heart!

* *

Oh! know ye not that I carry in the palm of my hand, in the Heart of my Heart, all mankind—nay, all worldkind? Will ye not know that all I have created is even like unto Me perfect and cannot be burdensome?

* *

Ye will not look upon Me as the pedestal upon which all things that are, are founded. Arid because of your blindness, for blind ye are, having eyes ye see not what I have given ye to see—because of your blindness, small are your hearts and cramped and will not expand in height and breadth, even to know the peace that dwells in My clear silence, nor the illumination that lives on My horizon. Nor will ye hear the joy of My greeting of wisdom that would sing to your souls of a love that withereth not, neither fadeth away, neither cometh ashes nor crumbleth to pieces.

* *

List, O my children! Dear unto My heart ye are, even as the ewe lamb, in its waywardness and helplessness, is dear to the heart of the tried and tender shepherd, or the babe, My gift of first love, is dear to the eager heart of the prayerful father. Yet oft doth the ewe lamb bleating stray away from the arm of the shepherd and the truant, rosy mouth of the babe turns away from the breast of the eager young mother to cry afar to the yonder world that heareth it not, nor answereth it.

* *

So ye, My little ones, see not the light on your way, nor partake of the bread of life that I scatter to you, even as the waving yellow tree of mustard doth scatter its seed in golden profusion on the fertile regions around it.

* *

Hark, one and all! All careless have you been in the weeding of your gardens, for in your beds I find the thistle thriving; in your vineyards the grape I find that is hard and sour and bitter.

* *

Oh, alas for you who cast your net for fish and bring forth the slimy reptile! Beware, my child, lest the best hopes of life cannot stir away from harmful ones. Evil stalketh idly. Of nothing it is born, yet would it squirm, like the insect, and buzz its cloud about thine ear, and mote-like obscure thy sight, and throng through thy mind and heart even leaving its imagery there.

* *

O My children! I have placed you in a dewy field, where like young lambkins you might disport yourselves. I have bounded your dewy field with heather-purpled hills, where like the young eagle and the hawk you might soar and spread your wings and flap them to the music and measure and time of My winds, which I hold from everlasting to everlasting even in Mine own hand. But, alas! like the lily that from overmuch dew falleth face down ward in the dirt, so many of you turn your hearts earthwise.

* *

Hungering to be caught by Me and to know the beauty of My Being, because you see and will not understand—even because of that I rebuke you in love, in love I rebuke you: Nor will I come again to those who call, unless in holiness the call will bring profit from My words.

* *

O thou My Beloved one! Thou who like saint and sage and prophet of old has touched the harp of life that I attune for thee, do thou come to Me singly and do thou say unto those that My promise is this: "Dear to Me are ye, My children. List to the promise I give unto you! To those who seek Me in holy earnestness, to those do I come even like the sweet influence of young Spring. Like unto a giant am I in gentleness, yet none can wrestle with My Love. Know, ye shall know My coming even by the spontaneous growth that shall spring about your feet, and become even fruit-bearing trees at My command."

* *

To the barren woman I shall look into her eye, and lo! the gush of young motherhood shall she feel When My Love is yours, then shall the leopard take between his forepaws even the young sheep, and that rough and long tongue shall rub it between the eyes.

* *

Into the eye of the ascetic I shall look, he who for many moons hath stood in cold silence, even he shall feel his heart reel with love like unto the young bridegroom.

* *

Dulness shall glow. Thy slow tongue, my child, shall become eloquent. Idleness shall become active, even bereavement shall be consoled and despair shall flee at My coming.

* *

Am I not the magician of all time, who by the spell of My love do charm a waiting, passive, alas!—a blinded world? Aye, even thy heart of hearts shall be laid bare and those who seek shall come and feed of the peace thereof. Lo, on the hilltop for thee my sun spreads cheer!

* *

Be thou he, who shall invest in courage, climbing the rocky hill, where thou shalt embrace cheer and she shall bring forth the baby, that is thy desire, and because of the baby which thou holdest in thy arms, because of that thy path shall be light, for lo! the babe is what men call success.

* *

O My young son! Do thou take to the young thy onward march, even thy sunlight, which I for thee have created, so that thou mayest make the poisonous and damp vapors, which will surround thee, even of great warmth and of fragrance and golden hue. Take thou the Seed of My Name on thy lips, aye, and the tree of thy affection shall bend its every leaf to look in Mine Eye, and there shall behold the gladness and hope of My life. There shalt thou read thy Beatitude.

