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**THE WAY OF POWER:  
STUDIES IN THE OCCULT**

**Lily Adams Beck**

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**LILY ADAMS BECK**



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## Preface

A book of this sort has so many debts to acknowledge that it should be thickly set with notes and references, and yet in writing for the general reader this is not possible. Therefore I can only say, speaking generally, how much I owe to many and great thinkers from those of three millenniums ago down to the present time. I am often asked to recommend books on these subjects, but it is difficult to do so, for with regard to many of the Indian thinkers on whom so much depends their invaluable writings, even when translated, are hampered with Sanskrit terms very difficult for those unused to them, and modern writers sometimes assume more patience and perhaps knowledge than the average man with all the preoccupations of life has time to possess. Yet he may wish to know. This book is therefore an effort to interpret, to suggest, and no one knows better than myself what a contracted statement it is of what a great subject. Yet I venture to hope there are those to whom my experiences and conclusions, as I felt my way, may be of the same value that they have been to myself. And this is why I have stated them in a detail which may be misunderstood as egoism.

L. Adams Beck,  
(E. Barrington.)

# Chapter 1

## **“The Occult Of Today Is The Science Of Tomorrow.”**

I have chosen this motto for my book relating to the occult, for it is an attempt to describe the (at first) very small experiences and knowledge which led me to see the reality of the true occult world lying like an almost uncharted country behind the thick jungle of fraud and charlatantry, and which have led me also to state in comparative detail what I found on my journey and the conclusions it compelled. I use the illustration of “going through the Looking Glass” for two excellent reasons. Firstly, everyone knows that remarkable story of Alice, dear to two or three generations, and how she passed through the Looking Glass to the queer upside-down sort of country behind it. Secondly, few people realize that the book is a wonderful parable of how you can get through the mere reflections of things into the reality behind them if only you know the way. Carroll, who was a great mathematician, knew of the undiscovered country from that point of view. I found a very different road and as a matter of fact there are almost as many roads as there are people. The country behind the Looking Glass, generally called the Occult world, is reality, and the daily world we live in is Shadowland though the reflections look so hard and bright and real that they take most of us in.

The world is a great mirror. A man sees himself in it as the foremost figure and around him the persons and things which make his surroundings. The Japanese have called it the Mirror of the Passing Show--an uncommonly good name. Seeing it with our eyes we take this reflection for reality and are quite content to believe our senses and go comfortably or uncomfortably on our way. Very few people know what blind feelers the five senses are--feeble, faulty, mistaken, and yet (until we know better) our only means of approach to anything outside the prison of ourselves. We pity a blind, deaf, dumb man, but are much in the same case ourselves. It is only a question of degree, and the microscope, telephone, and so forth carry us a few steps farther into the dark. They are simply extensions. That is what makes the occult world so amazingly interesting.

We see, no longer blinded by our eyes,  
And hear, no longer deafened by our ears

which is distinctly good business in such a fascinating universe.

Like others I lived in perfect satisfaction with the gay ordinary reflections in the Looking Glass World until the first doubt overtook me in childhood. My mother, who had trained me to be perfectly fearless in matters of the imagination, told me a strange experience which had befallen her and her sisters and it set me thinking.

Her father owned many ships. A little dance was to be given, and she and her sister were practicing some dance music two evenings before, with a third sister to turn the leaves--three happy girls. The drawing-room was a very large one with dividing folding doors thrown back. As they played, the standing sister suddenly caught my mother's hands and the tune crashed in discord. Leaning round the folding door was a man roughly dressed in a thick short coat. He called out authoritatively “Stop the music,” and, as they thought, drew back behind the folding doors and was gone. I should explain that only two of the three saw. One saw nothing, which is curious but not unusual in such cases. Two saw and heard. My mother said that no thought of what is called the supernatural struck them, but they were frightened because a strange sudden man in the house when it is shut up for the night is not altogether a pleasant visitation. Still, it might have been someone to see their father on business. The three

rushed into the dining room with their tale and behold their father was dozing in his armchair at the head of the empty table after dinner, his glass of punch beside him. When the house was searched and nothing found they could not explain the man though they could not dismiss him from their minds; and the dance arrangements went on until next evening. Then, as again they were rattling off their music, came interruption. My grandfather put his head round the folding doors exactly as the stranger had done. . . . "Stop the music," he said. "One of the ships has gone down with all hands. There can be no dance tomorrow." The man they had seen sounded, he thought, very like the captain of the lost ship. They could get no nearer to a clue but the thing was as certain to the two from whom I heard it as the sight of each other.

Now when one hears a personal experience like this from people one knows do not lie, it is either dismissed as hallucination, or makes an impression coloring all opinion. I turned it over and over in a very young mind and accepted it as what people called "a ghost," but that did not last. A ghost is only a symptom. Why did ghosts come to some people and not to others? And, if they came at all, from where and for what purpose? Was their country far or near? I had no fear, but deep curiosity, and from that moment knew that the shining surface of the mirror of the world may be jarred by quite other reflections than those one reckons on. But the question in my mind was, *Where do they come from?* Is there another world beside this which is their domain? Even then, I did not think this covered all the ground.

My next experience, a personal one, was startling. My grandmother was strongly clairvoyant. Though I did not even know the word then, I knew that when she dreamed a thing it had an odd way of coming true; and always in the disagreeable things no one likes to face. In particular, she had an ominous recurrent dream which was followed by the Unpleasant as surely as a dog follows his master. I hated that dream, but set it down to some crank in grandmothers from which young people had nothing to fear. It coincided more or less. That was all, but it had a kind of interest difficult to escape.

I was very young and in the rather conceitedly skeptical stage of that youth of whom the great Master of Trinity, Cambridge, remarked, "We are none of us infallible; not even the youngest of us." However, one morning she came down to breakfast with a very grave face and began at once.

"A very curious thing happened last night. No, not a dream. I was awake, and I saw in my room a tall man in a turban and a sort of robe. He knocked three times on the wall. I saw him do it, and somehow I knew it meant the three-syllabled name of a place and that some terrible misfortune had happened there. Mark my words, we shall hear something from Bermuda."

A very near relation was holding a high position there at the time and for a moment I was startled, but youth is always a little over-clever and I said arrogantly, "As nobody in Bermuda wears a turban that doesn't seem likely!" and went my way in peace.

She said no more; and letters came from Bermuda and all was well and I triumphed. But we had not done with the gods. At the earliest possible moment news came that her nephew, a young officer in the army, loved by her as a son, had been stabbed to death in the bazaar at Kandahar by an Indian lunatic. The man, who had apparently never seen him before, came up behind and drove a knife deep down between his shoulders and so an end.

Then indeed I began to think, for I had known my cousin well; he was a real person to me and here was a thing done before my eyes. How had this strange message fled overseas from India (for the time matched)? Why had it not come to his mother? Why had my grandmother misread it? Why, when my cousin had been promoted and we all were glad, had that news come in a slow letter? Why had the murderer, for it seemed it must be he, announced it to a

woman he had never heard of? Then there must be some natural affinity with misfortune in this mysterious kind of intelligence! And had God or the Devil anything to do with it? And what good did it do?

Youth can think when it chooses, and no answer given by the elders to the questions I propounded met the facts to my satisfaction. They didn't know. They retired on "coincidence," but I reflected that a world where such coincidences happen would really be such a miracle in itself that it only brought the difficulty a step nearer. And again when, not long after, another case happened which I could verify--the mother of a sailor hearing his voice crying for help, and finding that that night his boat had been overturned on the way to his ship and his life all but lost--it was clear to me that behind the well-polished mirror into which we all look for our impressions of the world was a dark hinterland where very strange forces played or worked on lines of their own, having no relation at all to anything we know and yet with a queer wireless which they used with people whose aerials were ready to tune in. How and why? But I called it the private telegraph wire, for wireless had not yet been reflected on the Mirror of the Passing Show--the world we lived in.

So then I began to read hungrily, untiringly, and for years such books as those of Podmore, Myers, Flammarion, and many more--the adventures and experiments of Sir William Crookes and the leading men of the Society for Psychical Research in England deserving special mention because they were so flawlessly honest and possessed by the desire for truth. They led me gradually into divergent paths, the magic of the ancient world and of the medieval times, and still I got no light. The more I studied the subject, the more impossible seemed any theory that the spirits of the dead should return to communicate with the living for the purpose of uttering the platitudes attributed to them. For one thing, these books admitted that the phantasms of the living could be seen also, and as a girl my own eyes had seen the appearance of a relation then at a distance pass through a room when I was alone. Nothing happened as a result, but I had seen and realized that my first belief that these things were always connected with death and misfortune was.. mistaken. And as to any instruction from departed spirits worth the paper it is written on, from that day to this I have never heard of or read any remark from a supposed departed spirit which is not platitude pure and simple. Even the spirits of the mightiest are not exempt from this unlucky law of platitude and become as tedious and obvious as the rest. But I came to the conclusion that when a very large amount of fraud is excluded there remains certain evidence of some strange forces at work in some of these dubious manifestations and materializations. But what? And where could any sort of evidence be got hold of which would lead to a clue?

Meanwhile I had some interesting personal experiences as the years went by. I touch briefly on a few of these. I was staying with the mother and sisters of a very near relation who was on a voyage. One night I dreamed I saw him limping along the deck in great pain; I told them at breakfast and met with the usual laughter. But I wrote, and--yes--he had fallen down a hatchway, had not meant to tell us, and how had I known? I developed too a curious faculty of sensing some people's thoughts if I held their hands. A tingle seemed to run up my arm from theirs and then I knew to a large extent what was in their minds, and this applied also to things they had held for a while. This did not come off with everyone. There had to be some underlying connecting force, and one might find that in a stranger and miss it in people of one's own blood. It was interesting but I gave it up very soon, for physically it was wearying and I dislike playing about with forces I do not understand. At the entreaty of a friend now dead I attended one séance, saw what was considered an extremely fine program of materializations, voices and so forth, heard the usual explanations, recognized glimpses of the unknown force. But that approach I considered neither scientific nor spiritual. A good deal of



it seemed grotesque. I never went to another. There were things I could not explain, but it carried no conviction whatever and the semi-religious flavor was unpleasant.

But still, behind all these changing scenes lay the belief in power, uncharted, misunderstood, played with, but--power! And such experiences brushed me here and there with passing wings as if on their own errands and left me startled but ignorant.

Then on a day very memorable for myself I stumbled on books relating to the thought of Asia, but especially India. But does one ever stumble? Is not everything that befalls a man the direct, inevitable result of his own deeds and thoughts? I read in astonishment, realizing that here was a nation which had made what we call "the other world" its chief and engrossing study. In other words, the wise and great among the Indian people moved with ease in the mysterious World behind the Looking Glass and found it so much more interesting than the Mirror of the Passing Show that they really concerned themselves very little with the latter and gave its prizes the go-by. They had for three thousand years and more devoted themselves to the study of the soul and its powers as, let us say, the Western nations have devoted themselves to the literature of love, and they had done this to the exclusion of the dreams and delights which tempt us in the West and engross us in that polished surface reflecting us and our doings in home and mart as the be-all and end-all, until we never dream that anything lies behind the Looking Glass which can interest or concern us. And that belief is the state of mind called by wise men Materialism, and when it possesses a nation it points straight down the road to national and individual ruin.

Then for the first time I began to see glimpses of light on the horizon, for I saw that these Indian people spoke of a law which could be tested and followed and that the "occult" like all the rest of the universe may have its being within the limits of law. Their books said:

"Yes, there are mighty forces at work all round us, and by obeying certain rules some of us know how to bend them and make them obedient. When you understand how to make the wheels go round, then these things are no more wonderful than telegraphy. As a matter of fact there is nothing supernatural. There are only things which don't happen commonly because the rules are not known."

Here was an astonishing thought to meet at large! I resolved to begin at the beginning and study some of their doings before I probed their reason. Fate threw in my way a connection by marriage, a naval man, who on board his ship at Bombay had had a visit from a wandering Hindu who offered to show a sight the sahibs could never have seen before. He agreed, and standing a great brass vessel of water on the deck the man stood off at a great distance and in the sight of many people beckoned, and the water rose snake-like in the jar and crept over the edge and slipped down the side a bright snake of water, and so along the deck until he halted it with a sign, released it with a beckon, and so on until it crept to his feet and there dissolved into a pool of common water, leaving the jar empty.

I asked, "How did you explain it?" and the captain answered, "I couldn't. It couldn't have happened, but all the same he made a lot of us see it."

"But that kind of mass-hypnotism could be almost as wonderful as the reality," I suggested. "A really terrible power for good or ill! And besides you saw the empty jar. What about that?"

He laughed and gave it up. But I pondered. What was the law?

My own turn came to go to India, not credulous at all in the ordinary sense of the word--quite prepared to meet with fraud and the sleight-of-hand man, but still confident that behind the Looking Glass lies the world where things happen not at all according to our logic but on a

very different logic of its own. You can see that in the brilliant “Through the Looking Glass.” First comes the punishment, then the crime. The White Queen begins to scream and cuts her finger afterwards, and the part may be greater than the whole. I saw that our little maxims end with the Looking Glass and have no currency behind it; that it has its laws.

There was at one of the most sacred towns a man who was said to perform the mango trick extremely well, and we invited him to sit on the veranda of the little hotel and there, under my very eyes, to show his skill. He sat at my feet, he planted the mango stone in a pot at my feet, then sitting far off he returned and raised the covering at intervals, holding it at arm’s length and touching neither pot nor plant, that I might see the growth.

Finally, when the plant had grown to a height of over two feet I picked two leaves from it and sent one to a friend at home. And the curious thing is that though I know I sent this and a friend standing beside me saw the whole incident, the man to whom I sent the leaf declares to this day he never received it. He returned all my letters in case I should wish to use them as a travel record and among them is the one in which I speak of the leaf, but he never saw it. Could it have dropped out and how? A mango leaf is not a small one. I do not know. I have seen that same performance several times since and done on obvious lines of juggling. The difference can be seen and felt very easily.

## Chapter 2

In India and Ceylon I had personal instances of this force which develops itself in powers that transcend the senses. In Benares a wandering fortune-teller came into the veranda of the little hotel where I had just arrived, unknown. Liking something about the man's face I consented that he should read my hand. It was a strange experience in more ways than one. He did not touch it; it lay, palm upward, on my knee, and he stooped and read it with unblinking black eyes.

"This mem-sahib writing."

I said: "All mem-sahibs write."

"Yes--knowing that. This mem-sahib write book."

I had never written a book in my life and had no more expectation of writing one than he had. Articles on health subjects had been my only contribution to the gaiety of nations. So I shook my head. He doggedly repeated the assertion, "This mem-sahib write book," and went on with the most singularly accurate description of the events of my past life. I do not mean the intimate thoughts but the events. One can scarcely imagine anything stranger than in a place so foreign (until one has grown to love it) to see the past unrolling before one, touched into life by the hand of a wandering fortune-teller. And again I thought, "How is it that they get in touch?" for by this time I knew very well that discounting all frauds and fakes and guesses there are persons who can undoubtedly read events quite otherwise than by the senses. At the time I was watching with some interest for the failure of a prediction made to me by a Western seer before I had left London on my journey to India. Its failure, because, though he had predicted it as a certainty, humanly speaking it was impossible it should take place. We had met on a business matter before I left London, and suddenly, sweeping beyond material matters as was his strange power occasionally, and fixed in gazing on the unseen, he said in that voice which seems to come from very far behind the Mirror of the Passing Show:

"Things will not be as you think in India. I see a very important change in your intentions. The event which will determine them will take place at Christmas time. I see the exact circumstances which will enable you to continue your explorations in the Orient for a very much longer time than you have arranged."

