

33. Or through the divining power of intuition he knows all things.

This is really the supplement, the spiritual side, of the Sutra just translated. Step by step, as the better consciousness, the spiritual view, gains force in the back of the mind, so, in the same measure, the spiritual man is gaining the power to see: learning to open the spiritual eyes. When the eyes are fully opened, the spiritual man beholds the great Companions standing about him; he has begun to “know all things.”

This divining power of intuition is the power which lies above and behind the so-called rational mind; the rational mind formulates a question and lays it before the intuition, which gives a real answer, often immediately distorted by the rational mind, yet always embodying a kernel of truth. It is by this process, through which the rational mind brings questions to the intuition for solution, that the truths of science are reached, the flashes of discovery and genius. But this higher power need not work in subordination to the so-called rational mind, it may act directly, as full illumination, “the vision and the faculty divine.”

34. By perfectly concentrated Meditation on the heart, the interior being, comes the knowledge of consciousness.

The heart here seems to mean, as it so often does in the Upanishads, the interior, spiritual nature, the consciousness of the spiritual man, which is related to the heart, and to the wisdom of the heart. By steadily seeking after, and finding, the consciousness of the spiritual man, by coming to consciousness as the spiritual man, a perfect knowledge of consciousness will be attained. For the consciousness of the spiritual man has this divine quality: while being and remaining a truly individual consciousness, it at the same time flows over, as it were, and blends with the Divine Consciousness above and about it, the consciousness of the great Companions; and by showing itself to be one with the Divine Consciousness, it reveals the nature of all consciousness, the secret that all consciousness is One and Divine.

35. The personal self seeks to feast on life, through a failure to perceive the distinction between the personal self and the spiritual man. All personal experience really exists for the sake of another: namely, the spiritual man.

By perfectly concentrated Meditation on experience for the sake of the Self, comes a knowledge of the spiritual man.

The divine ray of the Higher Self, which is eternal, impersonal and abstract, descends into life, and forms a personality, which, through the stress and storm of life, is hammered into a definite and concrete self-

conscious individuality. The problem is, to blend these two powers, taking the eternal and spiritual being of the first, and blending with it, transferring into it, the self-conscious individuality of the second; and thus bringing to life a third being, the spiritual man, who is heir to the immortality of his father, the Higher Self, and yet has the self-conscious, concrete individuality of his other parent, the personal self. This is the true immaculate conception, the new birth from above, “conceived of the Holy Spirit.” Of this new birth it is said: “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit: ye must be born again.”

Rightly understood, therefore, the whole life of the personal man is for another, not for himself. He exists only to render his very life and all his experience for the building up of the spiritual man. Only through failure to see this, does he seek enjoyment for himself, seek to secure the feasts of life for himself; not understanding that he must live for the other, live sacrificially, offering both feasts and his very being on the altar; giving himself as a contribution for the building of the spiritual man. When he does understand this, and lives for the Higher Self, setting his heart and thought on the Higher Self, then his sacrifice bears divine fruit, the spiritual man is built up, consciousness awakes in him, and he comes fully into being as a divine and immortal individuality.

36. Thereupon are born the divine power of intuition, and the hearing, the touch, the vision, the taste and the power of smell of the spiritual man.

When, in virtue of the perpetual sacrifice of the personal man, daily and hourly giving his life for his divine brother the spiritual man, and through the radiance ever pouring down from the Higher Self, eternal in the Heavens, the spiritual man comes to birth,—there awake in him those powers whose physical counterparts we know in the personal man. The spiritual man begins to see, to hear, to touch, to taste. And, besides the senses of the spiritual man, there awakes his mind, that divine counterpart of the mind of the physical man, the power of direct and immediate knowledge, the power of spiritual intuition, of divination. This power, as we have seen, owes its virtue to the unity, the continuity, of consciousness, whereby whatever is known to any consciousness, is knowable by any other consciousness. Thus the consciousness of the spiritual man, who lives above our narrow barriers of separateness, is in intimate touch with the consciousness of the great Companions, and can draw on that vast reservoir for all real needs. Thus arises within the spiritual man that certain knowledge which is called intuition, divination, illumination.

37. These powers stand in contradistinction to the highest spiritual vision. In manifestation they are called magical powers.

The divine man is destined to supersede the spiritual man, as the spiritual man supersedes the natural man. Then the disciple becomes a Master. The opened powers of the spiritual man, spiritual vision, hearing, and touch, stand, therefore, in contradistinction to the higher divine power above them, and must in no wise be regarded as the end of the way, for the path has no end, but rises ever to higher and higher glories; the soul's growth and splendour have no limit. So that, if the spiritual powers we have been considering are regarded as in any sense final, they are a hindrance, a barrier to the far higher powers of the divine man. But viewed from below, from the standpoint of normal physical experience, they are powers truly magical; as the powers natural to a four-dimensional being will appear magical to a three-dimensional being.

38. Through the weakening of the causes of bondage, and by learning the method of passing, the consciousness is transferred to the other body.

In due time, after the spiritual man has been formed and grown stable through the forces and virtues already enumerated, and after the senses of the spiritual man have awaked, there comes the transfer of the dominant consciousness, the sense of individuality, from the physical to the spiritual man. Thereafter the physical man is felt to be a secondary, a subordinate, an instrument through whom the spiritual man works; and the spiritual man is felt to be the real individuality. This is, in a sense, the attainment to full salvation and immortal life; yet it is not the final goal or resting place, but only the beginning of the greater way.

The means for this transfer are described as the weakening of the causes of bondage, and an understanding of the method of passing from the one consciousness to the other. The first may also be described as detachment, and comes from the conquest of the delusion that the personal self is the real man. When that delusion abates and is held in check, the finer consciousness of the spiritual man begins to shine in the background of the mind. The transfer of the sense of individuality to this finer consciousness, and thus to the spiritual man, then becomes a matter of recollection, of attention; primarily, a matter of taking a deeper interest in the life and doings of the spiritual man, than in the pleasures or occupations of the personality. Therefore it is said:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt,

and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

39. Through mastery of the upward-life comes freedom from the dangers of water, morass, and thorny places, and the power of ascension is gained.