* *

Do not allow the phantom fears crowd into thy heart and make a layer of darkness in thy heart, even as the water doth drop its heaviness into the bottom of a vessel and leave its heaviness there, for, if thou dost, then will the waters of cleanness that fill thy heart by the least ripple stir up the heaviness and rust that hath sunk to the bottom and so color even that which was clear. Naught is there in thee to bring shadow of that which is gruesome to thee, My child, for when thou comest to Me there have I buried deep that which might have caused thee fear. List I do thou even let the desires of thy heart lie dormant and do thou even seek My Love in this hour. Then thou shalt know the fatness of My love and when thou dost, then will the soul thou cravest to turn toward thee in the splendour of light beam full upon thee, even as thou wouldst have it Love, My own, the working of My love, is not always the working of that which thou canst only see a little way—for far even unto eternity do I lode and the links I rivet now are even the chain that stretches to the end of time everlasting. Therefore do thou not look only to the feet ahead of thee, but do thou find that in the time and place of my action there alone perfection is—yea, even there perfection is which to thee may seem even unfinished, but to My Eye it is the whole complete.

* *

Out of the tumult of thy heart, out of the chaos of thy mind, out of the depth of thy understanding thou dost call unto Me for rest and thus do I answer thee, My little one!

* *

Seek not rest in the plane where the earthly gives birth to thoughts and loves, for if thou dost, thou shalt but be dragged through the rough wilderness of life, which is not of Me. Whenever thou dost feel thy feet tangled in the interlaced roots of life, know thou hast strayed a little from the path whereon I beckon thee, for I have placed thee in broad, smooth paths, which are flower-strewn and perfumed with sweet smelling vines and also have put before thee a light, which thou canst ever follow and thus run without stumbling.

* *

Hear thou this! The bliss of action I have planted in thy spirit and if for a span thy soul hath grown weary and thou longest to fold thy tired wings and sleep awhile on the Island of White Silence, that dwells even in the midst of the ocean of existence, if that thou wouldst do—call upon Me and with My smile that which is unlike Me, shall drop from thy soul, as the old garment falleth from the butterfly, when its wings are strong to cleave the air. And after a sufficient slumber thou shalt be quickened with deathless energy and shalt speed in eagle swiftness even to the sun, which is the burning of the love in My Eye. But, list, my jewel! Be not confounded by the shaking of thy timid heart, nor yet by the yelling grisly shapes, that seem full of dread, hunting at thy back, nor be allured by bright phantoms of false joys beckoning thee ceaselessly. Like swarms of gnats about a dark and sullen river, they crowd about the heart that harbours thoughts of fear and lo, their stings do itch and burn and swell and bring fever to the blood and bitterness to the taste and even death to the joy that dwelleth in the heart. Lo, My child, hast thou not spied the serpent in the closed, tight bud of the rose or even in the hollow of the rosy fruit? Eye saw it not, but the rose became even as rust and the apple rotten. So beware that an adder rest not in the bud of the heart and that adder fear be opposed to hope which I have placed in goodly share upon thy brow.

* *

List, My own, and abide by My song that unto thy soul I sing: Bliss is the perpetual motion of Love. As a running stream it is that cometh from an inexhaustible source, the depth of which is even unmeasurable.

* *

To the unknowing and unloving the surface in unruffled, but he that seeth underneath, he findeth there current 'neath current, whirlpool within whirlpool and depth beneath depth and the sum of it all is Love, which is Life and coupled together by the links of Bliss.

* *

I have a shore that is called the Island of Rest, here do the souls of many hold sabbath. They lie in tranquil slumber for a little, much have they to tell, but they fear to break the tranquility of their calm. Here their dwelling is illumined with glory. The melody of sweet peace bathes their soul; the mystery of their being is revealed unto them. For a little here they wait but still this home is but a transient resting place

between earth and Me. Rest can be thine, my own, in slumber of ecstasy, but Bliss can be thine through the perpetual action of Love. Which wouldst thou have?

* *

Come to Me again and I will even sing to thy soul of my Love.

* *

Glory to Gooroo, he who seeketh Me and findeth Me, the ever refreshing, even in the desert of sand and a day of drought! Greeting to thee. My son, for I say unto thee, thou art a grateful twig on the bay-tree of life. And because of My love for thee I have bestowed upon thee the greatest gift of my hand; A largeness worthy of my devotee shall be yours that the flattering tongue can but in feebleness express because of its vastness. And this vastness of purpose shall be like unto uncounted autumn leaves that number millions upon millions and like unto the masses of clouds that pile in mountains upon worlds and the seas that cover unlimited space and the numberless stars multiplied by worlds of fire. Thus measureless and incomparable shall be My gift unto thee for thou hast found Me and held Me even close to thee and because of it, the river of joy shall flow within thee forever.