I said it was impossible. I asked for the description of the unknown events and it was given without hesitation. In my heart I set the whole matter down as one of those incalculable errors of the clear-sight which I had noted before, giving them the effect of a scientific communication ignorantly understood. But again the agencies of the World behind the Looking Glass knew their business better than I. Without my own agency the plan I had made for India was swept out of being, and on the succeeding Christmas Day events culminated in the possibility of my continuing what had become my work in Asia without any obstacle. And this was the more singular because I had clearly realized by that time that if one wanted to understand the thought of Asia in these esoteric matters it must be studied in Burma, Ceylon, Java, China, and Japan as well as in India, and of this there had seemed no possibility. Now the way lay straight before me to all this exploration and long after, though I did not dream it then, to my writing the books which the fortune-teller foresaw, nominally by looking in my hand, really by a force tuning the vibrations between himself and me until each responded to the same stimulus. In other words, that event which I had believed impossible made me a student of the innermost side of occult science and also made me a writer every

one of whose books, whether as L. Adams Beck or E. Barrington, is engaged with the Mirror of the Passing Show and leading up to the perception of what lies behind it; the irony of life as it presents itself to those who have no psychic perception and its understanding by those who have.

I pause here for a moment to note the effect on my mind and daily life of the certitude that a very different world from the one which our senses propose to us really lies about us and that we move in it in ignorance as complete as that of cats or dogs in a library, surrounded by all the wisdom of the ages yet unable not only to taste it but even to guess that it exists. I had not reasoned this belief out as yet. I did not see in the least how it could be, though I felt blindly that it must certainly be so. There was no other way of accounting for the phenomena I had myself observed. So I resolved that I would devote myself to collecting and studying by the light of my own experience all possible evidence. It is of no use to cling only to one's own experiences, for they are very apt to run in one channel and to blind one to other real experiences. But I realized what a jungle of fraud, folly and mirage lay before me and was determined it should not be my only preoccupation, and that a healthy natural life, with what are called "outside interests," must be the accompaniment of this study. I thought it peculiarly necessary that there should be no fanaticism, no eagerness to believe. Our wishes, however ardent, are no guarantee of truth or even of hope. "Nor does our being weary prove that there is rest." I can truly say my wish was only to ascertain the facts in a difficult problem and not to deduce any moralities from it. That latter desire is an almost inescapable trap in the path of truth-seeking. But I saw that one must read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest with keen alertness of brain and a something beyond, which as yet I did not understand. Thus I had no axe to grind. I did not wish at all to assure myself of immortality or to console anyone else by promising it to him. I was by no means sure from Western teachings as to immortality that any sensible person need desire it, and though I believe in it now it is on very different grounds.

Thus my attitude was much the same as when, a child, I studied Euclidean geometry. It was a fascinating game. It could not appear on the surface to matter very much that the sum of three angles of a triangle was equal to two right angles, yet I was taught if it were otherwise the world as we conceive it would be quite other than it is. Might not something of the same be argued of what interested me now? I still think this was a fortunate attitude for beginning my investigation though I now know that more is needed at a later stage. But I certainly thought that if I could trace these facts to their source some conclusions as to life and death would need revision and that the logical conclusions accepted as basic facts might be thrown seriously out of gear, though how I could not tell. It was clear that many people who possess these powers in a small way use them quite carelessly and indeed unconsciously; and this seemed both interesting and encouraging for it was exactly the same spirit in which many years ago people watched the magnet and other natural forces at work and drew no conclusions whatever. Probably it was chance, they thought--but anyhow a trifle. That was sufficient. But to me these small manifestations seemed indicative of something vast, not terrifying in the least, but with surprising possibilities if one could get the hang of it. Such had been the result these earlier people scorned.

So I began to collect evidence from the people with whom I came in contact in India and resolved that this should be my special study, little foreseeing to what conclusions it would lead me.

And here I must mention another factor which I believe has a most important bearing on these problems though many people will laugh the suggestion to scorn.

Early in life instinct had pushed me to the relinquishing of many foods in common use--among them, meat of all sorts, fish, soups, puddings, cakes, richly flavored foods and such drinks as tea, coffee, cocoa, and of course anything alcoholic. I find it difficult to say whether this instinct is a cause or effect of what I will call the psychic temperament. It may be a little of both. I believe now that the tendency occurs at a certain stage of development in psychic evolution and has some strongly marked results. Be that as it may it will be found that in India, which may be regarded as the very fountainhead of the *siddhis* or occult powers, it is thought a necessity for the serious student that the foods should consist of the simplest and the most natural things that can be had, and the less cooking the better. For myself for many years I have lived upon fruit, salads, cheese, eggs, and milk or water with or without fruit juice as drinks and I sincerely believe that this simplicity of life has helped me enormously physically, intellectually, and in spiritual perception; and I may say this with more courage because to bring the body to heel is the counsel of all the highest forms of religious belief. I own I am a little inclined to doubt the perception of those who profess to be authorities in matters psychic and spiritual and yet drug themselves with substances which cloud the brain and body. The subconscious self is independent of brainsight, I know, but yet the body and brain are instruments through which we are obliged to register the conclusions of the subconscious and for excellent reasons, and if those instruments are not kept in the best working order there is as much loss as if one attempted to see through a clouded telescope. I regard the simplest forms of living as being undoubtedly best for the health of the body and therefore necessary for the brain, which is the registering instrument of the psyche in us. It has also been recognized by all the faiths and by the medical science of the present day and others as an aid to morality and to the self-control without which it is most dangerous to have anything to do with what is called the occult. But I shall discuss this side of the question in more detail later.

So it seemed to me that all the circumstances of my life had fitted me for attacking this problem in a level-headed way--neither credulous nor taking experiences on trust nor as a rabid opponent. I may say I have had experiences put before me very imposingly backed which I felt obliged to reject because I believed that the percipients were fitted neither to see nor to record their sights.

Having said this I will return to the evidence I have collected, touched here and there by my own psychic adventures.

## Chapter 3

In the first chapter of this book I have spoken of the science of the occult as standing on the tripod of the psychic, intellectual and physical and I might have said much more on all three, as India has done in her great teachings. But in such matters it is wise to be extremely practical and to begin at the beginning and with something entirely in one's own control; and this can scarcely be said either of the psychic or of the intellectual, for both are more or less conditioned by the stage of evolution reached in their development, whereas with common sense and intelligent suggestion one can begin at any moment to improve the powers of the third person of that strange trinity which is man--namely, the body--and thereby begin to clear the channel through which force flows to the other two. I do not deny that people of frail or crippled physique have had strong psychic and intellectual perception, but it is in spite of the physical disability, not because of it; and had their bodies been in the same efficient working order as (say) the reflectors of an astronomical instrument they would have had clearer and more coherent results, less disturbed with the storms and vibrations which interrupt connection. It is a fact proved by age-long experience that the body embruted and degraded by intemperate living and misuse of the sensual pleasures completely blocks the way to the evolution of intellectual and psychic growth:

The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,  
 And the man said, "Am I your debtor?"  
 And the Lord--"Not yet; but make it as clean as you can,  
 And then I will let you a better."

In other words, to work without the co-operation of the body is to be perpetually standing on tip-toe in an unnatural attitude which deflects attention to itself. Also, happy people are much more likely to do the best work in psychic science. Misery has a driving force which sometimes wrings fine intellectual and artistic work out of men as an escape-valve from its pressure, and because ill-health is misery a man like Lombroso can point to certain brain and body cripples who have had what he calls genius. But for the highest forms of art, serene and sunny consciousness of peace and power is the atmosphere for the most enduring work, and this applies a thousandfold to psychic wisdom, where, historically, are seen immortal results attained by those who have made the body a clear window through which the inward light can shine.

Therefore health of the body, which includes that transmitter the brain, is of immense importance for people who wish to attain high results in the study of the psychic, commonly called the occult, and it is plain wisdom to neglect no means of attainment, especially the fundamental one of a body trained to co-operation instead of hindrance.

To those who have experienced this advantage it is really like watching a dance of lunatics to see how people apparently otherwise competent to pursue the business of life treat their bodies. Women who consider the possession of physical beauty the chief business of life as means to the only end they are capable of understanding destroy it as it were wilfully, withering its brief blossom by every means in their power. They eat foods fatal to the circulation and mechanism of the body, coarsening their skins till all the raddling and rouging in the world only accentuates the mischief, dulling the luster of their eyes and hair, driving their bodies into the rebellion of excessive fat or leanness at ages when they should still be beautiful as figures on a Greek frieze. Men to whom pellucid clearness of brain is wealth or power, vital to all their hopes and interests, cloud it with nicotine and alcohol, darken it with

gross and mistaken feeding. Since the brain is part of the body and the nervous system is the first to cry out against such usage one may safely say that men and women suffering from the results of such folly are very ill qualified to run the world's business. When Carlyle wrote that every sick man was a scoundrel he was with characteristic violence overstating a case which does not need strengthening, and there is something to be said for the point of view in Butler's brilliant "Erewhon" where people suffering from physical disability are brought before a jury to be judged and condemned accordingly. The Roman who spoke of "a healthy mind in a healthy body" knew what he was talking of. And with Carlyle I marvel at what men suffer, not at what they lose.

In the study of the Occult a healthy body and clear brain are even more necessary than in the affairs of daily life, because in that strange world we are explorers. It is ours, yet unknown to us, forgotten, uncharted, in some ways dangerous. Though the world is really our own we are as little at home in it at first as the long-lost heir when he returns to his kingdom and finds the scepter strange and alarming in hands used to the spade. And it is largely because they have often lacked this physical calm and poise that we are apt to call those men mad who have penetrated behind the deceptive Looking Glass of our senses and with half-dazed eyes brought back word of the strange conditions beyond. They are very strange because in the world of reality the values are not ours, our great things are small, our small things great and all our logic baffled. But the pioneer need not necessarily be unbalanced. Take an historical example of what is probably the greatest pioneering fact in the history of psychics; the one which has shaped the lives and destinies of more uncouthed millions than any other. No one has called the Buddha either nerve-broken or insane, though after that tremendous psychic experience which gained him the name of the Enlightened One he returned from the world of true perception with teachings perfectly staggering to the opinions concerning life and death held by the world at large. And the foremost reason of his triumph in enabling men to discern what really matters from what does not matter a cent was his perfect sanity and cool clarity of brain backing the highest psychic perception and all based upon a disciplined body. That was a thing all men could understand and honor. He had tried luxury and had renounced its poisons. He had tried a cruel asceticism and had cast aside its follies, and so experienced he taught a wise temperance that the body attaining perfect poise may not thrust its revolt in the face of the spirit. According to his doctrine the psychic powers are sooner or later within the reach of every man who follows a certain plainly defined path. They come as inevitably and normally as breathing, but like all other powers are to be used with caution and wisdom and by no means as a show-off or an end in themselves. This wisdom he had learned from the ancient Indian teaching and his own great experience. It is the art of seeing life steadily and whole both within and outside the perception of our physical senses and it cannot be completely mastered until the subjugation and co-operation of the body are made part of the coherent scheme of things. Real life cannot be treated as a thing of little colored patches. It must be seen in its entirety.

I know that to acquire a perfectly working circulation of the blood and mastered appetites may seem a lowly beginning for a great quest but there is an Indian parable which illustrates the value of the infinitely little. A prisoner in a great tower directs his wife to bring to its foot a beetle, a silk thread and a little honey. She is to attach the silk to the beetle, to smear his horns with honey and set him free to climb the tower, following the scent of the honey. He does it. A twine is attached to the silk thread, a rope to the twine and the prisoner is freed. The infinitely little has conquered.

So the ancient wisdom of India perceived long ago, what we are dimly beginning to guess, that if a man desires to storm the strange world of psychic attainment safely he must lay his foundations on the earth as he sees it and make the body his co-operator and not his trampled

or pampered slave. For, as says one of the greatest of the ancient books: "He who fasts and he who eats too much, he who does not sleep and he who sleeps too much, he who works too much and he who does not work,--none of these can be adepts." In other words one cannot acquire discrimination, insight and instinct without making a scientific study of the means to that end.

I gained the beginning of this knowledge by experience years before I knew anything of the way charted out in Asia. Fortunately for myself I suffered in youth from violent headaches which obliged me to consider whether there was no means of escape from facing life with such a miserable handicap. Doctors failed in finding their cause or cure and at last I resolved I would give up one food after another in hope of tracking down the offender. I did this and have never had a trace of headache from that day to this, though with as many opportunities for it as most people can boast of.

I was groping blindly for escape from bodily suffering and had not the faintest notion that this change would influence my life psychically and intellectually. It would be handsomer if I could say I had done it from the most exalted motives, but it is perhaps more impressive as showing the colorless and impassive action of law in these matters that such a very ordinary impulse should lead one into such unforeseen paths. For when I came in touch later with the wisdom of the Orient I knew that by a very little hole I had crept in through the thorny hedge that guards the ancient wisdom. It was a tiny beginning, but a beginning.

I do not say for a moment that the world of true wonders lies open before one who has so entered. Life is not like that in any of its spheres. . . . Physically, intellectually and psychically it is always a case of evolution, and in evolution you cannot jump any of the links. I will try to tell as simply and truly as I can exactly what the process seemed to me to be as it worked itself out.

First there was the relief from a crippling disability. That is always joy. Indeed it has been said there is no joy in the world so great as the relief from suffering, which though it may be an exaggerated statement represents a common experience. I knew at once that a problem was solved and had left me free to grapple with others, and realizing that the body is like a boat obedient to the rudder I had a passionate desire to see how much could be done with it by wise steering. It was more difficult then than now because within the last few years the doctors have begun to pay some attention to the preventive aspects of disease and one can have advice. For me it was a case of pioneering, but I did not turn back for a moment.

Here I may be asked what I did. I gave up in one gesture, so to speak, meat of every kind, including poultry and fish. I also surrendered tea, coffee, and cocoa. Alcoholic drinks I had never used. I was ignorant that this sudden change of habit was a risk and it did not hurt me, but I should always advise against any but a very gradual change. For a time I lived on cooked vegetables, much cereal, and an abundance of milk, a mistaken diet though infinitely better than the one I had left. But gradually the mysterious wisdom of the body asserted itself and I evolved a diet of raw fruit, salads, nuts, a little cheese, eggs not abundantly used, and for drinks water and sometimes milk. Everyone cannot take milk so I may mention that with lemon juice dropped into it and stirred while dropping (in the proportion of about half a lemon to a tumbler of milk) it is a very refreshing and digestible drink. I took very little cereal, and gave up cakes, puddings, pastries and all sugared foods, and I have lived ever since in this way, eating only two or three times a day and never between meals. I tried twice in view of going to a country where it is dangerous to eat salads to substitute a little fish but it was such a failure from every point of view that I gave it up. I may say I have no use for the so-called "simple feeding" which demands all sorts of meatless dishes, elaborately cooked, and continues the drugs of tea and coffee. It is better to get down to bed-rock if you really



want to make a success, and one gets to like these simple foods so much as to think it strange that everyone is not content with them.