Here is one of the sentences, so characteristic of this author, and, indeed, of the Eastern spirit, in which there is an obvious exterior meaning, and, within this, a clear interior meaning, not quite so obvious, but far more vital.

The surface meaning is, that by mastery of a certain power, called here the upward-life, and akin to levitation, there comes the ability to walk on water, or to pass over thorny places without wounding the feet.

But there is a deeper meaning. When we speak of the disciple’s path as a path of thorns, we use a symbol; and the same symbol is used here. The upward-life means something more than the power, often manifested in abnormal psychical experiences, of levitating the physical body, or near-by physical objects. It means the strong power of aspiration, of upward will, which first builds, and then awakes the spiritual man, and finally transfers the conscious individuality to him; for it is he who passes safely over the waters of death and rebirth, and is not pierced by the thorns in the path. Therefore it is said that he who would tread the path of power must look for a home in the air, and afterwards in the ether.

Of the upward-life, this is written in the Katha Upanishad:

“A hundred and one are the heart’s channels; of these one passes to the crown. Going up this, he comes to the immortal.”

This is the power of ascension spoken of in the Sutra.

40. By mastery of the binding-life comes radiance.

In the Upanishads, it is said that this binding-life unites the upward-life to the downward-life, and these lives have their analogies in the “vital breaths” in the body. The thought in the text seems to be, that, when the personality is brought thoroughly under control of the spiritual man, through the life-currents which bind them together, the personality is endowed with a new force, a strong personal magnetism, one might call it, such as is often an appanage of genius.

But the text seems to mean more than this and to have in view the “vesture of the colour of the sun” attributed by the Upanishads to the spiritual man; that vesture which a disciple has thus described: “The Lord shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body”; perhaps “body of radiance” would better translate the Greek.

In both these passages, the teaching seems to be, that the body of the full-grown spiritual man is radiant or luminous,-for those at least, who have anointed their eyes wit! eye-salve, so that they see.

41. From perfectly concentrated Meditation on the correlation of hearing and the ether, comes the power of spiritual hearing.

Physical sound, we are told, is carried by the air, or by water, iron, or some medium on the same plane of substance. But there is a finer hearing, whose medium of transmission would seem to be the ether; perhaps not that ether which carries light, heat and magnetic waves, but, it may be, the far finer ether through which the power of gravity works. For, while light or heat or magnetic waves, travelling from the sun to the earth, take eight minutes for the journey, it is mathematically certain that the pull of gravitation does not take as much as eight seconds, or even the eighth of a second. The pull of gravitation travels, it would seem “as quick as thought”; so it may well be that, in thought transference or telepathy, the thoughts travel by the same way, carried by the same “thought-swift” medium.

The transfer of a word by telepathy is the simplest and earliest form of the “divine hearing” of the spiritual man; as that power grows, and as, through perfectly concentrated Meditation, the spiritual man comes into more complete mastery of it, he grows able to hear and clearly distinguish the speech of the great Companions, who counsel and comfort him on his way. They may speak to him either in wordless thoughts, or in perfectly definite words and sentences.

42. By perfectly concentrated Meditation on the correlation of the body with the ether, and by thinking of it as light as thistle-down, will come the power to traverse the ether.

It has been said that he who would tread the path of power must look for a home in the air, and afterwards in the ether. This would seem to mean, besides the constant injunction to detachment, that he must be prepared to inhabit first a psychic, and then an etheric body; the former being the body of dreams; the latter, the body of the spiritual man, when he wakes up on the other side of dreamland. The gradual accustoming of the consciousness to its new etheric vesture, its gradual acclimatization, so to speak, in the etheric body of the spiritual man, is what our text seems to contemplate.

43. When that condition of consciousness is reached, which is far-reaching and not confined to the body, which is outside the body and not conditioned by it, then the veil which conceals the light is worn away.

Perhaps the best comment on this is afforded by the words of Paul:

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable [or, unspoken] words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

The condition is, briefly, that of the awakened spiritual man, who sees and hears beyond the veil.

44. Mastery of the elements comes from perfectly concentrated Meditation on their five forms: the gross, the elemental, the subtle, the inherent, the purposive.

These five forms are analogous to those recognized by modern physics: solid, liquid, gaseous, radiant and ionic. When the piercing vision of the awakened spiritual man is directed to the forms of matter, from within, as it were, from behind the scenes, then perfect mastery over the “beggarly elements” is attained. This is, perhaps, equivalent to the injunction: “Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this.”

45. Thereupon will come the manifestation of the atomic and other powers, which are the endowment of the body, together with its unassailable force.

The body in question is, of course, the etheric body of the spiritual man. He is said to possess eight powers: the atomic, the power of assimilating himself with the nature of the atom, which will, perhaps, involve the power to disintegrate material forms; the power of levitation; the power of limitless extension; the power of boundless reach, so that, as the commentator says, “he can touch the moon with the tip of his finger”; the power to accomplish his will; the power of gravitation, the correlative of levitation; the power of command; the power of creative will. These are the endowments of the spiritual man. Further, the spiritual body is unassailable. Fire burns it not, water wets it not, the sword cleaves it not, dry winds parch it not. And, it is said, the spiritual man can impart something of this quality and temper to his bodily vesture.

46. Shapeliness, beauty, force, the temper of the diamond: these are the endowments of that body.

The spiritual man is shapely, beautiful strong, firm as the diamond. Therefore it is written: "These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass: He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and I will give him the morning star."

47. Mastery over the powers of perception and action comes through perfectly concentrated Meditation on their fivefold forms; namely, their power to grasp their distinctive nature, the element of self-consciousness in them, their inherence, and their purposiveness.