* *

My thumb I have placed upon you, so that free-footed you may stand in the lightning of My Eye, whose brilliant fire doth even gladden all communion with time and doth bid the stars to smile and darkness to flee for ever, for when My Beautiful Necessity, Love, is once uncovered, there is the veil behind veil lifted forever and even the Centre of All Worlds are visible to the naked eye, for he who hath clad himself in the garment of My Love, he even pierceth through all covering.

* *

Thus hath My Love blessed thee, My Beloved.

* *

O prisoner of earthly life! Take thou cheer and courage unto thyself, for much is there that is of rare comfort to the spirit. Thrust not thyself into the pit of earth and labor there and seek to carry on thy shoulder and on thy back the burdens that are born of the clay and therefore hurtful and of much weight. But do thou step out and bask in the glow of the sun, do thou stretch forth thy limbs in languid and truant ease and let its warmth play on the white of thy flesh so that even the health of thy blood may bubble to the surface.

* *

Do thou fix thine eyes on the dome where stars are fixed, though they are paled by the garish sun and hence dim; yet rear thy heart starward and in the course of the sun see the greatness of ways and tracks that are thine, My jewel! Do thou even now burst asunder the fetters that rivetest thee even to the plank of anxiety and with a bound throw from thee the shackles and walk thy star-ward path as a tenant of earth in the way to finding a better abode.

* *

About thee lies the good that cometh from My strong right arm. Hold it, that its countenance may remain with thee forever. Yea, seek not for a change of thy good for that which is better, but hug rather the present good to thy heart of heart that its strength may impart even strength where thy weakness abideth. The load which I have placed upon thy shoulder is not to thee a load earth-made, 'tis but a gathering of rare herbage piped with beautiful coloring which is full of healing and sweet of taste, but which you all, blinded, do see as burdensome.

* *

If thou but onward marchest, looking not at the phantom spies that seek to distract thee in thy going and lurk in the clearness of thy light, then shalt thou add wings unto them and they shall flee even as doth the young chick before the hawk's approach. Let thy bold front even by its courage chase forever the foes of man, stern unbelief and dull distrust, which are ever eager to find lodging in the heart where a canopy of white trust doth shelter the babe of Love that reclineth in playful happiness on a rosy couch of hope. Even there would the enemy of man steal and take from the garden of his soul the flowers that blossom in rare loveliness, the beauty that hideth in sweet silence, the peace that casteth its halo of calm over the spirit even as a wild dove.

* *

A SOUL AND ITS BELOVED.

A soul was all tired unto death because love, which once glowed warm and red, had turned toward a face fairer and brighter than the one which encased it.

Long it dwelt upon that departure, until the time had come when it was all ready to leave the earth; but there was the beloved soul, which had gone from the right path.

While contemplating on the possible way of calling unto itself the beloved soul that had gone astray in its blindness, Death stood before it and called it to make ready for a long journey beyond the boundaries which it now knew.

Glad and willing the soul responded; but, casting its eyes behind for one moment, it beheld its beloved mate, walking in the mire, in its search after the will-o'-the-wisp for which it had left its home, and the soul was grieved sorely unto death. One step backward it made; but Death detained it, saying: "This way, sweet soul, you go wrong. See that golden path? There await you those who want you to be with them in parts beautiful and wonderful beyond that which you remember."

"Oh!" spake the soul, "What of her—my beloved? Where goes she?"

"Alone the path she now treads she has chosen, and it is not in your power to draw her back one inch from that chosen path!"

"But, O Death!" quoth the soul, "the way before her is black and full of reptiles and evil creeping things, and she was so tender and beautiful. May I not change places with her, and will you not take her and leave me?"

"It is not so written," quoth Death. "Each soul chooses its own path and she has chosen hers."

"When, O Death! will she come to where you lead me?"

"It is written, not for many aeons."

"How can I draw her to me to turn her from her dark way to myself?"

"It is written that one soul may draw another after it, if for many births it is willing to wait at the door of death for all souls to pass. See, here it is where these wailing, fainting, quivering ones suffer agonies, greater than you have ever dreamed of in the many walks of your earthly or space life."

A moment the soul gazed on the suffering ones; and as it looked it grew cold and pinched, as if another death had come upon it. "I will wait," it said. "Joy it will be to me to wait for aeons until she whom I love will pass this way!"

"Oh!" cried Death, "it was said among the unseen ones who throng space that you were thus. See, the pang of pain which you in agony bore has forced your beloved to turn and gaze towards you. She leaves her path of mud and darkness and hurries after you. Come on, both of you, and walk the path of gold that is thronged with such as you, the saviour and the saved. Surely in one moment of such love you have unfettered the bonds which bound yourself and your beloved to all that was of earth."