And now I will say what these did for me. I had rather an inclination to overweight. That disappeared and I touched the normal weight for my height and have kept to it. With this came activity and energy of mind and body which have never left me. I had been a little inclined to drowsy and lethargic reverie. *Doing* now became more interesting, but it was doing with a clear purpose ahead for I realized that I was gaining weapons and sharpening them for the adventure of life. My circulation was clear. I no longer suffered from cold hands and feet, and instead of pallor, developed a healthy color. I noticed that even my hair gathered luster, as one may see a sick dog's roughened staring coat smooth itself and shine, with wise treatment. I could walk distances almost incredible when I remembered how the least fatigue had ended formerly in sick headache. The next result was that I began to realize in natural sequence that though cutting out certain food-poisons is the foundation stone of the palace of health the building asks for such tools as right exercise, right breathing, right use of hot and cold water for drinking and baths, pure air and sunshine, and all these things I studied and practiced patiently and for a while believed this bodily health was all that mattered for life. That was natural, for I saw clearly the instant advantage it gave over people who had not sufficiently grasped its value to make sacrifices for it--sacrifices which one can afford to laugh at in view of the gain.

Then came one of the penalties of ignorance. I lost strength and discovered I had been living on capital instead of income. In other words I had not been eating the necessary ration of the tissue-forming foods. This may sometimes be an excellent beginning for it runs off the poisons accumulated by wrong feeding, but it is always risky and should be closely watched. So it became necessary to take the thing as a serious study that I might understand food values and their relation to sedentary and active occupations. All this can be done for one now, but I have never regretted that I had to work through it myself. The knowledge was driven in and has been most useful. I recovered strength in a few weeks and then had the luck of meeting a famous doctor, now dead, who blazed a trail for many through the jungle of ignorance in such matters. With his help I cleared up the only remaining difficulty, that of suiting generalities to my own especial needs--a question always important in every diet. I achieved that and had no further difficulties. I fear all this sounds very egotistical, but I have been asked to give details in case they should be useful to others.

Having now a fixed center to work from I had leisure to notice what a surprising change was taking place in my intellectual equipment. I could measure that growth almost daily also. First, in my memory. That had always been good, but now it became unusual, and I noticed it was growing by a process which I called inward sight. That is to say, I saw things rather than remembered them in the ordinary way, and just as when one knows a place the picture is hung once and for all for reference in one's brain, so with anything that interested me. I had not to call anything to mind. It was as it were flashed upon me the instant I needed it--like a vision. I memorized nothing but it was always there when I wanted it; and to this day this is so true that I write a whole historical story without doing much more than verify my references and seldom find them mistaken. Perhaps this may be a more common case than I think, but it is a very useful thing and from another aspect provides me with what I call a traveling library of prose and poetry, which I have not memorized but which is always there for use or pleasure. I see a book as a picture--see the printed page and the very paragraphs and can then repeat almost anything I have liked whether for use or for pleasure, things practical as well as things beautiful, if there is a distinction. And this includes the spoken word.

This was the first thing that made the question of clairvoyance clear to me. Memory. I said to myself: If what we call the past can be instantly present to one by inward sight whether intellectually or in the perfect vision of memory calling up and transporting one to a place trodden no more by one's earthly feet, why may not this strange faculty of presentment stretch forward also into what we call the future and present it as clearly to those who have developed along that line? To memory time and distance offer no barriers. Why may it not work forward as well as backward? The contra argument will be: "Because you have not yet seen the things which are to happen. The impression is not yet made on the brain." But what of foretelling dreams and prophecies, with which I might fill this article? I did not then know anything of the Oriental teaching of the static quality of time which science now appears to be endorsing--what is called in India the Eternal Now in which past, present and future are One,--but great possibilities loomed dimly upon me like mountains seen for an instant through mist and resumed into it.

I found also a very much increased clearness in following argument, in perception all round, I fear at this time I was ready to make myself a nuisance, for I was young enough to believe that things clearly advantageous should be thrust down everybody's throat and that virtue demands a persistent bumping of all one's friends into the paths of peace. I know few things which develop a more maddening fanaticism than this kind of brilliant success. However, I soon outgrew that pugnacious stage and realized that people can only accept things in their own vibration or stage of development and are better left without argument which is meaningless to them. Their time will come as one's own does when the soil is there to provide for the root of the flower.

But I saw from day to day what a wonderful thing I had hit on. It had cured my physical disability, had doubled every intellectual power I possessed, and had given me the confident expectation that this was only the beginning of what it could accomplish. I was right there. Gradually another aspect of the question dawned upon me. This way of living was the most excellent moral (I hate the word) gymnastic that could be devised. It is no easy thing to live on a plan of one's own in contradiction to that of the world about one, to be laughed at, chaffed, however kindly, to be told one is a faddist and so forth. That would not be the case now. It was the case then. And there was also the question of giving up foods one had enjoyed for those which at first seemed insipid, and of reducing them to the simplest, most unobtrusive form, that it might not inconvenience others.

But after a while it became strangely delightful to find that I did not mind a bit what people said or thought. I got to know a lot about the subject and began to make it interesting to them when it happened to come up, and there was a pride in being what they called "a mighty good advertisement" for my opinions.

But there is much more to it than that. Chaff rightly directed is the best tonic in the world for the anemic disease of taking oneself seriously, a complaint to which the young and clever are dreadfully prone and from which even the adult and stupid are not wholly exempt. As a remarkable Bishop of London once said: "After having slain the ape and the tiger in oneself there still remains the donkey, who is the most intractable animal of the three." Chaff and good-humored scorn are an excellent diet for starving out the donkey, and so I found it. But there was more. I do not think anyone knows or realizes the full flavor of life until he has learned to say no to himself with rather more than the same ease with which he can say no to other people's enjoyments. I had learned the great lesson--it still seems stupendous to me though it may be a truism to some--that with a real end in view any sacrifice becomes a pleasure and in that spirit the very best good is attainable on whatever plane you may choose

to seek it. I may add that in Asia this way of living opens many a close-shut door to those who practice it. It is regarded as a virtue there.

And after that and with the early experiences I have described in my first chapter it was not a long step to the question of why all the great faiths have taught abstinence, temperance, fasting, as a very sword and shield in the fight against the dominance of the body. They did not do it to be tiresome and contradictions as had once seemed possible, but because they were all students of psychology; their business was with the Occult, and world-wide, age-long experience had taught them in differing degrees that the real world behind the Looking Glass is not to be entered by those whom the body binds to its caprices. It is the religions that insist on this fact which still keep their hold on their peoples, and the religions that walk in purple and fine linen and fare sumptuously every day which have lost it; because the reduction of the Occult to a law which every man can perceive and follow daily is the business of all faiths, and in his own heart every man knows this cannot be achieved nor the circle squared unless the body also has sworn allegiance to the quest. It is impossible to know one's real self and its powers until this is gained, and when it is achieved the rest is not difficult.

And now things rapidly cleared up in my mind. As my force increased I was able to speak easily in public, an effort of which I had always thought with terror hitherto. Not only so, but I can truly say I did not even need preparation nor do I think I could speak if I prepared. I can only note any quotation that occurs to me on the subject (and the subjects are many) and leave the rest to the moment, knowing that the impulse and fulfilment are independent of the brain.

Thus I gradually realized that what is called the Occult is only an extension and wider perception of the powers we know, and that everything is attainable if we leave off talking and get down to business. Do not let your mind spread and splash over. Concentrate on one resolve and exclude others. Take time to be solitary daily. Avoid people who disturb you. Have the body in such training that it no more dares to interpose than a highly trained dog. Cultivate will and perseverance as you can never do with an undisciplined body. The world has had examples of what concentration can do but has not realized the source. It is by such thoughts and practices that man is put in touch with the force of the universe; and he becomes a channel of the sort of power on which he has chosen to concentrate--bad or good.

So I learned that the trained mind becomes a form of reason, and reason blends into the psychic, and delimitations are destroyed so that it becomes difficult to say where each dominion in the trinity of body, mind, and spirit which is man begins and ends.

## Chapter 4

It is necessary before going farther to make some allusion to the strange world in which man passes nearly half his visible life--the world of sleep. Nearly three centuries ago the delightful poet Herrick wrote these lines:

Here are we all by day. By night we are hurled  
By dreams, each one, into a several world.

Wonderful insight!--Yet he would have been amazed indeed if anyone had told him that his poet's instinct had revealed to him the existence of that strange world behind the Looking Glass of which I have written so often in these chapters. Yet it is so. The poets, the philosophers, those whose wisdom and instinct alike draw them to what in India is called *Realization* have always understood that through dreams is a very direct way to the World As It Is--not as it appears in waking moments when earth-bound Reason stands at the helm of the many-peopled ship which a man calls "myself."

Of course there are foolish little dreams also, mere bubbles on the surface of memory of the day's doings, but these are easily known for what they are and nobody marks them. Sometimes, however, and often to those who least expect it, comes a dream marching with the certainty and assurance of a god, or the profoundly disturbing enigmatic questioning of the Sphinx, or the terrifying fore-vision of a prophecy, and all life is changed and deflected for the dreamer. In other words, the dreamer has for a moment stepped through the Looking Glass, or, in the Indian phrase, he has realized with a sudden shock of truth that life is not as he has thought it--but far otherwise. That man is fortunate, for to most people such knowledge comes only in the act of what we call death. It may then be guessed by the look of helpless surrender, of awful recognition on the faces of the dying as their true Selves look into their hearts. Very happy are those who have seen glimpses already through the eyes of Death's younger brother, Sleep. And this is one of the many reasons why some knowledge of the world of dreams is desirable.

So strongly were the Greeks impressed with the haunting mystery of this state of consciousness that they offered divine honors to the Triad of brothers, Hypnos, Oneiros, Thanatos, or Sleep, Dream, and Death; and looking upon their dark brooding faces yearned for the Knowledge to which each is in turn a gateway.

One of my own first steps through the Looking Glass of early perception into the true world behind it was in the revelation of a dream. I can tell it only in part, and it is inherent in the mystic nature of dreams that they can never carry the conviction to others that they do to oneself. That is inevitable, springing as they do from roots deep-set in long-past experiences of personality.

I was going on a very long journey, full of doubts and loneliness, leaving much behind. It was hard to go. I think death must have that same bitterness on the cup's edge from which all must drink excepting those who know that death is nothing--a mere link and by no means the most important in the chain of psychic evolution.

But one night far out at sea, a dream came walking the water. Dewy twilight and an old garden at home, flowers tall in the borders, fading into forgetfulness of color and light, the mouse-angels (as I was taught to call the bats) weaving magic circles about them under a dawning evening star. So far, all familiar, but in the shadows a Personality not to be bound in any earthly words I know, unseen but in the deepest sense of the word absorbing my being

into what was far beyond my understanding. I found myself (it was long ago) pleading for the right to grief. How could it be otherwise when the cup of bitterness is thrust into one's hand and the Angel of the Darker Drink invites the soul forth to the lips to taste it?

"It is so far--to the other end of the world," I said, and much more that cannot be told. The answer was--but whether spoken or not I never know: "You are ignorant indeed. All such grief is self-pity. And furthermore in the real world there is no far or near--only states of mind. Step out from it into the light. Even here, when you know a very little, everything is just round the corner. If you try with all your might you cannot lose touch when you know the truth. Everything is Here and Now." And suddenly I *knew*, and the shock of delight which woke me forever destroyed in me the fetters of "far and near" or any vestige of belief in parting made by time, distance or death. There was more than that, and how conveyed I cannot tell for I despair of repeating the assurance which freed me from one of the most painful maladies of ignorance.

India has always recognized three planes of consciousness connected with sleep: Waking, Dreaming, and Deep Sleep. The first they class as the Gross, the second as the Subtle, the third as the Pure. From deep sleep are brought back the incommunicable dreams--often completely forgotten by oneself--which bring us in touch with the Eternal Self. The subtle states of consciousness with the one hand lull and numb the obstinate perception of the senses and with the other free that huge submerged subconscious self, in relation to which man's everyday consciousness has been compared with the vastness of the submerged area of an iceberg in comparison with that part which appears above the surface.

When this takes place many very singular things may and do happen. Men may easily remember acts and scenes of experiences in former lives. Not infrequently the strangest, most educative type of dream springs from this source, and it should be regarded with deep interest for obvious reasons. That has been a subject often dealt with in fiction but never, so far as I know, in the fullness of certitude with which it comes in reality. It is a state very difficult of investigation because dreamers are naturally shy on such a subject, but I may say it is almost a test of truth that when such experiences are revealed they are natural and simple. They seldom are connected with violently dramatic experiences or the arrogance which claims great place or position in former lives for the dreamer, and they bring conviction to those who experience them because they reveal the secrets of development and arrest, and throw light on the way that still remains. I have never heard of one in which the whole life was remembered except when perfection of perception is attained, and such instances come rarely to the world's knowledge.

There are happily few cases where homesickness for the beauty and verity of the dream-life extinguishes all desire for the Mirror of the Passing Show as revealed by the senses, and the dreamer pines through the long inhospitable unrealities of the sunshine for night and the truths hidden in darkness. This is a state as wholly undesirable as the paradises revealed by drugs and drink. It is a psychic narcotic and should be combated manfully, especially as it is invariably associated with a diseased condition of body which reveals it for what it is and marks a failure in discipline. And there are the strange dreams which I call "fusing dreams" where one personality meets another in sleep and a dual life is lived, for a time becoming a reality and remembered in daytime but out of reach except in sleep. This appears to be a foreshadowing of the intimate communication and absorption in store (when psychological matters are more clearly understood) for lovers or the highest forms of friendship. Of this state I have no personal knowledge though I have based a story ("V. Lydiat") on knowledge gained elsewhere, which attracted interest from those who knew it was true in essentials.

I myself had at one time the very strange experience of a connected story which I dreamed nightly. It was, so to speak, serialized, in that it went on for many nights, beautiful, dramatic (as I thought) in conception and development, springing and branching as a tree does from its seed. But the singular thing was that a friend one day brought to my house a visitor supposed to have unusual perception in such matters, and when my dream-serial was mentioned he said, "Yes, I can see it," and forthwith began to describe with perfect accuracy the terraced lawns and clipped box hedges which were always the beginning when the mists of sleep rolled aside and the stage was set. I think this was a case of mind-reading, startling in the extreme, for I had never given a detail to a living soul. I had the impression that he could have told me the whole story as easily, and regretted afterwards that I had shut down the subject. For I never knew the end though I believe it is still latent in my own perception. The experience ended as suddenly as it began.

I find that many of the subjects of my stories come to me in sleep in the form of dramas which I see clearly acted before me; sometimes also in the form of stories told dramatically after the fashion of story-tellers in the bazaars of Asia. But I have never succeeded in catching more than a flashing glimpse of the story-teller, and I know he is not always the same. I have a belief that to come face to face with him in dream would open the measureless stores of wisdom and beauty lost in the past. Is art a recovery as well as a prophecy?

The titles almost always come in the state between sleeping and waking when reason and thought lie on the threshold of consciousness like dogs on duty but still dormant. When they take charge the connection is broken and I must remember as I can. Daily events blunt the impressions very quickly except in some remarkable cases.