Take, for example, sight. This possesses, first, the power to grasp, apprehend, perceive; second, it has its distinctive form of perception; that is, visual perception; third, it always carries with its operations self-consciousness, the thought: "I perceive"; fourth sight has the power of extension through the whole field of vision, even to the utmost star; fifth, it is used for the purposes of the Seer. So with the other senses. Perfectly concentrated Meditation on each sense, a viewing it from behind and within, as is possible for the spiritual man, brings a mastery of the scope and true character of each sense, and of the world on which they report collectively.

48. Thence comes the power swift as thought, independent of instruments, and the mastery over matter.

We are further enumerating the endowments of the spiritual man. Among these is the power to traverse space with the swiftness of thought, so that whatever place the spiritual man thinks of, to that he goes, in that place he already is. Thought has now become his means of locomotion. He is, therefore, independent of instruments, and can bring his force to bear directly, wherever he wills.

49. When the spiritual man is perfectly disentangled from the psychic body, he attains to mastery over all things and to a knowledge of all.

The spiritual man is enmeshed in the web of the emotions; desire, fear, ambition, passion; and impeded by the mental forms of separateness and materialism. When these meshes are sundered, these obstacles completely overcome, then the spiritual man stands forth in his own wide world, strong, mighty, wise. He uses divine powers, with a divine scope and

energy, working together with divine Companions. To such a one it is said: “Thou art now a disciple, able to stand, able to hear, able to see, able to speak, thou hast conquered desire and attained to self-knowledge, thou hast seen thy soul in its bloom and recognized it, and heard the voice of the silence.”

50. By absence of all self-indulgence at this point, when the seeds of bondage to sorrow are destroyed, pure spiritual being is attained.

The seeking of indulgence for the personal self, whether through passion or ambition, sows the seed of future sorrow. For this self indulgence of the personality is a double sin against the real; a sin against the cleanness of life, and a sin against the universal being, which permits no exclusive particular good, since, in the real, all spiritual possessions are held in common. This twofold sin brings its reacting punishment, its confining bondage to sorrow. But ceasing from self-indulgence brings purity, liberation, spiritual life.

51. There should be complete overcoming of allurements or pride in the invitations of the different realms of life, lest attachment to things evil arise once more.

The commentator tells us that disciples, seekers for union, are of four degrees: first, those who are entering the path; second, those who are in the realm of allurements; third, those who have won the victory over matter and the senses; fourth, those who stand firm in pure spiritual life. To the second, especially, the caution in the text is addressed. More modern teachers would express the same truth by a warning against the delusions and fascinations of the psychic realm, which open around the disciple, as he breaks through into the unseen worlds. These are the dangers of the anteroom. Safety lies in passing on swiftly into the inner chamber. “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.”

52. From perfectly concentrated Meditation on the divisions of time and their succession comes that wisdom which is born of discernment.

The Upanishads say of the liberated that “he has passed beyond the triad of time”; he no longer sees life as projected into past, present and future, since these are forms of the mind; but beholds all things spread out in the quiet light of the Eternal. This would seem to be the same thought, and to point to that clear-eyed spiritual perception which is above time; that wisdom born of the unveiling of Time’s delusion. Then shall the disciple live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal.

53. Hence comes discernment between things which are of like nature, not distinguished by difference of kind, character or position.

Here, as also in the preceding Sutra, we are close to the doctrine that distinctions of order, time and space are creations of the mind; the threefold prism through which the real object appears to us distorted and refracted. When the prism is withdrawn, the object returns to its primal unity, no longer distinguishable by the mind, yet clearly knowable by that high power of spiritual discernment, of illumination, which is above the mind.

54. The wisdom which is born of discernment is starlike; it discerns all things, and all conditions of things, it discerns without succession: simultaneously.

That wisdom, that intuitive, divining power is starlike, says the commentator, because it shines with its own light, because it rises on high, and illumines all things. Nought is hid from it, whether things past, things present, or things to come; for it is beyond the threefold form of time, so that all things are spread before it together, in the single light of the divine. This power has been beautifully described by Columba:

“Some there are, though very few, to whom Divine grace has granted this: that they can clearly and most distinctly see, at one and the same moment, as though under one ray of the sun, even the entire circuit of the whole world with its surroundings of ocean and sky, the inmost part of their mind being marvellously enlarged.”

55. When the vesture and the spiritual man are alike pure, then perfect spiritual life is attained.

The vesture, says the commentator, must first be washed pure of all stains of passion and darkness, and the seeds of future sorrow must be burned up utterly. Then, both the vesture and the wearer of the vesture being alike pure, the spiritual man enters into perfect spiritual life.

End of Book III

Introduction to Book IV

The third book of the Sutras has fairly completed the history of the birth and growth of the spiritual man, and the enumeration of his powers; at least so far as concerns that first epoch in his immortal life, which immediately succeeds, and supersedes, the life of the natural man.

In the fourth book, we are to consider what one might call the mechanism of salvation, the ideally simple working of cosmic law which brings the spiritual man to birth, growth, and fulness of power, and prepares him for the splendid, toilsome further stages of his great journey home.

The Sutras are here brief to obscurity; only a few words, for example, are given to the great triune mystery and illusion of Time; a phrase or two indicates the sweep of some universal law. Yet it is hoped that, by keeping our eyes fixed on the spiritual man, remembering that he is the hero of the story, and that all that is written concerns him and his adventures, we may be able to find our way through this thicket of tangled words, and keep in our hands the clue to the mystery.

The last part of the last book needs little introduction. In a sense, it is the most important part of the whole treatise, since it unmasks the nature of the personality, that psychical “mind,” which is the wakeful enemy of all who seek to tread the path. Even now, we can hear it whispering the doubt whether that can be a good path, which thus sets “mind” at defiance.

If this, then, be the most vital and fundamental part of the teaching, should it not stand at the very beginning? It may seem so at first; but had it stood there, we should not have comprehended it. For he who would know the doctrine must lead the life, doing the will of his Father which is in Heaven.

Book IV

1. Psychic and spiritual powers may be inborn, or they may be gained by the use of drugs, or by incantations, or by fervour, or by Meditation.