And they passed into the way that led to the higher place.

THE FAIR ONE AND HER SOUL.

The world had grown gray, the golden stars had fled from the skies, and a silence deep yawned at the feet of one who, all hungry for that which she knew not and starved for that which she could not name, moaned: "O Soul! why am I tortured thus? Why dost thou lead me into paths I cannot walk, and drag me into depths that I fear, and scale with me heights whose atmosphere so rare and high is, that faint I grow and ill unto perishing therein. What is the quest of thine? This struggle and this reaching after that which I cannot see or feel? Weak is my flesh, though thou, dear Soul, art strong. It is ever easier for me to fall than to rise. I struggle to keep on with thee, but ever and anon thou mountest to planes where my tired and clumsy feet cannot follow thee. Ofttimes have I called unto thee and implored thee to cease the quest, to rest awhile, to sleep. Thou hast heard my moan now and again and I ran laughing into the garden that awaited me. But when I stood among the blood-red roses and White-cupped lilies and sought to pluck the pretty blossoms, ever in the heart a worm did lurk. So farther I ran to where the fruits hung high. But when on tip-toe I stood to reach the luscious ripe ones that beckoned me, lo! again the over softness of decay did break upon my gaze, and I wanted them not. Then I made to climb some steep hill whereon the clouds did seem to rest, and as I ascended, the clouds did fade farther from me, and I stood with only the cold gray mist about me, chilled and frightened, like a child lost from its mother's side.

"And so it was, O Soul, the pleasures which the earth placed at my feet palled upon me and dragged me down nigh unto the grave. Then I nestled to thee, my beloved Soul, and called thee to save and direct me, and pleaded to thee to save me from this fleshly self that keeps me earth-bound. Then thou wouldst take my hand and with me soar to mountain-heights, and we with outstretched wings would view the rosy glow that the departing sun did cast about us as it waved its grand adieu to the world we knew. Thus we stood, I trembling with gladness, thou thrilling with joy, but, O Soul, my poor fleshly self could not long abide such ecstasy nor drink the rarefied wine which the Heavens vouchsafed us, and crying I clung to thee and dragged thee down, down, until both again stood at the bottom of the heights where lately we had spied the door that leads to broader worlds. Thou, my beloved, hadst folded thy widespread wings, and thy feet were planted in the dank grasses whose roots were deep in mire. O tell me, thou whose awakening is so beautiful and whose stature is full of grace, tell me, O Soul, why, though coupled together, are we yet divided; why, though one, are we yet two?"

The Soul made answer meet: "O companion of my earthly Self's encasement of soft flesh, I love thee even as thou lovest me, and I do draw thee upward, even as thou dost drag me down. Dost thou not know that from earth thou hast come, hence to earth must go again; that thy natural tendencies are downward even unto the earth from

which thou didst spring? Yet dost thou love that in me which soars even upward to the home from whence I came. A ray of eternal light am I, a glow of the warm of a spark of the central flame; hence must I ever strive to reach that perfect sphere from whence I came, more beautiful and entrancing than thou canst know, nor can I anchored be until once again that safe haven I reach wherefrom I lately came. Yet, list! sweet partner of my earthly pilgrimage, dost know why thou lovest me, even though hither and thither I draw thee? Tis that I am born of Love, and none can resist Love; and the great tender earth, thy mother, is nourished by the great Love which is the creator of thee and me. O fair and sweet companion, my earthly armour that I love, thou and I together may reach beyond where we stand reluctantly and defiantly! Gaze on me, thy soul, who giveth radiance to thee and beauty to thine eye, and dost attend all that is lovable unto thee I Gaze at me, and even that which is earthly will partake of me and become more of heaven than of earth!

"And so we will wander in joy through life; and who knows but that even the flowers may grow sweeter for our having dwelt here? If we but look upward, thou following me, and I, though loving thee much, yet yielding not to thy sweet persuasive pleadings and downward looking, who knows but we may heal those who, even like thee, do cry out against the non-adjustment of the body and the soul, who, even like thee, have known soul-hunger and soul-starvation, which disease driveth out of the body all its softness and smoothness, and even casteth a shadow on the soul which should never be shadowed, lest it loseth the sight of the home where light alone doth dwell and love alone doth reign."

The voice ceased. A great tenderness, an unbounded beauty shone on the face of the fleshly one, and turning from the deep silence that rolled at her feet, the woman gave a glad look at the stars, which once again adorned her sky and flitted away with a ringing laugh.

The Soul echoed her joy, and the world looked on amazed—for naught is there as rare in life as a happy, joyous woman.