I had lately a dream of extraordinary beauty and perception which I shall not forget. It began in Kensington Gardens and a meeting with a little middle-aged woman there, leading up to the discovery of a strange boarding-house in London for people who had died with unfulfilled lives which apparently came to nothing, but who were now directing themselves along ways of fulfilment, absolutely unconscious that they had undergone the experience of death. I dreamed the name also: "The House of Fulfilment." That title I have been compelled to steal for an "occult" novel which nothing else would fit, but the story abides and I shall write it one day. There were such strange people in it, and the singularity was that, belonging to the World behind the Looking Glass, they were obliged to work with tied hands in the conditions of this until they could make good. The house was in one of the little old-fashioned Georgian streets of Kensington . . . running up the hill from noisy Kensington High Street, very quiet, with yellowing poplars looking over the wall and bushes of Michaelmas daisies in the borders. I see it all.

I hope I shall not be suspected of any arrogance in telling these experiences. I think those things told quite simply and truly are helpful in the deciphering of a difficult subject and I should be glad to know if other writers also dream many of their stories. It is interesting, because quite undoubtedly the gift of creative art in its differing degrees is one of the roads to the Land behind the Looking Glass. There are reasons for that too long to enter into here but irrefutable, and it is a singular fact that while the saints appear to enter in great flashes of cosmic consciousness, the artist seems to take the winged way of dreams. But there can be no fixed rule in such matters, nor would one expect it.

There is one amazingly interesting fact in true dreams. It is that the dreamer goes free. He regains his birthright and is no longer the slave of the miserable dimensions of length, breadth and height which control all our waking doings. Nor is he bound by time as with a tether. Observe that in dreams time is no more. It may be to-day and tomorrow at the same moment. You may be a child, yet with all the memories and experiences of old age. You may drift

composedly down the street never touching it with a footfall. You may melt through walls and doors like Christ after the Resurrection. You may talk fearless and unamazed with friends who cross the river of death to meet you, and know they never died. You may easily meet two personalities of people you know, fused into one, and find it quite comprehensible and natural until you wake and it blurs as the darkness of the prison-gates closes on you; you may be in two places at the same moment. Things can be absolutely simultaneous which in ordinary life are consecutive. One great thinker has suggested that death itself may be a passage from the consecutive to the simultaneous. This is very likely. He had had in dreams a glimpse into the World behind the Looking Glass.

Profoundly beautiful subconscious revelations sometimes take place in dreams. Here is one which carries a meaning not negligible. I knew two men who had once been close friends. The one had done the other a terrible injury and its consequences had completely estranged them. People did not even speak of either in the other's presence. All was ended. But one day the injured man suddenly said to me: "It's a strange thing. I hate the man. Heaven knows I have reason to. But I dream of him constantly--can't get away from him; and always in my dreams the old friendship is there and to be together is good right through. Those are the happiest dreams I have. And yet waking, I would run the country sooner than meet the fellow. I could kick myself for being such an ass in my sleep."

As you will see, the submerged self he met in dreams knew best. It knew that love is in its nature real and eternal and hatred a darkness, a nothingness, which dissolves in the light of truth. I would give much to know the dreams of the other man. Would they complete the story? I have often wondered that. The first was, at all events, compelled in the dream-world to Reality. Such a case is well understood in Indian teaching. India asserts that the infinite tide of perfection behind all of us flows in by such inlets as the different planes of consciousness in sleep.

"For in the animal lay hidden and possible the man, and when the door of consciousness was opened, man rushed out. And in man lies hidden perfection barred and locked away by ignorance. With Realization he comes in touch with the Hidden Treasure."

Milton was right in his almost miraculously perceptive assertion that high revelations are made "in clear dream and solemn vision."

For in sleep we move on much more subtle and permeative planes of action than in waking, and the more we are daily disciplined in opening up the channel of communication with the untrodden continent of our submerged self--the lost Atlantis hidden in us all--the more wonderful and illuminating are our dreams. This may be seen in the dreams recorded in the Scriptures of the great Faiths. They would form a book of profound psychological interest if analyzed and compared.

Yet, striking through apparently very commonplace personalities come sometimes singularly revealing dreams, thus proving that in truth no one is commonplace, that it is only the commonplace of ignorance in ourselves which so sees it. For below the dwarfed nature of which our senses make report lies the submerged and marvelous self of which the man himself is wholly unconscious except in the strange visitings of dreams which he is unlikely to reveal to any human being except in most unusual circumstances. Very often also, his everyday self entirely fails to interpret them. He will say in bewilderment, "I knew when I was asleep, but now it all seems nonsense." And I fancy most of us have had the experience of dreams extraordinarily lovely and revealing which the awaking sense clutched at for a moment and then let go helplessly, drifting away shapelessly as mists at dawn. One may see

the dream-flowers wither in the hot clasp of our sense-perceptions, see the dream-pageant fade and dissolve like sunset clouds, leaving nothing behind but the gathering gray of loss.

That dream of being in two places at once--places that melt into each other and are absolutely one--I have had often. Each is each, yet there is no overlapping. I walk through the *one* and know no surprise. Waking, I remember it perfectly but cannot intellectually understand how it was possible, though I know well that is how things are in the real world behind the Looking Glass, where the logic and rules of the game are entirely different from those we know in front of it. Because, as I learned in a dream already quoted, places there are not solidarities but states of mind.

I have heard many people express the wish that they could control their dreams and enjoy what they most desire in sleep. But that is a foolish wish, for dreams would lose all significance if our everyday selves took charge. It is precisely because they are off duty that the unexpected, the illuminative, come through. This is the flaw in Du Maurier's beautiful book, "Peter Ibbetson." The hero and heroine, divided in life, meet nightly in dreams. The dream is a duet--but of the senses exalted to the highest pitch. They dream together of exquisite jewels and toilettes, of dinners at the choicest restaurants and wines of the costliest vintages, operas, plays, by the most celebrated performers, and so forth,--opiates for the sorrow of parting. Such dreams are earth-bubbles. The senses are awake and guardant though the body sleeps. They are a fairy story of the reasoning, clutching mind.

No. Let us rejoice that in the true dream the close guard of the senses is off duty and we go out free in the dark to revelation. Very different is the wish that we could unfailingly meet the hidden self and, joining hands, walk straight into the Real World, and that wish can be gratified by patient discipline. And there the disciplined body may receive its share, for it may be said with truth that there is no sleep so deep, tranquilizing and profound as that which is called "The Opener of the Gates."

The Greeks and Romans both believed in the healing power of dreams, and in ancient Rome the College of the Inspired Dreams was a place of gathering for those who were sick or sad. It was dedicated to Æsculapius the Healer, and it was believed he was the inspirer of these dreams. Those needing help slept in the quiet of the sacred cloisters and seldom without result. One sees exactly why that should be and wishes such help could be given now, and without human intervention, to those who need it. But it is a true saying that we can participate in heaven and its gifts only in so far as heaven is within ourselves. How can people empty of heaven realize the possibilities of dreams or the meaning of that little known saying of Christ's, "When the outside becomes the inside then the Kingdom of Heaven is come." It means that when for any man the deceptions and distortions of the outer world are swallowed up in realization of the inner, the hidden world,--when the outer and the submerged selves have joined hands and are one,--then he has touched on immortality and has drunk of the wine of eternal joy.

It is a strange thought that all round us, hidden in every recurring night, lie these silent fields of harvest in which so few are reapers. Yet they lie, ripening in sunshine. In the words of Professor James:

"One conclusion was forced upon my mind, and my impression of its truth has ever since remained unshaken. It is that our normal waking consciousness is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there are potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence, but apply the requisite stimulus and at a touch they are there in all their completeness."



With the last four words I disagree, for it is impossible for the uninitiated to say what their completeness is when we know of cases ranging from the mere glimmer to the conflagration of revelation. But the statement is true and striking and it is gladdening to see the distinguished thinkers of the West gradually awaking to facts known and taught for millenniums in the Orient. Professor James added:

“The whole drift of my experience goes to persuade me that the world of our present consciousness is only one out of many worlds of consciousness which exist, and that these other worlds must contain experiences which have a meaning for our lives also.”

That statement is clear and concise, but how far does it fall behind the statement of St. Paul (with direct experience to back it) struggling with the futilities of words to express what eye has not seen nor ear heard, but nevertheless what he had known for truth in ways far beyond mortal senses. (I condense.)

“I knew a man above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; God knoweth!)--such a one caught up into the third heaven; How that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not possible for a man to utter.”

In our version “possible” is translated “lawful,” but the former is said to represent the meaning more closely. And again he says, using the very illustration of the Looking Glass which I have used so often, “For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.”

Yes, there are indeed many states of consciousness and such a man could have taught, can teach, modern investigators much about the varying degrees of consciousness in dream and trance.

In India is the well-spring of knowledge of these states and their powers and it is clearly stated by those who know that there are dangers. In the World behind the Looking Glass are no guides. There a man must depend upon the essential in himself and on nothing else. I have written a story about that side of the world of dreams which came to me so actually as a dream that though my hand wrote it I could never say my objective self created it. It sums up more than I knew of the subject at the time, but I have since learned its truth.

One of the characters says:

“We recognize a strange force, a very powerful dynamic. We consider it a manifestation of the primal energy. It lies all round us for the taking and in itself is neither had nor good. The result depends on the person who uses it. The rules we call The Rules of Detachment. Certainly this force may be used for a very high kind of spiritual adventure, but in itself it is neutral. It is a sword. Now a sword may be used by a god or a devil or any of the grades between.” The Rules of Detachment are given.

This force is of course related to the world of dreams, and the hero persists in projecting himself into this state of consciousness without knowledge of where safety lies. The story is concerned with his neglect of the Rules of Safety and the terrible consequences and final extrication. The point is that what you will meet in that world is what you deserve to meet and what your own thoughts and life have invited.

“With a thought you may be in the horror of the Desolate Country, with another in the Shining Land, for every man creates his own universe until he can perceive it as it is in truth.”

Indeed one must not walk unguarded among dreams. There are many people whose degradation, slow but complete, has been consummated by what they have met there. There are people in mad-houses who could testify to this and more, and would not be believed if they did so. We do not understand. We play with the Unknown and wreath it with flowers

and one day it rises and petrifies us with a deadly stare. There are thoughts and deeds which should make any man who is their slave fear to sleep. Shakespeare knew this as he knew most other things. Look at his Lady Macbeth crawling against the castle wall and shuddering at the very thought of night and what it brings in hidden hands.

Sleep is so imminently near to the reality which brushes away illusion and reveals our true selves. Does any man of that order need a more burning hell than to meet himself and see the truth? It has been said that the most appalling experience in ghost stories is that of the man who meets the doppel gänger--his own double; and I recall a terrible picture of Rossetti's--"How They Met Themselves"--where fear stares at you from two ravaged faces. But what is the experience of meeting one's outward semblance to that of meeting one's inward verisimilitude?

Many dreams visit us of which we miss the importance. The waking self has not the knowledge to interpret them. The counsel is needed then of one instructed who can "divine" as it says in the Bible. The Old and New Testaments are very wonderful dream-books, as they are also in all the psychological matters in which the West begins to explore. It will be remembered in Joseph's adventures in Egypt--that land of ancient mysteries--how the two servants of Pharaoh and Pharaoh himself dreamed dreams which they knew instinctively were important but could in no way decipher until Joseph "divined" for them. If an adequate study were made of these and the many allied cases of abnormal consciousness we should realize the treasures of knowledge hidden for the seeker. Many thousands might be helped to realization if their dreams could be divined for them, not indeed after the methods of the modern psycho-analyst but by one who understands something of the conditions of that world where the subconscious meets us with face unveiled according to our capacity of understanding.

Let it be understood that the enjoyment of life as presented to us in the Mirror of the Passing Show is by no means hurt or hindered by comprehension partial or complete of its illusions, and is neither stilted nor highbrow, nor tinged with Puritanism. We can afford to love what can no longer deceive or hurt us and every step onward reveals more and more of the joy that is based on this understanding.

Do we enjoy the theater less because we know the show is only a shadow and reflection of life as it seems to us? Is it of less interest because we know that presently the actors will have laid aside their assumed characters with their dresses, and the lights will be extinguished and the stage remain empty and echoing until the next troupe of actors bounds on in the glitter of lights and watching intent faces? Eyes that are unblinded perceive all the more clearly the beauty, irony, and pathos of the show because they know that it must pass, that it dances before them veiling from its actors and most of its spectators the Utterly Lovely, the Wholly Desirable, which at times it attempts to shadow forth.

In India they call this glittering, shifting, changing spectacle the *Lila* or "Sport of God"--a conception that has meanings too profound to be touched on here, though some minds will see the implication for themselves. And of these implications one of the deepest is the meaning of sleep and dreams, and the state of consciousness into which each one of us is nightly thrown. It is as though the evolving power within cried to the most crass and materialistic of us all:

"You shall not wholly forget your true self and its origin. You bury it in the day with schemes and fancies that heap the earth above it, blinded, deafened and dead. But the night is mine and yours. Then, be you what you will, sot, dollar-chaser, prostitute, thief, blinded with frivolity or with earthly wisdom, drunken with the pleasures of the Passing Show, I take you by the

hand and lead you into the Ancient Dark, forcing you to the sight of things lovely, terrible, grotesque, deadly, foreshadowing, and thus compel you to remembrance of that which abides when the fashion of this world passes away.”

It is well to take the reminder of sleep and dreams. In that world those who know carry the Lamp and Sword, and the universe is theirs.

## Chapter 5

Scattered through ancient books of all the Eastern countries (including the Scriptures we ourselves accept as canonical though at present the so-called miracles which they record do not enjoy a very high reputation) are events so unusual and alien to everyday experience that the witnesses incline to attribute them to the manifestation of supernatural interference and there leave the subject without further explanation. They have been dismissed as a whole in a summary fashion with the apparent conclusion that until our own favored nineteenth and twentieth centuries people were incapable of weighing evidence, were shining examples of mendacity, and were as easily deceived as children. Certainly there were and are many people of this description even in the present day, but it is very difficult to suppose even in connection with the Bible that one or other of these was invariably the case. For my part, in my quest, I have thought it worth while in an extended course of reading to consider these instances and endeavor to relate them to what I have learned further on my way and to note some of them for consideration. Let us for instance glance at the famous travels of Abu-Abdulla Mahommed, known as Ibn Batuta, the most famous of Arab travelers, a man born in the year 1304 and known to scholars all the world over, who made his way as far as China in those difficult days. The editor who set down the travels (70,000 miles) of Ibn Batuta from his own lips concludes thus:

“Here ends what I have put into shape from the memoranda of the Shaik Abu-Abdulla Mahommed Ibn Batuta whom God honor! No person of intelligence can fail to see that this Shaik is the Traveler of our age, and he who should call him the Traveler of the whole Body of Islam would not go beyond the truth.”

In all that I relate I alter no fact nor implication though I condense. I give one singular incident which took place in Silhet in Bengal. Ibn Batuta says:

“My object in going to the hill country was to see a holy personage who lives there, the Shaik Jalaluddin, one of the most eminent of saints and singular of men who had wrought miracles of great note. He was when I saw him a very old man. At a later date I heard from the Shaik’s disciples of his death at the age of one hundred and fifty years. I was also told that for some fifty years he had lived only on milk. When I was going to visit him four of his disciples met me at a distance of two days’ journey from his place of abode. They told me that he had said to the faquirs with him: ‘The traveler from the West is coming: go and meet him.’ Now he knew nothing whatever about me, but the truth had been revealed to him. I set out with these people and arrived at the hermitage outside his cave. . . . The day I entered his presence he was wearing an ample mantle of goats’ hair which greatly took my fancy, so that I could not help saying to myself: ‘I wish to God that he would give it to me.’ When I went to take leave of him he went into a corner of his cave, took off this mantle and made me put it on. The faquirs told me that the Shaik was not in the habit of wearing it, but put it on at the time of my arrival, saying:--‘The man of the West will ask for this dress. A Pagan king will take it from him and give it to our brother to whom it belongs and for whom it was made.’ When the faquirs told me this, my answer was:

“‘I have the Shaik’s blessing with his mantle and shall take care not to wear it in visiting any king whatever.’

