

does not lead to suspension of the activities of the mind, though it may help such suspension. After perfecting *Prāṇāyāma* if one practises control over the mind by means of *Dhāraṇā* etc. then alone one may advance in the path of Yoga; otherwise one will gain nothing, except keeping the body like a corpse for a period of time.

Apart from this, there are other methods of restraining the activities of *Prāṇa*. Those who concentrate the mind by *Īśvara-Pranidhāna* (devotion to God) or *Dhāraṇā* in Consciousness, when their concentration leads to supreme joy, bringing in its train an effort for the *Sāttvika* form of restraint, by means of that also the functions of the *Prāṇa* may be stopped. And if that concentration becomes constant, being wholly absorbed in it, and reducing the diet without much trouble, or stopping food altogether, *Samādhi* may be gained by stopping the activities of the *Prāṇa*. The *Mahābhārata* says, "By reducing the diet, they conquer the fifth fault, *viz.* the breath;"—this injunction is intended for such spiritual aspirants. Through practice of devotion to God and *Dhāraṇā* of the *Sāttvika* type, the intensity of joy that is felt in the innermost being, gives rise to a strong desire to hold it as if by an embrace of the heart, which producing a *Sāttvika* form of contraction of the nerve centres may stop the activities of the *Prāṇa*. Just as in the process of *Hatha-Yoga* the impulse of contraction is externally produced, in this process it is internally produced.

To stop the activity of the *Prāṇa*, which is a state of catalepsy, for a long time (in the way recommended in *Hatha-Yoga*) intestinal impurities have to be wholly removed, otherwise obstacle is created by putrid substances, and the abdomen cannot be properly contracted. This does not become necessary in the process in which total fast is observed, or a reduced diet (*i.e.* pure water, or water mixed with milk) is taken. Vide I.19 (2).

With some people, the effort to stop the activity of the *Prāṇa* comes almost naturally. By this means, they can more or less stop the *Prāṇa* for a period of time. It is known that a person could remain buried under the ground continually for 10 or 12 days. At that time, he did not wholly lose his consciousness but was like an inert substance. Another person