Spiritual powers have been enumerated and described in the preceding sections. They are the normal powers of the spiritual man, the antetype, the divine edition, of the powers of the natural man. Through these powers, the spiritual man stands, sees, hears, speaks, in the spiritual world, as the physical man stands, sees, hears, speaks in the natural world.

There is a counterfeit presentment of the spiritual man, in the world of dreams, a shadow lord of shadows, who has his own dreamy powers of vision, of hearing, of movement; he has left the natural without reaching the spiritual. He has set forth from the shore, but has not gained the further verge of the river. He is borne along by the stream, with no foothold on either shore. Leaving the actual, he has fallen short of the real, caught in the limbo of vanities and delusions. The cause of this aberrant phantasm is always the worship of a false, vain self, the lord of dreams, within one's own breast. This is the psychic man, lord of delusive and bewildering psychic powers.

Spiritual powers, like intellectual or artistic gifts, may be inborn: the fruit, that is, of seeds planted and reared with toil in a former birth. So also the powers of the psychic man may be inborn, a delusive harvest from seeds of delusion.

Psychical powers may be gained by drugs, as poverty, shame, debasement may be gained by the self-same drugs. In their action, they are baneful, cutting the man off from consciousness of the restraining power of his divine nature, so that his forces break forth exuberant, like the laughter of drunkards, and he sees and hears things delusive. While sinking, he believes that he has risen; growing weaker, he thinks himself full of strength; beholding illusions, he takes them to be true. Such are the powers gained by drugs; they are wholly psychic, since the real powers, the spiritual, can never be so gained.

Incantations are affirmations of half-truths concerning spirit and matter, what is and what is not, which work upon the mind and slowly build up a wraith of powers and a delusive well-being. These, too, are of the psychic realm of dreams.

Lastly, there are the true powers of the spiritual man, built up and realized in Meditation, through reverent obedience to spiritual law, to the pure conditions of being, in the divine realm.

2. The transfer of powers from one vesture to another comes through the flow of the natural creative forces.

Here, if we can perceive it, is the whole secret of spiritual birth, growth and life. Spiritual being, like all being, is but an expression of the Self, of the inherent power and being of Atma. Inherent in the Self are consciousness and will, which have, as their lordly heritage, the wide sweep of the universe throughout eternity, for the Self is one with the Eternal. And the consciousness of the Self may make itself manifest as seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, or whatsoever perceptive powers there may be, just as the white sunlight may divide into many-coloured rays. So may the will of the Self manifest itself in the uttering of words, or in handling, or in moving, and whatever powers of action there are throughout the seven worlds. Where the Self is, there will its powers be. It is but a question of the vesture through which these powers shall shine forth. And wherever the consciousness and desire of the ever-creative Self are fixed, there will a vesture be built up; where the heart is, there will the treasure be also.

Since through ages the desire of the Self has been toward the natural world, wherein the Self sought to mirror himself that he might know himself, therefore a vesture of natural elements came into being, through which blossomed forth the Self's powers of perceiving and of will: the power to see, to hear, to speak, to walk, to handle; and when the Self, thus come to self-consciousness, and, with it, to a knowledge of his imprisonment, shall set his desire on the divine and real world, and raise his consciousness thereto, the spiritual vesture shall be built up for him there, with its expression of his inherent powers. Nor will migration thither be difficult for the Self, since the divine is no strange or foreign land for him, but the house of his home, where he dwells from everlasting.

3. The apparent, immediate cause is not the true cause of the creative nature-powers; but, like the husbandman in his field, it takes obstacles away.

The husbandman tills his field, breaking up the clods of earth into fine mould, penetrable to air and rain; he sows his seed, carefully covering it, for fear of birds and the wind; he waters the seed-laden earth, turning the little rills from the irrigation tank now this way and that, removing obstacles from the channels, until the even flow of water vitalizes the whole field. And so the plants germinate and grow, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But it is not the husbandman who makes them grow. It is, first, the miraculous plasmic power in the grain of seed, which brings forth after its kind; then the alchemy of sunlight which,

in presence of the green colouring matter of the leaves, gathers hydrogen from the water and carbon from the gases in the air, and mingles them in the hydro-carbons of plant growth; and, finally, the wholly occult vital powers of the plant itself, stored up through ages, and flowing down from the primal sources of life. The husbandman but removes the obstacles. He plants and waters, but God gives the increase.

So with the finer husbandman of diviner fields. He tills and sows, but the growth of the spiritual man comes through the surge and flow of divine, creative forces and powers. Here, again, God gives the increase. The divine Self puts forth, for the manifestation of its powers, a new and finer vesture, the body of the spiritual man.

4. Vestures of consciousness are built up in conformity with the position of the feeling of selfhood.

The Self, says a great Teacher, in turn attaches itself to three vestures: first, to the physical body, then to the finer body, and thirdly to the causal body. Finally it stands forth radiant, luminous, joyous, as the Self.

When the Self attributes itself to the physical body, there arise the states of bodily consciousness, built up about the physical self.

When the Self, breaking through this first illusion, begins to see and feel itself in the finer body, to find selfhood there, then the states of consciousness of the finer body come into being; or, to speak exactly, the finer body and its states of consciousness arise and grow together.

But the Self must not dwell permanently there. It must learn to find itself in the causal body, to build up the wide and luminous fields of consciousness that belong to that.

Nor must it dwell forever there, for there remains the fourth state, the divine, with its own splendour and everlastingness.

It is all a question of the states of consciousness; all a question of raising the sense of selfhood, until it dwells forever in the Eternal.

5. In the different fields of manifestation, the Consciousness, though one, is the effective cause of many states of consciousness.

Here is the splendid teaching of oneness that lies at the heart of the Eastern wisdom. Consciousness is ultimately One, everywhere and forever. The Eternal, the Father, is the One Self of All Beings. And so, in each individual who is but a facet of that Self, Consciousness is One. Whether it breaks through as the dull fire of physical life, or the murky flame of the psychic and passionate, or the radiance of the spiritual man, or the full glory of the Divine, it is ever the Light, naught but the Light. The one

Consciousness is the effective cause of all states of consciousness, on every plane.