“So I quitted the Shaik and a good while after it happened that when I was traveling in China I came to the city of Khansa [Hang-chow]. The crowd was great and I was separated from my companions. I had on this dress. The viceroy was passing with a great following and

observed me. He called me, asked questions and would not let me go but took me in and presented me to the prince who bore the title of king, who asked me questions. While I answered his eyes were fixed with admiration on my dress.

“‘Take it off,’ said the viceroy, and there was no possibility of disobeying, so the prince took the dress and gave me ten robes of honor, a horse caparisoned and a sum of money. I was vexed but then came to my mind the saying that a Pagan king would take my dress, and I was greatly astonished.

“The year following I came to the residences of the King of China at Cambaluc [Peking]. I betook myself to the hermitage of the Shaik Burhan-uddin. He was reading and had on my very dress.

“‘This,’ said I, ‘is the mantle the King of Hang-chow took from me.’

“‘This mantle,’ said the Shaik, ‘was made for me by my brother Jalaluddin and he wrote to me that it would reach me by the hands of such a one.’ So he showed me Jalaluddin’s letter, which I read, marveling at the Shaik’s prophetic powers. On my telling Burhan-uddin the first part of the story he said:

“‘My brother Jalaluddin is above these prodigies now. He had indeed supernatural resources, but now he has passed to the mercy of God.’”

Now this, even if the story could be proved to be unreliable in some details, is an interesting example of what was believed of clairvoyance in a remote time. The shrine of this shaik is still venerated in India. Ibn Batuta gives also an interesting account of what we call hypnotism. A friend of his in discussing events of this kind tells him:

“I went once to see the Shaik [or Khan] in his cave. He took hold of my hand and all at once I imagined myself to be in a great palace where this Shaik was seated upon a throne. I thought there was a crown upon his head. On each side were beautiful handmaidens and there was water about into which fruit was constantly dropping. I took up an apple to eat it, and straightway I found myself again in the cave with the Shaik beside me laughing. I had a bad illness which lasted several months and I never would go again to see that strange being.”

At Hang-chow in China, where he mentions there were many Mohammedans, Ibn Batuta had also a singular experience. There he was entertained by a Mongol viceroy named Kurtia (it may be remembered that at this time the Mongol dynasty, best remembered by the famous Kublai Khan, was ruling China), and great are the accounts Ibn Batuta gives of his noble hospitality in his own palace. But here is the passage:

“That same night a juggler made his appearance and the Amir said:

“‘Come. Show us some of your marvels.’

“Upon this he took a wooden ball with several holes in it through which long thongs were passed, and laying hold of one of these, slung it into the air (we were in the middle of the palace court). It went so high that we lost sight of it. There now remained only a little of the end of a thong in the conjuror’s hand and he desired one of the bystanders who assisted him to lay hold of it and climb. He did so, climbing by the thong and we lost sight of him also. The conjuror then called him three times, but getting no reply snatched up a knife, climbed the thong and disappeared. Presently he threw down one of the boy’s hands, then a foot, then the other hand, the other foot, the trunk, and last, the head. Then he descended, puffing and panting, with his clothes all bloody, kissed the ground before the Amir and said something in Chinese. The Amir gave an order, our friend took the lad’s limbs and laid them together, gave a kick, and to! there was the boy who got up and stood before us. All this astonished me

beyond measure and I had an attack of palpitation like that which overcame me in the presence of the Sultan of India when he showed me something of the same kind. They gave me a cordial. The Kazi was next me and said he:

“Wallah! It is my opinion that there has been neither going up nor coming down. It is all hocus pocus.”

This seems to be an excellent example of mass hypnotism.

The former occasion to which Ibn Batuta alludes here was very curious.

While visiting Mohammed Tuglak (whose noble mausoleum I have seen in India) he found two yogins in the King's room, one of whom, while sitting cross-legged, rose into the air. His comrade pulled off a shoe, and rapped it on the ground. The shoe immediately rose in the air and tapped the other on the nape of the neck, when he gradually subsided to the ground. Ibn Batuta was so horrified at this transgression of all natural law that he fainted away in the King's presence.

Ricold de Monte Croce ascribes the same practices to the Tibetan lamas. One of them was said to fly, but, according to Ricold's description, he did not exactly fly but skimmed over the ground without touching it, and could seem to sit without sitting upon anything.

I now give some particulars related by the Mogul Emperor (Jehangir) of India, son of the great Emperor Akbar, and father of Shah Jehan who built the Taj Mahal. He was born in August, 1570. I may mention that in his singular autobiography a man in the greatest position in the known world had no temptation to mislead anyone. He was what he was--and when the men whom he describes asserted that they could achieve effects passing the bounds of human belief they were running the risk of impalement (rather a favorite punishment with the Emperor) if they had failed to convince him.

“They stated that of any tree which should be named they would set the seed and I should immediately see the result. One of the nobles present desired a mulberry. They set ten different seeds in the ground and recited among themselves in unintelligible language, when instantly a plant sprang from each of the ten places, each of which was the tree required. In the same way they produced a mango, an apple tree, a cypress, a pine-apple, a fig-tree, an almond, a walnut and many others, and this without any attempt at concealment and open to the observation of all present. The trees sprang slowly from the earth to the height of one or perhaps two cubits, when they shot forth leaves and branches; the apple tree in particular producing fruit which was brought to me and of which I can attest the fragrance.

But the fruits were not confined to the apple; they said I should taste of the fruit of every tree. Then making a sort of procession and invocation about the trees there appeared on the respective ones a sweet mango without the rind, an almond fresh and ripe, a large delicious fig and so with the pine and the rest. This was not all. Before the trees were removed there appeared among the foliage birds of surprising beauty and melody of song such as the world never saw before. At the close of the operation the leaves, as in autumn, put on variegated tints and the trees gradually disappeared into the earth. I can say only that if what I describe had not happened in my own presence I could never have believed it. Also, they were furnished with a bow and about fifty steel-pointed arrows. One took the bow and shooting an arrow into the air it stood fixed at a considerable height. He shot a second which became attached to the first and so with all the arrows to the last, which striking the united sheaf in the air the whole broke asunder and fell to the earth. This it would be difficult to explain. Also, they brought a chain fifty cubits in length which they threw up into the air where it remained as if fastened. A dog immediately ran up and disappeared in the air. A hog, a panther, a lion and a tiger were alternately sent up and disappeared. At last they took down

the chain and put it in a bag, no one discovering in what way the animals were made to vanish. This, I may venture to affirm, was beyond measure strange. Also they excavated the earth in the shape of a tank of considerable size. They spread a covering over it, and this being removed, the water appeared to be a sheet of ice. They desired that the elephant keepers should lead their elephants across. Accordingly one of the men set his elephant upon the ice and it walked over with as much ease and safety as upon rock, remaining for some time on the surface of the frozen pond. The sheet was replaced and being again removed every vestige of ice or even moisture had completely disappeared.

“I can add only that though I had frequently in my father’s court witnessed such performances never did I see or hear of anything so wonderfully strange. I dismissed them finally with a donation of 50,000 rupees with the intimation that all the Amirs of my court should each contribute something in proportion. In very truth, however we may have bestowed on these performances the character of trick or juggle, they very evidently partake of the nature of something beyond the exertion of human energy. I have heard that the art has been called the Semnianian [perhaps “celestial”]. It may be said indeed that in some men exists a peculiar and essential faculty which enables them to accomplish things far beyond the ordinary scope of human exertion.”

So speaks the Emperor. His translator, Major Price, adds in a note:

“I have myself been witness to the mango operation on the western side of India, but a sheet was used to cover the operation [i.e., the growth]. I have however no conception of the means by which it was done, unless the jugglers had the trees about them in every state from the seedling to the fruit.”

I also have seen this done as I have said and can safely say there was no opportunity for an all but naked man to carry either trees or branches with him. Like others, I have seen very clumsy imitations of this performance--one no later than three months ago, and there is no mistaking the difference. These latter can be seen anywhere in India.

The Emperor had some remarkable experiences also with a famous astrologer at his court. I profess no belief in astrology, for I know nothing of it and think quite another explanation possible, but it is worth recording. Jehangir writes (I condense as usual):

“On the 17th a strange affair happened. Shah Shuja [his grandson] was playing in the palace. There was a window and the prince went to it to look out. He fell headlong from it. By chance there was a carpet below and a carpet-spreader sitting on it. The child’s head fell on the carpet and his feet on the back and shoulders of the man and though the height was seven yards the compassion of God came to his aid and the carpet and the man saved his life. He was unable to speak. I ran out in a state of bewilderment and holding him in my affectionate embrace was distracted with this favor from Allah. A strange thing was that three or four months before the royal astronomer had represented to me that it was predicted from the Prince’s horoscope that these three or four months were unpropitious to him and it was possible he might fall from some high place, but that the dust of calamity would not settle upon the skirt of his life. This dread dwelt on my mind and I was never for a moment forgetful of that nursling of fortune. When I arrived in Kashmir this unavoidable catastrophe occurred.”

Again:

“On Tuesday the 21st Padshah Begum Banu [one of the ladies of the harem] died and grief for this heart-rending event laid a heavy load on my heart. A strange thing is that the astronomer royal two months before this had informed some of my servants that one of the

chief sitters in the harem of chastity would hasten to the hidden abode of non-existence. He had discovered this from the horoscope of my destiny.”

Again:

“In these days Shah Shuja had an eruption so violent that no water would go down his throat and his life was despaired of. It was recorded in his father’s horoscope that his son would die this year; all the astronomers were unanimous that he would not live,--but the astronomer royal said on the contrary that he would live. I asked ‘By what proof?’ He said that in the horoscope of my destiny it was recorded that in this year no trouble would find its way to the royal mind, and as I had a great affection for him no harm would befall him and some other child would die. It came to pass as he said. Shah Shuja carried his life out of that deadly place, and another son of my son’s died at Burhanpur. Besides this many judgments of the astronomer royal proved correct. This is not without strangeness and therefore is recorded in these memoirs. I ordered the astronomer royal to be weighed against money and the weight came to 6,500 rupees. This was given him.”

It is a singular fact that though a devout Moslem the Emperor Jehangir, like his great father the Emperor Akbar, was fond of discussing the highest flights of Indian thought with the saints of that faith. His first notice of one of them, known as Jadrup Gosain, is as follows:

“When I arrived in the neighborhood of Agra I went on foot to see him. He has thoroughly mastered the science of the Vedanta. I conversed with him. He spoke well, so much so as to make an impression on me. My society also suited him. My revered father saw him in the same place and always remembered him very well.”

The science of the Vedanta includes Yoga. Jehangir then goes on to describe the initiation of the Brahmins with much accuracy. After a later interview he adds:

“Certainly association with him is a great privilege.”

Again:

“In foregoing pages something has been written about Jadrup Gosain. At this time he changed his residence to Mathura, which is one of the greatest places of worship of the true God (under the aspect of Krishna) on the banks of the Jumna. As I valued his society I hastened to wait on him and for a long time enjoyed his company without the presence of any stranger. In truth, his existence is a great gain to me; one can be greatly benefited and delighted.”

Again:

“On Monday the 12th my desire to see the Gosain Jadrup again increased and hastening to his hut without ceremony I enjoyed his society. Sublime words were spoken between us. God Almighty has granted him an unusual grace, a lofty understanding, an exalted nature and sharp intellectual powers, with a God-given knowledge and a heart free from the attachments of the world. He has of worldly goods a piece of old cotton and a piece of earthenware from which to drink water. On Wednesday I went again to visit the Gosain and bade him good-by. Undoubtedly parting from him weighs upon my mind that desires the truth.”

I have a motive in inserting these notices of the Emperor’s meetings with the Sannyasin for in the final chapters of this book I hope to deal with the teaching which as I believe gives us the key to many of these mysteries, and undoubtedly the Emperor heard of them from Jadrup who was a, past master in the science, and derived from them the wistfulness for knowledge of which he speaks.



I cannot close this chapter without alluding to the strange experiences of the Lazarist Fathers Huc and Gabet in Tibet about the year 1849, and will then pass on to one of the most remarkable demonstrations on record of power for which it seems difficult to account on the theories either of fraud or spiritism.

The Abbé Huc in the record of their travels in Tibet, in allusion to a lamasery where they spent some time and which rejoices in the possession of a so-called miraculous tree, writes as follows:

“The Monastery is called the Ten Thousand Images, alluding to the tree which according to the legend sprang from the saint Tsong-Kaba’s hair and bears a Tibetan character on each of its leaves. At the foot of the mountain on which the lamasery stands is a great square enclosure formed by brick walls. Upon entering we were able to examine at leisure the marvelous tree. We were filled with an absolute consternation of astonishment at finding that there were on each of the leaves well-formed Tibetan characters all of a green color, some lighter, some darker. Our first suspicion was fraud of the monks, but after a minute examination we could not discover the least deception. The characters all appeared to us portions of the leaf, equally with its veins and nerves. In one leaf they would be at the top, in another in the middle, in younger leaves only partially formed. The bark and branches which are like those of the plane are also covered with characters. When you remove a bit of bark the young bark beneath exhibits the indistinct outline of germinating characters. We examined everything closely to detect trickery but could see nothing of the sort and the perspiration absolutely trickled down our faces under the influence of the sensations which this most amazing spectacle created. More profound intellects than ours may be able to supply an explanation but we give it up. The tree seemed of great age. Its trunk, which three men could scarcely embrace with outstretched arms, is not more than eight feet high. The branches spread out and are extremely bushy. The leaves are always green and the wood has an exquisite odor, something like cinnamon. The lamas told us that in summer the tree produces beautiful large red flowers,--also that nowhere else exists such a tree, that many attempts have been made in various lamaseries to propagate it by seeds and cuttings but in vain. The [Chinese] Emperor Khang-Hi when upon pilgrimage constructed a dome of silver over the tree.”

Again, on an occasion when they met with many pilgrims in the wilderness the Abbé and Father Gabet spoke to one:

“‘Doubtless some great solemnity calls you together.’

“‘Yes, tomorrow will be a great day. A lama will manifest his power; he will kill himself yet not die,’ the father continues.

“This spectacle is very common in the lamaseries of Tartary. The lama who is to manifest his power prepares himself for many days by fasting, prayer and no communication with mankind. On the day the multitude of pilgrims assembles in the great court there where an altar is raised. The lama seats himself upon the altar and takes from his girdle a large knife; at his feet numerous lamas commence the invocations. He suddenly throws aside his scarf, unfastens his girdle, and with the knife slits open his abdomen in one long cut. While the blood flows the multitude prostrate themselves and he is questioned about all sorts of hidden things. The replies are regarded as oracles. The recitation of prayer is resumed. The lama takes blood from his wound, breathes thrice upon it and throws it into the air. He passes his hand over the wound, closes it and everything resumes its pristine condition. He recites a short prayer and the multitude disperses. We do not believe there is any deception. We are

persuaded the devil has a great deal to do with such matters. There are other famous supernaturalisms. They heat irons red-hot and lick them.

They make incisions in various parts of the body which an instant afterwards leave no trace. All these things are preceded by prayer.”

I think these cases of mass-hypnotism very interesting. It is obvious that it is a most extraordinary force and power. These two men were students of the Tibetan languages and such earnest missionaries that they risked their lives daily in Mongolia and Tibet on their successful journey to Lhasa.

It is difficult to believe they lied. They recorded many other matters of the same interest, attributing them to the machinations of the devil. In considering such things with an inclination to ridicule them as impossible it is interesting to remember the words of Galvani--that man who made the earliest experiments in electricity, and used frogs at first for the purpose. He said:

“I am attacked by two classes of people, the learned and the ignorant. Both of them treat me with ridicule and say I am only fit to be a dancing master for frogs. And yet I think I have discovered one of the grandest forces in nature.”

A conclusion which none would question. It was certainly the belief of Sir William Crookes, the great English scientist, that he too had discovered a mighty force in nature unknown and possibly dangerous to trifle with at present, and in his belief the Indian yogins share.

I have chosen the examples given above really at random from the mass available and regret to have omitted so much that is interesting, including Marco Polo's description of the occult happenings at the court of that Mongol Emperor of China who is best remembered by the public as the poet Coleridge's "Kublai Khan."

One of my objects has been to show how ancient and modern experiences join hands in an almost equal mystification, and I especially regret not having had space for the extraordinary and yet proved fact of the power of certain yogins to suspend animation and the heart-beat and in that condition permit themselves to be buried.

One case, supported by credible eye-witnesses, is that of the yogin Haridas, who, falling into a self-induced trance in the presence of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his court, was buried in a garden outside Lahore. "For forty days strict watch was kept over the grave, and when they ended he was exhumed, cold, stiff and unconscious and restored by applying warmth to the head and friction to the body while forcing air gently into the lungs."

He was buried in the presence of the Maharaja and Sir Claude Wade. Dr. Honigberger was also at the court at the time and cites this case.

But I must pass on.

## Chapter 6

I might of course fill volumes with modern records of this kind and I therefore have chosen only a few witnessed by men celebrated for one reason or another and certainly not lacking in perspicuity. I now turn to one of the most remarkable of modern times. I do not know what others may think of it but it seems to me worth attention and I have chosen it because though the events described were in India and the performer was Indian the observer was European, and writes with the necessary suspension of judgment.

His name was Jacolliot. He was Chief Justice of Chandernagore, one of the portions of India which still remain French. The events took place (roughly speaking) about sixty years ago.

This man spent much of a long residence in India in looking into the question of the "occult." You may live all your life there and never come up against anything of the kind, but if you are interested and evince sympathy and understanding along the right lines you will have plenty of food for reflection. Jacolliot seems to have been profoundly interested in comparative religion and a student of the Kabala, in which he asserts he found many resemblances with the doctrines of the Brahmins. (It must be understood that I condense but never alter.) He describes himself as no partizan but a man who records what he saw; adding:

"An ardent partizan would have been too credulous and have taken all on trust. A rabid opponent would have made it his business to disparage and discredit. I shall tell what I saw with my own eyes and shall faithfully record such explanations as I received. The facts which are simply magnetic are indisputable. As to the facts which are purely spiritual I was only able to explain those in which I participated either as actor or as spectator upon the hypothesis that I was the victim of hallucination, unless I am willing to admit that there was an occult intervention."

He prefaces his book with the quotation from the words spoken by the Brahmins on receiving a candidate for initiation:

"Learn that this is a mystery which should never be revealed to the vulgar herd, otherwise great harm may befall you."

Into his long and interesting comparisons of the teachings of Zoroaster and the Kabala with the books of the Brahmins I will not enter, except to say that he describes the Brahmin teachers of his time as holding the doctrine that these strange powers were manifestations of the powers of the Pitris--that is, the ancestral spirits, under the power of the triune Divinity known under the names of Brahma, Siva and Vishnu. He gives all the rites of initiation for the boy, the householder, and for those who pass beyond into the ascetic life which leads to the higher powers--in other words, the three degrees of initiation.

The teaching is that the ancient scriptures of India (the Vedas) contain this knowledge hidden within them as the soul is contained in the body. So, in our own Scriptures, Origen, one of the early Christian fathers traced a mystic meaning in much that we consider that he who runs may read.

I pass however to what Jacolliot actually saw and the summing up. The following pages are quoted from him. Where the word "I" appears, Jacolliot must be understood as speaking.

I had been a resident of Pondicherry, the capital of the French possessions in the Carnatic for several years, when one morning I was informed that a faquir wanted to see me. I had left Europe without the slightest idea of the phenomena which the spiritualists attribute to their

mediums. As to the Hindu faquirs I conceived them to be simple magicians yet I had heard a great deal of their marvelous skill and was anxious to see a specimen. I received him in one of the verandas. His face was thin and bony as that of an anchorite and his eyes, which seemed half dead, produced a sensation such as I once experienced when looking at the motionless orbs of a large shark. Bowing with his hands raised to his forehead he murmured:

“I greet you respectfully, sahib. May the immortals watch over your days. The guru (Master) said to me this morning, ‘Go and glean at random,’ and Ganesha the God of Travelers has led me to you. What do you want of me?”

“You are said to move inert bodies without contact. I wish to see.”

“I have no such power. I evoke spirits who lend their aid.”

“Evoke, and show me what they can do.”

He resumed his squatting position on the pavement, placing his seven-knotted stick between his crossed legs.

He then asked to have my man bring seven small flower-pots full of earth, seven thin sticks of wood and seven leaves taken from any tree.

Without touching them himself he had them placed in a horizontal line about six feet from his outstretched arm. He told my servant to put a stick in each pot and impale a leaf on each. This being done the leaves dropped down to the pots.

The faquir then pronounced an invocation, stretched out his hands in the direction of the pots and stood motionless in a sort of ecstasy.

Suddenly it seemed to me that my hair was moved by a slight current of air. This was repeated several times. At the end of about a quarter of an hour, the leaves began to move slowly upward along the sticks of wood, and then as slowly to descend. I passed and repassed several times between the Hindu and the pots but there was no interruption. I asked to examine his arrangements and he agreed without delay. I removed the leaves and sticks and emptied out the earth. I ordered fresh pots, earth and leaves, divided the bamboo stick myself into seven pieces and having thus rearranged everything placed it all at about four yards from the faquir, who looked on unconcernedly.

He extended his arms and five minutes had hardly elapsed when the leaves moved up and down the stick as before. Still I would not acknowledge defeat. I had seven holes bored in a plank in which I placed the sticks. The phenomena recurred as before. I repeated the experiment in twenty different ways but always with the same result. He said:

“Ask anything you will. The leaves will remain still if the leaves have nothing to say. Otherwise they will move up the sticks.”

I had a set of raised brass letters and figures upon a zinc block which I used to stamp my name and numbers upon the books in the library. I thought of a friend who had died some years before and extracted the letters and numbers one by one.

As I took out the letter A, the leaves began to move to the top of the sticks and fell again. The first letter of my friend’s name. Letter by letter and figure by figure I obtained the following words:

“Albain Brunier, died at Bourg-en-Bresse. (Ain) January 3, 1856.” What made my astonishment greater was that I was totally unprepared. I wanted to be alone and reflect. I dismissed the faquir and made him promise to return next day at the same hour. My excitement had disappeared but I was no nearer to a belief in the supernatural on the morrow.

I repeated the phenomenon changing the spelling in my mind; dwelling strongly upon each letter. I got: "Halbin Pruniet, died," etc., but could never change the remainder. I got such changes in the name that no one would have recognized it, but never in the name of the city. Hence I concluded that I could not sufficiently isolate my mind from the correct spelling of all the words in the sentence.

[Here I think we have an interesting case of mind-reading.]

In the last sitting the faquir gave, he lowered one balance of a pair of scales with a peacock's feather while the other contained about 170 pounds. By the mere imposition of hands he made a crown of flowers float in the air, the atmosphere was filled with vague and indistinct sounds and a shadowy hand drew luminous figures in space. At the time I considered the two latter simply as phantasmagoria. I did not even give them the benefit of a doubt nor note them. But in regard to the purely material facts I applied the severest tests.

Such were my first observations at Pondicherry. My judicial duties and special studies concerning ancient India did not give me time to continue them. From this time forward I made notes of all the material phenomena by which the faquirs seek to prove the existence of the powers they claim. I am convinced there are in nature and in man, who is a part of nature, immense forces the laws of which are yet unknown to us. I think that one day man will discover these laws, that things we now regard as dreams will appear as realities, and that we shall witness phenomena of which we have no conception. Who knows whether this force of the ego, according to the Hindus, may not be shown to be one of the greatest forces in nature?

Among ourselves have we not seen scientific societies regard the telegraph as a toy fit only for sending messages from one room to another? In the open air the wire was not to be relied on! As I have been led to speak of my own views I will say that the conclusion I have drawn from what I have seen in India is that aside from the claptrap by which it is surrounded and of which the Hindus are very fond, there is in man a special force acting in an unknown direction and often intelligently, the laws of which require to be studied by unprejudiced and liberal-minded specialists.

I lost no opportunity of attentively observing any manifestations that bore any relation to the subject.

Leaving Chandernagore on 3rd January 1866 I arrived at Benares. I intended to remain there a couple of months. The Peishwa, a Mahratta Prince at Benares with whom I had become acquainted through the Rajah of Chandernagore, hearing of my arrival sent to offer me apartments in his magnificent seven-storied palace on the banks of the Ganges.

Here I met the most extraordinary faquir, perhaps, that I had ever encountered in India. He came from the extreme south of India and his mission was to take charge of the remains of a rich Malabar man. The Peishwa, who was in the habit of extending hospitality to pilgrims, had found lodgings for him in a small thatched cottage upon the very banks of the river in which he had to perform his ablutions for the next three weeks in honor of the dead. His name was Govindaswami.

I had him brought to my apartment one day at noon. The room in which I received him looked out upon the terrace which in turn overlooked the Ganges. In the middle of the terrace was a water-spout which fell in a fine shower into a marble basin.

I asked him to go out upon the terrace, which was much lighter than the room and where I could better watch him.

"Do you know whether any power is developed in you when you perform? Did you ever feel any change in your brain or muscles?"

“I am but an instrument. I invoke the ancestral spirits and it is they who manifest their power.”

The faquir was already in position with both hands extended towards an immense bronze vase full of water. Within five minutes it began to rock gently to and fro upon its base and to approach the faquir gently and with a regular motion. As the distance lessened metallic sounds escaped from it as if someone had struck it with a steel rod. I asked if I could give directions. He consented at once.

The vase advanced, receded, or stood still, according to my request. At one time at my command the blows changed into a continuous roll like that of a drum, at another they had the slowness and regularity of a ticking clock.

Upon the table of the drawing-room stood a musical box. I had it brought to the terrace by my servant and I asked the force to tune the blows struck upon the vase to accompany any air on the instrument.

I wound up the box and a whirlwind of notes was the result. Quick sharp strokes accompanied the time like the baton of a conductor.

All this was done without fuss, parade or mystery upon a terrace a few yards square. The vase could hardly, when empty, have been moved by two men. It received the falling jet of water from the fountain and was used for the morning ablutions. What was the force which moved this mass?

The faquir, who had not left his place, then rested the tips of his fingers for a short time upon the edge of the vase. It began to rock to and fro in regular time, gradually quickening its speed. But what surprised me most was to see that the water was stationary as if there were a strong pressure which prevented its regaining its equilibrium.

Three times during these oscillations the vase rose to a distance of seven to eight inches completely from the ground and when it fell to the pavement again it did so without perceptible shock. The performance lasted several hours during which I took copious and careful notes and also took the precaution of having each phenomenon repeated in a different manner. The faquir promised to return every day as long as he should remain at Benares. He was glad to have met me. I had lived for many years in the south of India and knew the beautiful language of the Tamils.

I should mention that the French in India appear to use the term faquir alike for the Hindu and Mohammedan ascetics. This man was of course a Hindu. His name indicates one who has a special reverence for the Divine in the aspect of Krishna.

He returned next day and resumed his experiments with the great vase.

He asked me to lend him a small stick. I handed him an unsharpened lead pencil. He placed it in the water and by the imposition of, his hands [upon the surface of the water] made it move in every direction like a magnet in contact with an iron bar. When he placed a finger quietly on the middle of the pencil so as not to affect its position on the water I saw it slowly sink beneath the surface until it had reached the bottom of the vase. I state the facts without further comment.

His third visit was short. At my request he consented to perform a phenomenon of levitation which I had already seen others successfully accomplish without taking any particular notice of how they did it.

Taking an ironwood cane which I had brought from Ceylon he leaned heavily on it, resting his right hand on the handle with his eyes fixed on the ground. He then uttered incantations.

Leaning upon the cane with one hand the faquir rose gradually about two feet from the ground. His legs were crossed beneath him very like a bronze statue of the Buddha.

For more than twenty minutes I tried to see how Govindaswami could thus fly in the face of all known laws of gravity. The stick gave him no visible support and there was no apparent contact between that and his body except through his right hand.

On his next visit, at night, he resumed his performances.

Taking a small bamboo stool he sat upon it with his legs crossed and arms folded on his chest. The terrace was lighted like day. At the end of a few minutes the stool began to move noiselessly along the terrace by short jerks. The Hindu was motionless. The terrace was about seven yards long and as many wide. It took about ten minutes to traverse it. The faquir's legs crossed beneath him were distant from the ground the whole height of the stool. Three vases of flowers so heavy that none but a strong man could have lifted them (and he only with an effort) stood at one end of the terrace. He touched the edge of one with his finger-tips. It began to move to and fro and left the floor. It appeared to me to be floating in the air, going from right to left at the will of the faquir. I have always regarded this as caused by an illusion of the senses.

On his next visit--

Taking a small stand of teak which I could lift with my thumb and forefinger I placed it in the middle of the terrace and asked the faquir if he could fix it there so that it could not be moved. He imposed both hands on it for a quarter of an hour at the end of which time I approached the table and took hold of it. It would not stir from the ground. I struggled harder, with the result that the fragile leaf came off in my hand. I then took hold of the legs, which were united by a cross brace, but the result was the same. A thought then crossed my mind. Suppose, I thought, that these phenomena are produced by the faquir's charging objects with some kind of fluid and a natural force is thus developed the laws of which we do not know, the supply with which they are charged must gradually lose its efficiency unless renewed by the operator. I asked the faquir to go to the other end of the terrace, which he did. At the end of a few minutes I could handle the stool without trouble.

"The Pitris [ancestral spirits] have gone," said the Hindu, "because their means of earthly communication was broken. They are coming back."

He imposed his hands above an immense copper platter inlaid with silver and almost instantly came such a rapid and violent succession of blows and knocks that it might have been taken for hailstones on a metal roof, and I thought I saw a succession of phosphorescent lights pass to and fro across the platter in every direction.