6. Among states of consciousness, that which is born of Contemplation is free from the seed of future sorrow.

Where the consciousness breaks forth in the physical body, and the full play of bodily life begins, its progression carries with it inevitable limitations. Birth involves death. Meetings have their partings. Hunger alternates with satiety. Age follows on the heels of youth. So do the states of consciousness run along the circle of birth and death.

With the psychic, the alternation between prize and penalty is swifter. Hope has its shadow of fear, or it is no hope. Exclusive love is tortured by jealousy. Pleasure passes through deadness into pain. Pain's surcease brings pleasure back again. So here, too, the states of consciousness run their circle. In all psychic states there is egotism, which, indeed, is the very essence of the psychic; and where there is egotism there is ever the seed of future sorrow. Desire carries bondage in its womb.

But where the pure spiritual consciousness begins, free from self and stain, the ancient law of retaliation ceases; the penalty of sorrow lapses and is no more imposed. The soul now passes, no longer from sorrow to sorrow, but from glory to glory. Its growth and splendour have no limit. The good passes to better, best.

7. The works of followers after Union make neither for bright pleasure nor for dark pain. The works of others make for pleasure or pain, or a mingling of these.

The man of desire wins from his works the reward of pleasure, or incurs the penalty of pain; or, as so often happens in life, his guerdon, like the passionate mood of the lover, is part pleasure and part pain. Works done with self-seeking bear within them the seeds of future sorrow; conversely, according to the proverb, present pain is future gain.

But, for him who has gone beyond desire, whose desire is set on the Eternal, neither pain to be avoided nor pleasure to be gained inspires his work. He fears no hell and desires no heaven. His one desire is, to know the will of the Father and finish His work. He comes directly in line with the divine Will, and works cleanly and immediately, without longing or fear. His heart dwells in the Eternal; all his desires are set on the Eternal.

8. From the force inherent in works comes the manifestation of those dynamic mind-images which are conformable to the ripening out of each of these works.

We are now to consider the general mechanism of Karma, in order that we may pass on to the consideration of him who is free from Karma. Karma, indeed, is the concern of the personal man, of his bondage or freedom. It is the succession of the forces which built up the personal man, reproducing themselves in one personality after another.

Now let us take an imaginary case, to see how these forces may work out. Let us think of a man, with murderous intent in his heart, striking with a dagger at his enemy. He makes a red wound in his victim's breast; at the same instant he paints, in his own mind, a picture of that wound: a picture dynamic with all the fierce will-power he has put into his murderous blow. In other words he has made a deep wound in his own psychic body; and, when he comes to be born again, that body will become his outermost vesture, upon which, with its wound still there, bodily tissue will be built up. So the man will be born maimed, or with the predisposition to some mortal injury; he is unguarded at that point, and any trifling accidental blow will pierce the broken joints of his psychic armour. Thus do the dynamic mind-images manifest themselves, coming to the surface, so that works done in the past may ripen and come to fruition.

9. Works separated by different nature, or place, or time, are brought together by the correspondence between memory and dynamic impression.

Just as, in the ripening out of mind-images into bodily conditions, the effect is brought about by the ray of creative force sent down by the Self, somewhat as the light of the magic lantern projects the details of a picture on the screen, revealing the hidden, and making secret things palpable and visible, so does this divine ray exercise a selective power on the dynamic mind-images, bringing together into one day of life the seeds gathered from many days. The memory constantly exemplifies this power; a passage of poetry will call up in the mind like passages of many poets, read at different times. So a prayer may call up many prayers.

In like manner, the same over-ruling selective power, which is a ray of the Higher Self, gathers together from different births and times and places those mind-images which are conformable, and may be grouped in the frame of a single life or a single event. Through this grouping, visible bodily conditions or outward circumstances are brought about, and by these the soul is taught and trained.

Just as the dynamic mind-images of desire ripen out in bodily conditions and circumstances, so the far more dynamic powers of aspiration, wherein the soul reaches toward the Eternal, have their fruition in a finer world, building the vesture of the spiritual man.

10. The series of dynamic mind-images is beginningless, because Desire is everlasting.

The whole series of dynamic mind-images, which make up the entire history of the personal man, is a part of the mechanism which the Self employs, to mirror itself in a reflection, to embody its powers in an outward form, to the end of self-expression, self-realization, self-knowledge. Therefore the initial impulse behind these dynamic mind-images comes from the Self and is the descending ray of the Self; so that it cannot be said that there is any first member of the series of images, from which the rest arose. The impulse is beginningless, since it comes from the Self, which is from everlasting. Desire is not to cease; it is to turn to the Eternal, and so become aspiration.

11. Since the dynamic mind-images are held together by impulses of desire, by the wish for personal reward, by the substratum of mental habit, by the support of outer things desired; therefore, when these cease, the self-reproduction of dynamic mind-images ceases.

We are still concerned with the personal life in its bodily vesture, and with the process whereby the forces which have upheld it are gradually transferred to the life of the spiritual man, and build up for him his finer vesture in a finer world.

How is the current to be changed? How is the flow of self-reproductive mind-images, which have built the conditions of life after life in this world of bondage, to be checked, that the time of imprisonment may come to an end, the day of liberation dawn?

The answer is given in the Sutra just translated. The driving-force is withdrawn and directed to the upbuilding of the spiritual body.

When the building impulses and forces are withdrawn, the tendency to manifest a new psychical body, a new body of bondage, ceases with them.

12. The difference between that which is past and that which is not yet come, according to their natures, depends on the difference of phase of their properties.

Here we come to a high and difficult matter, which has always been held to be of great moment in the Eastern wisdom: the thought that the

division of time into past, present and future is, in great measure, an illusion; that past, present, future all dwell together in the eternal Now.

The discernment of this truth has been held to be so necessarily a part of wisdom, that one of the names of the Enlightened is: “he who has passed beyond the three times: past, present, future.”