Among the Peishwa's possessions was a small harmoniflute. With a small cord tied round the square forming a portion of the bellows I hung it from one of the iron bars of the terrace so it swung about two feet from the ground. I asked the faquir if he could make it play without touching it. He seized the cord by which it was hung and stood motionless. Soon the harmoniflute began to be gently stirred, the bellows to contract and expand and it emitted sounds perfectly plain and distinct.

"Cannot you get a tune?"

"I will evoke the spirit of one of the old pagoda musicians."

The instrument first played a series of notes; it then bravely attacked one of the most popular Malabar airs. He stood perfectly still. He merely held the cord by which he communicated with the harmoniflute.

I kneeled down to see the various movements of the instrument and I saw, unless misled by illusion, the up and down motion of the keys.

Another time:

He brought with him a small bag of sand, emptied it on the floor and leveled it with his hand. He asked me to sit opposite with paper and pencil. I gave him the handle of a penholder which he placed on the sand.

“I am about to evoke the Pitris. When you see the object you have just given me stand upright, one end only in contact with the ground, trace on the paper any figures you please and you will see a copy on the sand.” He then extended his hands and repeated the formula of evocation.

The wooden rod rose gradually, and at the same moment I moved my pencil, tracing the strangest figures at random. The piece of wood imitated every motion and I saw my figures appear successively in the sand, when I stopped the penholder stopped, when I went on it followed me.

Wishing to know if he could see from his position the movements of my pencil I left the table and placing myself in a similar position to his, satisfied myself that it was impossible for him to see what I was doing.

Having leveled the sand again he said:

“Think of a word in Sanskrit.”

He extended his hands as before. The magic pencil began to move and wrote the word:

“Purusha” (The Heavenly Generator).

That was the word I had thought of.

“Think of a phrase.”

The pencil wrote in Sanskrit:

“Vishnu sleeps upon Mount Aikonta.”

“Can the spirit give me the 243rd shloka of the book of Manu?” I asked.

The pencil wrote before my eyes (in Sanskrit): “The man, the end of all whose actions is virtue, all of whose sins are erased by acts of piety and sacrifice, reaches the heavenly mansions radiant with light and clothed with a spiritual form.”

As a last experiment, placing my hands on a closed book containing extracts from Vedic hymns I asked for the first word of the fifth line of the twenty-first page. The answer written was:

“Devadatta.” (Given by a God.)

Comparing, it was correct.

“Will you now put a mental question?” said the faquir. I moved my head and the following was written on the sand:

“The earth.”

I had asked: “Who is our common mother?”

I have no explanation or statement to make with regard to these facts. I only describe what I saw and assert that the circumstances are accurately described. Materially speaking I do not think any fraud could have been committed.



As he was about to leave me to go to his breakfast he stopped in the embrasure of the door leading from the terrace to the outside stairs and crossing his arms upon his chest lifted himself up gradually without any apparent support (in the air) to the height of about ten to twelve inches. I could determine the distance exactly. Behind his back was a silk hanging striped in gold and white bands of equal width. His feet were on a level with the sixth band. I had seized my chronometer: the entire time from the moment when he began to rise until he touched the ground again was more than eight minutes. I asked him if he could repeat this when he pleased.

“The faquir,” he answered emphatically, “can lift himself as high as the clouds.”

[Again Jacolliot gives a most interesting account of rapid growth.]

Among the claims advanced by the faquirs is that they can directly influence the growth of plants. I had already seen this done a number of times but regarded it as a successful fraud. On his arrival I told him what I intended.

“I am entirely at your service.”

“May I choose the earth, the vessel, and the seed which you are to make grow?” I asked.

“The vessel and the seed, yes. The earth must be taken from a nest of carias.”

These little ants, who build for shelter small hills, are very common in India and there was no difficulty. I told my servant to bring me a flower-pot and differing seeds. I took them and dismissed him. To the faquir I handed the flower-pot filled with a whitish earth which must have been saturated with that milky fluid which the ants secrete and deposit upon their building earth. I chose at random a pawpaw seed and asked him to allow me to mark it. I made a slight cut in its outer skin, and gave it to him with a few yards of mosquito cloth. [This of course is a kind of muslin.]

“I shall soon sleep the sleep of the spirits. You must promise you will neither touch me nor the pot.”

I promised.

He then planted the seed in the earth, now like liquid mud, thrusting his seven-knotted stick into a corner of the vessel, using it as a prop to hold up the piece of muslin. He sat down upon the floor, stretched both hands horizontally above him and fell into a deep cataleptic sleep.

At first I could not tell whether his sleep was real, but when at the end of half an hour he had not stirred I was forced to believe no man was able except in that condition to hold both his arms stretched horizontally before him. An hour passed by. He looked like a bronze statue of evocation.

At first I took my place opposite him but that soon became unendurable. His eyes seemed half dead but full of magnetic influences. Without losing sight of him I took a seat at the end of the terrace. I had been waiting for a couple of hours when a low sigh startled me.

He made signs for me to approach. Removing the muslin that hid the pot he pointed to a young stalk of pawpaw fresh and green and nearly eight inches high. He thrust his fingers into the ground and carefully taking up the plant he showed me upon one of the two cuticles still adhering to the roots the cut I had made two hours before.

Was it the same seed and the same cut? I noticed no substitution. He had not left the terrace. I had not lost sight of him. He could not conceal a plant in his clothes for he was almost entirely naked, and could not have told in advance that I should choose a pawpaw seed among thirty different kinds my servant had brought. He said:

“If I had continued my evocations longer the pawpaw tree would have borne flowers in eight days and fruit in fifteen.”

Bearing in mind the accounts of Huc the missionary [already quoted] and what I had myself witnessed in the Carnatic I said there were other performers who could accomplish this in two hours.

“You are mistaken. In the manifestations you speak of there is an *apport* of fruit trees by the spirits. What I have just shown you is really spontaneous vegetation, but the pure fluid under the direction of the Pitris was never able to produce the three phases of germination, flowering, and fruiting in one day.”

There is one fact I should not omit which may be of service. There are a multitude of kitchen plants which, put at dawn into moist soil and exposed to the influence of a sun which does wonders, appear above the ground by noon and at the close of day are nearly half an inch high, on the other hand I am bound to say at least fifteen days are necessary for the germination of a pawpaw seed.

The next sitting was devoted to apparitions.

He was entirely naked when he came in and his seven-knotted stick was fastened to a lock of his long hair.

“Nothing unholy,” he said, “should come in contact with the body of the evocator.”

My bedroom was on a level with the terrace. I set apart both for our experiment, and carefully shut and fastened all outside doors. In the center of each was a coco-oil lamp protected by a glass shade diffusing a light sufficiently intense to enable anyone to read the smallest type in the remotest corner. There was a small copper furnace with burning coals, on which are burned from time to time a few pinches of perfumed powder. He placed one in the center of the terrace, by its side a copper platter filled with fragrant powder, took his seat on the floor with his arms folded across his chest and commenced a long incantation. This done he remained in the same position motionless, his left hand on his heart, his right leaning on the seven-knotted stick.

I thought he would drop into a cataleptic sleep, but no. From time to time he pressed his hand against his forehead. I experienced a sudden shock. A slight phosphorescent cloud formed, from which semblances of hands seemed to come and go with great rapidity. In a few minutes they lost their vaporous appearance and resembled human hands. Some became as it were more material; others more luminous. I counted sixteen.

When I asked if I could touch them, one breaking away from the rest flew toward me and pressed my hand. It was small, supple and moist, like the hand of a young woman. It threw a rosebud at my feet and vanished.

For nearly two hours a scene ensued calculated to set my head in a whirl. A hand brushed my face or fanned it with a fan. It would scatter a shower of flowers or trace in the air characters of fire; words which vanished as the last letter was written. Some of these were so striking that I wrote them down hastily. (They were in Sanskrit.)

“I have clothed myself with a fluidic body.”

“You will attain bliss when you lay aside this transitory body.”

Meanwhile flashes of lightning seemed to dart about. Gradually the hands disappeared; we found a garland of those yellow flowers with penetrating perfume [marigolds] which the Hindus use in all their ceremonies.

I offer no explanation. I relate. The doors of both rooms were closed. I had the keys in my pocket and the faquir had not changed his position. To these succeeded two others.

A cloud hovered near the little brazier, which at the Hindu's request I had fed. It assumed the human form of an old Brahmin priest kneeling; the sign of Vishnu on his forehead, girdled with the triple cord. He seemed to pray. He took a pinch of perfumed powder and threw it on the coals. It emitted a thick smoke; when it dispersed I noticed the specter less than six feet distant. It held out its hands; I took them in my own and found them warm and human. "Are you," I asked, "a former inhabitant of the earth?" The word "Yes" (*Am*) appeared and disappeared in letters of fire on his bosom.

"Will you leave me something as a token?"

He broke the triple cord, gave it to me and faded away. I supposed the séance was over and was going to raise the movable curtains which shaded the terrace, for the heat was suffocating. Suddenly I heard a strange tune. I saw the phantom of a musician gliding along the wall. He held a harmoniflute, which appeared impossible, as the Peishwa had sent for his the day before. When he had made the circuit of my room and the terrace he disappeared and I found the instrument where he had vanished. It was actually the Rajah's harmoniflute.

Govindaswami then rose. He was covered with perspiration and seemed exhausted. He accepted my presents, made the parting salaam and disappeared. I threw myself on a hammock for a few hours' rest. When I woke and remembered, it seemed a dream. Yet there was the harmoniflute. The floor of the terrace was still strewn with flowers, the garland lay on the divan and the notes I had written had not vanished.

Jaccoliot in an interesting passage gives the conditions in which the true yogins operate. These should be noted. They are as follows:

They are accompanied by no assistant or confederate.

They are completely naked save for a small piece of linen about as large as the hand.

They are acquainted with none of the apparatus our European jugglers need.

They have nothing in their possession but a small wand of seven knots of young bamboo as big as the handle of a penholder, which they hold in the right hand, and a small whistle about three inches long which they fasten to one of the locks of their long straight hair, for, having no clothes, they must otherwise hold it.

They operate as the person they visit desires, either sitting or standing or on the marble, granite or stucco pavement of the veranda or the bare ground.

When they need a subject for magnetic or somnambulistic phenomena they take any of the servants you may choose, or a European if he is willing to serve.

If they need any article such as a musical instrument, a cane, a paper, a pencil, etc., they will ask you to furnish it.

They will repeat any experiments in your presence as many times as you require and will submit to any test.

They never ask any pay, merely accepting as alms for their temple whatever you choose to offer.

I have traveled in every direction for many years and can truthfully state that I have never seen a single faquir who was not willing to comply with these conditions.

Jaccoliot is no believer himself in spiritualism in the ordinary sense of the word. It is true that many of the performers claim, as above, that these supernormal feats are done by "spirit force" which they some of them, as above, interpret as the power of the Pitris, the ancestral spirits. Jaccoliot, however, writes:

I will say what I mean by the words "spirit force." I mean the alliance between the intellect and the spiritual in order to act upon inanimate objects, without predetermining in any way the cause which sets this force in motion.

The supreme cause of all phenomena according to the Brahmins is the pure akasha fluid which is diffused through nature and puts animate and inanimate beings in communication with each other. Heat, electricity, all the forces of nature are but modes of action and states of this fluid. The being who possesses an excess of it acquires a proportionate power over animate beings not so highly favored and over inanimate beings. Spirits themselves are sensible to this influence.

According to some Brahmins akasha is the moving thought of the Universal Soul directing all souls, who would be in constant communication with each other if the gross envelope of the body did not in a measure prevent. Thus the more the soul disentangles itself from the body by contemplation the more sensible it becomes. to this Universal fluid by which all beings, visible or invisible are united. I confine myself to the rôle of an interpreter and nothing more.

So writes Jaccoliot. He adds:

As to the last class of cases (apparitions and the production of material objects) I should have omitted them altogether from the present work, as shunning scientific investigation if (remembering that all religions with Christianity at their head included such phenomena in their mysteries and miracles) I had not thought it would be at least a matter of historical curiosity to set forth the nature of these singular practices--in common use in India at the present day--which are so well adapted to influence the popular mind and which formed the basis of all the ancient superstitions.

It will be observed that Jaccoliot is very cautious in his manner of statement and rightly so. He calls however for investigation and I believe he would have done so more loudly had he lived in the present day and seen the advance of science along lines which would have appeared to him equally miraculous with those which the faquir developed before him in the palace of the Peishwa in Benares. I recommend all to read his book "Occult Science in India," the first and longer part of which is devoted to examining the resemblances between supernormal beliefs in various parts of the world. All must draw their own conclusions but I think myself justified in describing him as a believer in the existence of some powerful and universal force which can be used by certain people and in certain conditions to produce results which the uninstructed would describe as "miraculous."

## Chapter 7

Hypnotism has been mentioned in connection with some of these phenomena which I have quoted. What is the object of connecting hypnotism with the occult since it is known to be allied with certain physical processes? It may be said: "Yes, hypnotism was once considered occult but is now transferred to the domain of science. Why consider it in such a book as this?"

My answer is that I think every manifestation of the true occult is on its way to recognition in the domain of science, and by science I mean the knowledge which understands causes and processes and can therefore use them to its own ends. But because it is obvious that this definition applies very partially to the science of the present day, which is ignorant as a child in presence of the matters that most seriously concern us, I believe the science of the future will be placed on a very different basis from that of today. It will be based on the consciousness of man rather than on his sense perceptions. But there is another reason why hypnotism should be discussed in a book on the occult. It is a fact that anything which lulls the reason--i.e., the objective guardian of the ordinary ego--to sleep, may be and often is a straight way to the Land behind the Looking Glass. Only a temporary way, be it understood. The path vanishes as the sleeper wakes. He may never find it again unless under the same condition or further along the path of evolution, but for the moment the mirror on which the senses project their show is cracked and he sees through it. And here also we touch one of the differences between the East and West--which is very material to the subject in hand, though of course in each case there are exceptions. In the West the hypnotizer imposes his own will on the subject. He causes him to act, to remember as he chooses; the subject becomes a mere vehicle for the impressions of the operator. And if those are concerned with obtaining certain results or the proof of a theory, nothing more than these can be expected from the subject. The results therefore in the West are not especially interesting and can be predicted.

In the East amongst those who are adepts in the subject, the process is quite different. There is no imposition of the practitioner's will upon the subject. The intention is to send the objective self to sleep and so to set the higher consciousness of the subject free for his own experiences according to the power and vision he possesses in himself. The word of power is: "I loose you. Go." It is obvious that very much more interesting and unexpected results can be had upon these lines though of course they will be strictly conditioned by the stage of psychic evolution reached by the subject. The cases which I have given from Ibn Batuta and the Emperor Jehangir may have some relation to this, and I very much wish I had space for the results of self-hypnosis in this connection. I think there is no doubt that in some of the low forms of Yoga--or what may be better called its baser imitations, there is a great deal of self-hypnosis and the results are what might be expected. I am inclined also to think that some of the crimes of our own civilization are due to conscious or unconscious action of this type. It is a very interesting subject, which would repay investigation. I believe one of the root causes of the love of opiates in the East and alcohol in the West is the unconscious longing to be free of the bondage of the senses, to get beyond them into some region where troubles are left behind and life is a dream of pleasure. The drunkard's paradise is pretty much what one would expect it to be. Singularly enough opium and hashish appear to have a different and higher effect in spite of the eventual ruin they entail. The famous case of De Quincey must be recalled, and the visions, melancholy, terrible, true and beautiful, which he saw under the influence of opium and has recorded in words worthy of their beauty.