So the Western Master said: “Before Abraham was, I am”; and again, “I am with you always, unto the end of the world”; using the eternal present for past and future alike. With the same purpose, the Master speaks of himself as “the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

And a Master of our own days writes:

“I feel even irritated at having to use these three clumsy words—past, present, and future. Miserable concepts of the objective phases of the subjective whole, they are about as ill adapted for the purpose, as an axe for fine carving.”

In the eternal Now, both past and future are consummated.

Björklund, the Swedish philosopher, has well stated the same truth:

“Neither past nor future can exist to God; He lives undividedly, without limitations, and needs not, as man, to plot out his existence in a series of moments. Eternity then is not identical with unending time; it is a different form of existence, related to time as the perfect to the imperfect . . . Man as an entity for himself must have the natural limitations for the part. Conceived by God, man is eternal in the divine sense, but conceived by himself, man’s eternal life is clothed in the limitations we call time. The eternal is a constant present without beginning or end, without past or future.”

13. These properties, whether manifest or latent, are of the nature of the Three Potencies.

The Three Potencies are the three manifested modifications of the one primal material, which stands opposite to perceiving consciousness. These Three Potencies are called Substance, Force, Darkness; or viewed rather for their moral colouring, Goodness, Passion, Inertness. Every material manifestation is a projection of substance into the empty space of darkness. Every mental state is either good, or passionate, or inert. So, whether subjective or objective, latent or manifest, all things that present themselves to the perceiving consciousness are compounded of these three. This is a fundamental doctrine of the Sankhya system.

14. The external manifestation of an object takes place when the transformations are in the same phase.

We should be inclined to express the same law by saying, for example, that a sound is audible, when it consists of vibrations within the compass of the auditory nerve; that an object is visible, when either directly or by reflection, it sends forth luminiferous vibrations within the compass of the retina and the optic nerve. Vibrations below or above that compass make no impression at all, and the object remains invisible; as, for example, a kettle of boiling water in a dark room, though the kettle is sending forth heat vibrations closely akin to light.

So, when the vibrations of the object and those of the perceptive power are in the same phase, the external manifestation of the object takes place.

There seems to be a further suggestion that the appearance of an object in the “present,” or its remaining hid in the “past,” or “future,” is likewise a question of phase, and, just as the range of vibrations perceived might be increased by the development of finer senses, so the perception of things past, and things to come, may be easy from a higher point of view.

15. The paths of material things and of states of consciousness are distinct, as is manifest from the fact that the same object may produce different impressions in different minds.

Having shown that our bodily condition and circumstances depend on Karma, while Karma depends on perception and will, the sage recognizes the fact that from this may be drawn the false deduction that material things are in no wise different from states of mind. The same thought has occurred, and still occurs, to all philosophers; and, by various reasonings, they all come to the same wise conclusion; that the material world is not made by the mood of any human mind, but is rather the manifestation of the totality of invisible Being, whether we call this Mahat, with the ancients, or Ether, with the moderns.

16. Nor do material objects depend upon a single mind, for how could they remain objective to others, if that mind ceased to think of them?

This is but a further development of the thought of the preceding Sutra, carrying on the thought that, while the universe is spiritual, yet its material expression is ordered, consistent, ruled by law, not subject to the whims or affirmations of a single mind. Unwelcome material things may be escaped by spiritual growth, by rising to a realm above them, and not by denying their existence on their own plane. So that our system is neither materialistic, nor idealistic in the extreme sense, but rather intuitional and

spiritual, holding that matter is the manifestation of spirit as a whole, a reflection or externalization of spirit, and, like spirit, everywhere obedient to law. The path of liberation is not through denial of matter but through denial of the wills of self, through obedience, and that aspiration which builds the vesture of the spiritual man.

17. An object is perceived, or not perceived, according as the mind is, or is not, tinged with the colour of the object.

The simplest manifestation of this is the matter of attention. Our minds apprehend what they wish to apprehend; all else passes unnoticed, or, on the other hand, we perceive what we resent, as, for example, the noise of a passing train; while others, used to the sound, do not notice it at all.

But the deeper meaning is, that out of the vast totality of objects ever present in the universe, the mind perceives only those which conform to the hue of its Karma. The rest remain unseen, even though close at hand.

This spiritual law has been well expressed by Emerson:

“Through solidest eternal things the man finds his road as if they did not subsist, and does not once suspect their being. As soon as he needs a new object, suddenly he beholds it, and no longer attempts to pass through it, but takes another way. When he has exhausted for the time the nourishment to be drawn from any one person or thing, that object is withdrawn from his observation, and though still in his immediate neighbourhood, he does not suspect its presence. Nothing is dead. Men feign themselves dead, and endure mock funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand looking out of the window, sound and well, in some new and strange disguise. Jesus is not dead, he is very well alive: nor John, nor Paul, nor Mahomet, nor Aristotle; at times we believe we have seen them all, and could easily tell the names under which they go.”

18. The movements of the psychic nature are perpetually objects of perception, since the Spiritual Man, who is the lord of them, remains unchanging.

Here is teaching of the utmost import, both for understanding and for practice.

To the psychic nature belong all the ebb and flow of emotion, all hoping and fearing, desire and hate: the things that make the multitude of men and women deem themselves happy or miserable. To it also belong the measuring and comparing, the doubt and questioning, which, for the same multitude, make up mental life. So that there results the emotion-soaked personality, with its dark and narrow view of life: the shivering, terror driven personality that is life itself for all but all of mankind.

Yet the personality is not the true man, not the living soul at all, but only a spectacle which the true man observes. Let us understand this, therefore, and draw ourselves up inwardly to the height of the Spiritual Man, who, standing in the quiet light of the Eternal, looks down serene upon this turmoil of the outer life.

One first masters the personality, the “mind,” by thus looking down on it from above, from within; by steadily watching its ebb and flow, as objective, outward, and therefore not the real Self. This standing back is the first step, detachment. The second, to maintain the vantage-ground thus gained, is recollection.

19. The Mind is not self-luminous, since it can be seen as an object.

This is a further step toward overthrowing the tyranny of the “mind”: the psychic nature of emotion and mental measuring. This psychic self, the personality, claims to be absolute, asserting that life is for it and through it; it seeks to impose on the whole being of man its narrow, materialistic, faithless view of life and the universe; it would clip the wings of the soaring Soul. But the Soul dethrones the tyrant, by perceiving and steadily affirming that the psychic self is no true self at all, not self-luminous, but only an object of observation, watched by the serene eyes of the Spiritual Man.

20. Nor could the Mind at the same time know itself and things external to it.

The truth is that the “mind” knows neither external things nor itself. Its measuring and analyzing, its hoping and fearing, hating and desiring, never give it a true measure of life, nor any sense of real values. Ceaselessly active, it never really attains to knowledge; or, if we admit its knowledge, it ever falls short of wisdom, which comes only through intuition, the vision of the Spiritual Man.

Life cannot be known by the “mind,” its secrets cannot be learned through the “mind.” The proof is, the ceaseless strife and contradiction of opinion among those who trust in the mind. Much less can the “mind” know itself, the more so, because it is pervaded by the illusion that it truly knows, truly is.

True knowledge of the “mind” comes, first, when the Spiritual Man, arising, stands detached, regarding the “mind” from above, with quiet eyes, and seeing it for the tangled web of psychic forces that it truly is. But the truth is divined long before it is clearly seen, and then begins the long battle of the “mind,” against the Real, the “mind” fighting doggedly, craftily, for its supremacy.

21. If the Mind be thought of as seen by another more inward Mind, then there would be an endless series of perceiving Minds, and a confusion of memories.

One of the expedients by which the “mind” seeks to deny and thwart the Soul, when it feels that it is beginning to be circumvented and seen through, is to assert that this seeing is the work of a part of itself, one part observing the other, and thus leaving no need nor place for the Spiritual Man.

To this strategy the argument is opposed by our philosopher, that this would be no true solution, but only a postponement of the solution. For we should have to find yet another part of the mind to view the first observing part, and then another to observe this, and so on, endlessly.

The true solution is, that the Spiritual Man looks down upon the psychic nature, and observes it; when he views the psychic pictures gallery, this is “memory,” which would be a hopeless, inextricable confusion, if we thought of one part of the “mind,” with its memories, viewing another part, with memories of its own.

The solution of the mystery lies not in the “mind” but beyond it, in the luminous life of the risen Lord, the Spiritual Man.

22. When the psychical nature takes on the form of the spiritual intelligence, by reflecting it, then the Self becomes conscious of its own spiritual intelligence.

We are considering a stage of spiritual life at which the psychical nature has been cleansed and purified. Formerly, it reflected in its plastic substance the images of the earthy; purified now, it reflects the image of the heavenly, giving the spiritual intelligence a visible form. The Self, beholding that visible form, in which its spiritual intelligence has, as it were, taken palpable shape, thereby reaches self-recognition, self-comprehension. The Self sees itself in this mirror, and thus becomes not only conscious, but self-conscious. This is, from one point of view, the purpose of the whole evolutionary process.

23. The psychic nature, taking on the colour of the Seer and of things seen, leads to the perception of all objects.

In the unregenerate man, the psychic nature is saturated with images of material things, of things seen, or heard, or tasted, or felt; and this web of dynamic images forms the ordinary material and driving power of life. The sensation of sweet things tasted clamours to be renewed, and drives the man into effort to obtain its renewal; so he adds image to image, each dynamic and importunate, piling up sin’s intolerable burden.

Then comes regeneration, and the washing away of sin, through the fiery, creative power of the Soul, which burns out the stains of the psychic vesture, purifying it as gold is refined in the furnace. The suffering of regeneration springs from this indispensable purifying.

Then the psychic vesture begins to take on the colour of the Soul, no longer stained, but suffused with golden light; and the man regenerate gleams with the radiance of eternity. Thus the Spiritual Man puts on fair raiment; for of this cleansing it is said: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool.

24. The psychic nature, which has been printed with mind-images of innumerable material things, exists now for the Spiritual Man, building for him.

The “mind,” once the tyrant, is now the slave, recognized as outward, separate, not Self, a well-trained instrument of the Spiritual Man.

For it is not ordained for the Spiritual Man that, finding his high realm, he shall enter altogether there, and pass out of the vision of mankind. It is true that he dwells in heaven, but he also dwells on earth. He has angels and archangels, the hosts of the just made perfect, for his familiar friends, but he has at the same time found a new kinship with the prone children of men, who stumble and sin in the dark. Finding sinlessness, he finds also that the world’s sin and shame are his, not to share, but to atone; finding kinship with angels, he likewise finds his part in the toil of angels, the toil for the redemption of the world.

For this work, he, who now stands in the heavenly realm, needs his instrument on earth; and this instrument he finds, ready to his hand, and fitted and perfected by the very struggles he has waged against it, in the personality, the “mind,” of the personal man. This once tyrant is now his servant and perfect ambassador, bearing witness, before men, of heavenly things and even in this present world doing the will and working the works of the Father.

25. For him who discerns between the Mind and the Spiritual Man, there comes perfect fruition of the longing after the real being of the Self.

How many times in the long struggle have the Soul’s aspirations seemed but a hopeless, impossible dream, a madman’s counsel of perfection. Yet every finest, most impossible aspiration shall be realized, and ten times more than realized, once the long, arduous fight against the “mind,” and the mind’s worldview is won. And then it will be seen that unfaith and despair were but weapons of the “mind,” to daunt the Soul, and put off

the day when the neck of the “mind” shall be put under the foot of the Soul.

Have you aspired, well-nigh hopeless, after immortality? You shall be paid by entering the immortality of God.

Have you aspired, in misery and pain, after consoling, healing love? You shall be made a dispenser of the divine love of God Himself to weary souls.

Have you sought ardently, in your day of feebleness, after power? You shall wield power immortal, infinite, with God working the works of God.

Have you, in lonely darkness, longed for companionship and consolation? You shall have angels and archangels for your friends, and all the immortal hosts of the Dawn.

These are the fruits of victory. Therefore overcome. These are the prizes of regeneration. Therefore die to self, that you may rise again to God.

26. Thereafter, the whole personal being bends toward illumination, toward Eternal Life.

This is part of the secret of the Soul, that salvation means, not merely that a soul shall be cleansed and raised to heaven, but that the whole realm of the natural powers shall be redeemed, building up, even in this present world, the kingly figure of the Spiritual Man.

The traditions of the ages are full of his footsteps; majestic, uncomprehended shadows, myths, demi-gods, fill the memories of all the nobler peoples. But the time cometh, when he shall be known, no longer demi-god, nor myth, nor shadow, but the ever-present Redeemer, working amid men for the life and cleansing of all souls.

27. In the internals of the battle, other thoughts will arise, through the impressions of the dynamic mind-images.

The battle is long and arduous. Let there be no mistake as to that. Go not forth to this battle without counting the cost. Ages have gone to the strengthening of the foe. Ages of conflict must be spent, ere the foe, wholly conquered, becomes the servant, the Soul’s minister to mankind.

And from these long past ages, in hours when the contest flags, will come new foes, mind-born children springing up to fight for mind, reinforcements coming from forgotten years, forgotten lives. For once this conflict is begun, it can be ended only by sweeping victory, and unconditional, unreserved surrender of the vanquished.

28. These are to be overcome as it was taught that hindrances should be overcome.

These new enemies and fears are to be overcome by ceaselessly renewing the fight, by a steadfast, dogged persistence, whether in victory or defeat, which shall put the stubbornness of the rocks to shame. For the Soul is older than all things, and invincible; it is of the very nature of the Soul to be unconquerable.

Therefore fight on, undaunted; knowing that the spiritual will, once awakened, shall, through the effort of the contest, come to its full strength; that ground gained can be held permanently; that great as is the dead-weight of the adversary, it is yet measurable, while the Warrior who fights for you, for whom you fight, is, in might, immeasurable, invincible, everlasting.

29. He who, after he has attained, is wholly free from self, reaches the essence of all that can be known, gathered together like a cloud. This is the true spiritual consciousness.

It has been said that, at the beginning of the way, we must kill out ambition, the great curse, the giant weed which grows as strongly in the heart of the devoted disciple as in the man of desire. The remedy is sacrifice of self, obedience, humility; that purity of heart which gives the vision of God. Thereafter, he who has attained is wrapt about with the essence of all that can be known, as with a cloud; he has that perfect illumination which is the true spiritual consciousness. Through obedience to the will of God, he comes into oneness of being with God; he is initiated into God's view of the universe, seeing all life as God sees it.

30. Thereon comes surcease from sorrow and the burden of toil.

Such a one, it is said, is free from the bond of Karma, from the burden of toil, from that debt to works which comes from works done in self-love and desire. Free from self-will, he is free from sorrow, too, for sorrow comes from the fight of self-will against the divine will, through the correcting stress of the divine will, which seeks to counteract the evil wrought by disobedience. When the conflict with the divine will ceases, then sorrow ceases, and he who has grown into obedience, thereby enters into joy.

31. When all veils are rent, all stains washed away, his knowledge becomes infinite; little remains for him to know.

The first veil is the delusion that thy soul is in some permanent way separate from the great Soul, the divine Eternal. When that veil is rent, thou shalt discern thy oneness with everlasting Life. The second veil is the delusion of enduring separateness from thy other selves, whereas in truth the soul that is in them is one with the soul that is in thee. The world's sin and shame are thy sin and shame: its joy also.

These veils rent, thou shalt enter into knowledge of divine things and human things. Little will remain unknown to thee.

32. Thereafter comes the completion of the series of transformations of the three nature-potencies, since their purpose is attained.

It is a part of the beauty and wisdom of the great Indian teachings, the Vedanta and the Yoga alike, to hold that all life exists for the purposes of Soul, for the making of the spiritual man. They teach that all nature is an orderly process of evolution, leading up to this, designed for this end, existing only for this: to bring forth and perfect the Spiritual Man. He is the crown of evolution: at his coming, the goal of all development is attained.

33. The series of transformations is divided into moments. When the series is completed, time gives place to duration.

There are two kinds of eternity, says the commentary: the eternity of immortal life, which belongs to the Spirit, and the eternity of change, which inheres in Nature, in all that is not Spirit. While we are content to live in and for Nature, in the Circle of Necessity, Sansara, we doom ourselves to perpetual change. That which is born must die, and that which dies must be reborn. It is change evermore, a ceaseless series of transformations.

But the Spiritual Man enters a new order; for him, there is no longer eternal change, but eternal Being. He has entered into the joy of his Lord. This spiritual birth, which makes him heir of the Everlasting, sets a term to change; it is the culmination, the crowning transformation, of the whole realm of change.

34. Pure spiritual life is, therefore, the inverse resolution of the potencies of Nature, which have emptied themselves of their value for the Spiritual man; or it is the return of the power of pure Consciousness to its essential form.

Here we have a splendid generalization, in which our wise philosopher finally reconciles the naturalists and the idealists, expressing the crown and end of his teaching, first in the terms of the naturalist, and then in the terms of the idealist.

The birth and growth of the Spiritual Man, and his entry into his immortal heritage, may be regarded, says our philosopher, either as the culmination of the whole process of natural evolution and involution, where “that which flowed from out the boundless deep, turns again home”; or it may be looked at, as the Vedantins look at it, as the restoration of pure spiritual Consciousness to its pristine and essential form. There is no discrepancy or conflict between these two views, which are but two accounts of the same thing. Therefore those who study the wise philosopher, be they naturalist or idealist, have no excuse to linger over dialectic subtleties or disputes. These things are lifted from their path, lest they should be tempted to delay over them, and they are left facing the path itself, stretching upward and onward from their feet to the everlasting hills, radiant with infinite Light.

End of Book IV

Here ends the Yoga Sutras