Here again chapters might be written of the visions of Asiatics induced in this way, and I believe that some of the foretellings and jugglings are certainly performed by men under this influence or that of the smoking of charas; but this is not difficult to distinguish when one has experience. I believe that tobacco-smoking offers in a very minor and puerile degree the same sort of dulling and soothing of the objective self, inducing dreaming states, and that this is why men and women have taken to it with avidity.

In this connection Professor James's wonderful book, "Varieties of Religious Experience," should be studied. His opinions on the power of narcosis to produce these brief flashes of the occult or mystic state are extremely interesting. He says:

"This is a realm that public opinion and ethical philosophy have long since branded as pathological though private practice and certain lyric strains of poetry seem still to bear witness of its ideality. Nitrous oxide and ether, especially nitrous oxide, when sufficiently diluted with air, stimulate the mystic consciousness to an extraordinary degree. Depth beyond depth of truth seems revealed to the inhaler. The truth fades out, however, or escapes, at the moment of coming to and if any words remain over in which it seemed to clothe itself these prove to be the veriest nonsense. Nevertheless the sense of a profound meaning persists and I know more than one person who is persuaded that in the nitrous oxide trance we have a genuine metaphysical revelation."

In view of what I have written already it is quite natural that the nitrous oxide trance should be a means of revelation for those and only those who have reached a certain stage of psychic evolution, and I fully agree with Professor James when he sums up the conclusions his investigations have left him (I condense):

"Looking back on my experiences they all converge toward a kind of insight to which I cannot help ascribing some metaphysical significance. The keynote of it is invariably a reconciliation. It is as if the opposites of the world whose contradictions and conflict make all our difficulties and trouble were melted into unity. Not only do they, as contrasted species, belong to one and the same genus, but one of the species, the nobler and better one, *is itself the genus, and so soaks up and absorbs its opposite into itself*. This is a dark saying, I know, when thus expressed in terms of common logic, but I cannot wholly escape from its authority. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear! I have friends who believe in the anesthetic revelation."

It seems to me to be a matter of certainty that the true and universal self in man may be occasionally liberated in this way, and, as to what is left behind sometimes sounding like nonsense, it must be remembered that in the Land behind the Looking Glass our logic *is* nonsense, and the truth as revealed there must appear to us to be dreams of madmen *if* we view them from the world of the senses. They have certainly often been so recorded.

I had once a most extraordinary dream shot through and through with beauty as a jewel with lights and perfections. I dreamed that I must write it down at once lest so much loveliness should escape me. But when I waked only one grotesque phrase survived--so grotesque though apparently meaningless that I never forgot it. Much later,--years after, events illuminated that phrase so that what it conveyed had become one of the most important events of my life. I believe the same might prove true of many of the remains of "veriest nonsense" of which Professor James writes, if they could be traced through the after life of the percipients. It will be interesting to give some specimens of experience under narcosis, and the first is of great value because it relates to a realization of time as the eternal "Now" of Indian Yoga. It was that of a man named Clark, who died young. (I condense.)

“In the first place the revelation is, if anything, non-emotional. It is the one sole and sufficient insight of how the present is pushed on by the past and becomes the future. The real secret would be the formulæ by which the ‘now’ keeps exfoliating out of itself yet never escapes. Ordinary philosophy is like a hound hunting his own tail. His nose never catches up with his heels. So the present is a foregone conclusion and I am ever too late to understand it. [It has become the past before one can grasp it.] But at the moment of recovery from anesthesia, then, before starting on life, I catch, so to speak, a glimpse of my heels, a glimpse of the eternal process just in the act of starting. That is why there is a smile upon the face of revelation as we view it. It tells us we are forever half a second too late.

“‘You could kiss your own lips and have all the fun to yourself,’ it says, ‘if you only knew the trick. It would be perfectly easy if they would just stay there until you got around to them. Why don’t you manage it somehow?’”

And the whole secret of the true occult is to know how to make one’s own lips wait until one gets round to them, and in kissing them one kisses the universe. That is Yoga with all its powers, revealing, in the immortal words of Plotinus, the great Neo-Platonic philosopher, the truth:

“For that which sees is itself the thing which is seen.” The transcendental logic of the Land behind the Looking Glass where “A can be both A and not A”! This is exactly what the percipient has realized in that experience.

Here is another experience--that of a woman who had taken ether for a surgical operation:

“I wondered if I was in a prison being tortured. My last dream immediately preceded my coming to. It only lasted a few seconds and was most vivid and real to me though it may not be clear in words.

“A great Power was traveling through the sky, his foot on a kind of lightning as a wheel is on a rail: it was his pathway. The lightning was made of innumerable spirits and I was one of them. Each part of the streak or flash came into its short conscious existence only that he might travel. I felt my flexibility and helplessness. He bended me, turning his corner by means of my hurt, and at the acutest point of [my agony] as he passed, I SAW.

“I understood for a moment things I have now forgotten, things that no one could remember while retaining sanity.

“He went and I came to. In that moment the whole of my life passed before me, including each little meaningless piece of distress, and I understood them. This was what it all meant. On waking I realized that in that half-hour under ether I had served God more distinctly and purely than I had ever done in my life before or than I am capable of desiring to do. I was the means of His achieving and revealing something to someone, I know not what or to whom. With that I came finally into what seemed a dream-world compared with the reality of what I was leaving.”

I should like to draw attention to one sentence in this experience:

“In that moment the whole of my life passed before me.”

This is a common experience of those who have been caught back at the last instant from death by drowning; it occurs also to those who are on the threshold of death in other ways and yet return. The explanation, I think, undoubtedly is the light of the higher consciousness breaking through as the body crumbles, revealing Time again as the Eternal Now. The dying man looks up and sees the past, present and future fused into a picture in which all parts are simultaneous. They are one and always were. Yoga again, and the explanation of

clairvoyance, prophecy and many more of the strange signals the true occult flings out to assure us that Reality is there for the finding!

That a flash here and there of truth can be caught by the man whose objective self is strangled in the grip of narcosis is a most interesting fact, but I need hardly say it is no recommendation to making the great escape into Reality in that particular way. None of these things offer the true road. How should they? I think even those dullings and lullings of the objective self in East and West to which I have alluded in this chapter are a serious risk and damage to the body--the instrument by which the psyche of man manifests,--and in obscurer ways than that are also a peril.

How should people who live the ordinary lives of Western civilization hope to see into what is described in the East by those who know, as "the Formless, the Beautiful, the Utterly Desirable"? To injure the body, to force a glimpse of the higher consciousness by mechanical means is no true way to the enfranchisement of the psyche. Many voluptuaries in psychic sensation have discovered this to their cost. It is in the union of the best, the highest, the simplest, in the union of body, mind and psyche that the Way lies and in that only, and in studying the principles of Yoga this is forcibly brought before the student. In an article published before I had resolved to write fully on these hidden matters I said:

"But where shall wisdom be found and where is the place of understanding? In small beginnings, in a certain personal austerity and circumspectness (in the East they call it re-collectedness) which need not be ostentatious, which is not disquieted by passion or opinion. This the great faiths have taught. They recognized with true psychological instinct that here was a gate to the eternal Way, to looking upon the lower satisfactions of life as stranglers of the real joys. More than half our troubles come from trying to adapt man to his environment instead of his environment to man. The wise asceticism is a perpetual appeal to joy. It throws aside the useless burdens. I reflect on the teaching of the wise of all nations and I recall none who has not taught that self-discipline is what makes the man the master of his fate in the only way in which he need care to rule it. Meng-Tsu, one of the wise men of China, wise in her antiquity, said a rememberable thing in this connection:

"That in which men differ from beasts is a thing very inconsiderable; the wise are wise because they preserve it carefully."

"It is a stern saying. It recognizes, with Froude's definition of the Roman stoic, that 'men who are the slaves of their habits are miserable and impotent, and insists that personal inclinations shall be subordinated. It prescribes plainness of life that the number of our necessities shall be as few as possible, and in placing the happiness of life in intellectual and moral action it destroys the temptation to sensual gratification.'"

So runs the creed of the great Romans. And this is the only safe and eternal way to the true occult--to the Land concealed by the dazzling phantasmagoric show of the senses. That there are by-paths none can deny and they must be stated in any honest study of the occult, but there is only one safe way, and it is encouraging to remember that all the faiths have marked that truth on their charts however they may have differed in matters of less importance. The type of man thus produced is the only hope of a race worthy to inherit the universe in the sense of developing the higher consciousness which alone can save us from our blunderings in the darkened cave of the senses in which we live. Do we breed such men in our teeming cities? Have not even the revelations of science based on the material and physical helped to rivet our fetters more closely by making self-indulgence and "pleasure" more attainable to the many as well as to the few?



I am not preaching a sour austerity,--many of the pleasures of life are lovely and innocent and lead directly to the doors of the true occult. But they are the simple ones.

Often in Japan for instance I have watched the crowds who stream out to share in the delight of the seasonal blossomings--unconsciously drinking in the occult and mystic influences of nature. I recall a day in autumn in a beautiful place beyond Kyoto when the maples had broken into their utmost glorious conflagration of russet-red, rose-red, fiery red, burning far away over the hills and reflecting themselves in a lake and a little river as if the very earth could not contain their splendor and they flung it on into a purer element.

Many hundreds of Japanese families had come out to see the wonder, not in any noisy or drunken way of enjoyment but simply to sit and absorb it quietly. Whole families from children to grandparents. It was impossible to avoid a feeling of envy for one's own country in seeing that sight and the evident feelings it produced. I remembered those who knew and who had said to me, "Every Japanese child is a potential artist." That is a glittering generality which like others may not be wholly true, but I myself believe it to be very largely true, and such things as I have described confirmed me in the belief. And if it be true, let it be remembered that art, not misused, is a straight highway to one of the gates of the Land behind the Looking Glass.

Thus, as I have quoted above, what is seen is one with him who sees, and, in the words of a Chinese thinker, "the secret of art lies in the artist,"--and all art, all beauty, all the true roads to the Land behind the Looking Glass must begin with entire self-obedience and forgetfulness of the ego that it may recognize itself as a part of the whole. That condition is the Guardian of the Gate and those who search for realization of the true occult know this with passion.

Hear the cry of Blake--he who was among the greatest of occultists, who was free to come and go in the Land behind the Looking Glass after his fashion:

"I will go down to self-annihilation and eternal Death,  
Lest the last Judgment come and find me unannihilate  
And I be seized and given into the hands of my own selfhood."

There is indeed no darker hell for, while it persists, the very psyche of man is shriveled in its flames and the five senses hold him with the five red-hot fetters of ignorance. Very poor foreshadowings indeed are the unconscious flashes of revelation set beside the steadily ordered purpose of a lifetime, building by the tools of discipline step by step before a man the upward way upon which the feet may be planted in safe foreseeing certainty.

Only such a man, after such a preparation, conscious in this life, forgotten but evolved in preceding lives, is fit to be trusted with the hidden powers. And that this is true the long history of aberrations and crimes in the occult witnesses, together with the longer history of ruin under the influences of drugs, especially of narcotics.

## Chapter 8

(In the four following chapters I quote largely from studies of their faith written by great Indians ancient and modern.)

It is taught in India that there are four roads, by each of which Yoga may be attained: perfect Yoga being understood to signify the concentration on or union with the universal Self which produces Realization, release from ignorance, liberation of the soul, and the powers. They are the Way of Action, the Way of the Intellect, the Way of Love and Devotion, and the Royal Yoga, which leads directly to the possession of the supernormal powers. A little should be said of each of the first three before passing on to the last, for it is not everyone who can, even if he would, devote himself to the hard discipline there prescribed, and there is a way for all--even for the very simple or the highly intellectual--to approach the knowledge of the powers latent within himself. I have thought that the well-known parable of the Christ referring to the men who possessed the talents alludes to this very thing, for all have this mine within themselves if they care to dig for the silver, gold or diamonds it contains, each in their relative value. One man is condemned by the Christ because he hid his talent in a napkin and did not trouble himself further; the others made varying uses of theirs, and the moral drawn is the necessity of diligence in the pursuit of the real Wisdom.

There is a beautiful Indian parable illustrating the truth that each of these Yogas or disciplines leads straight to possession of the supernormal powers of body, mind, and spirit:--

A king in India used to demand of every great ascetic who possessed all the occult powers, "Which is the greater man--he who gives up the world to attain them or he who lives in the world and performs his duties as a householder?" Some said, "He who gives up the world." But when he demanded proof they could not prove this and he compelled them to marry and become house-holders. There came one day an ascetic with a face of wisdom, and on the king's questioning him he replied:

"The householder and he who forsakes the world are equally great: each in his own way. Come with me and I will prove it."

And the king agreed.

So they went on a long journey to the chief city of another kingdom and there was all the rejoicing tumult of a high festival, for the beautiful princess, daughter of the king, was to choose her husband according to the ancient custom of India. Amid the assembled court and in view of the people she would throw a garland about the neck of her choice and none would question her will. And the king and the ascetic stood to see what she would do. Near them stood a young ascetic of such amazing beauty that the eyes of all followed him, and when the princess was borne in, radiant in loveliness, she too saw him, and cast her garland about his neck, thus choosing him for her husband. And the crowd rejoiced, for his was a heart-winning and spiritual beauty. He took the garland from his neck and gave it to her, saying with calm:

"My heart is fixed on other things. To me this is nothing." And he left the assembly, making his way to the great forest, leaving behind him love, beauty, wealth and a kingdom, as if all were dross.

The princess sprang from her jeweled throne and followed him on foot, drawn by Love, the great Seducer, but he neither turned nor looked at her and so going steadfastly onward was

lost in the forest; and there the king and his teacher, when they followed, found her sobbing and alone. And it was late in the evening.

So, taking pity, they said to her:

“Here is a great tree. We will all rest under it and tomorrow we will restore you to your father.”

A bird’s nest was in the tree where he lived with his wife and three nestlings. And looking down he saw and said:

“Wife, what must we do? Here are guests and it is winter and they have no fire to warm them.” So he flew away and finding a small burning stick dropped it before them, and they lighted a fire.

Still watching, he said:

“Wife, they have no food. On us lies the duty as householders and hosts of providing it. I must do my part, I will give them my body.”

And he flew down into the flame and was killed, and the bird-wife seeing this, said:

“Here are three persons and only one little bird for them to eat,--it is not enough. Also it is my duty to second my husband’s endeavor.”

So she too flew down into the fire, and the little ones accepting it as their duty also followed the example their parents had set them and fulfilled the guest-right, going cheerfully to death.

The princess, the king and the ascetic could neither eat nor sleep in beholding the action of the creatures who showed such high nobility. And next morning the two men restored her to her father. Then said the sannyasin (ascetic) to the traveling king:

“You have now seen that each is equally great in his own place. If you live in the world, hold yourself ready like these birds at all times to sacrifice yourself for the love of others. If you renounce the world resemble that young man whom neither love nor beauty nor wealth could tempt from the straight way of the spirit. But remember this always: The duty of the one is never the duty of the other.”

And the king went home, comprehending. So ends the parable.

Now this first means of approach to the true occult is so simple as to be within reach of all who have the faintest glimpse of desire for progress and power in the only world that is real--the world of the Hidden, the Beautiful, the True--the universe of Power. It is called the Yoga of Action. And the first instruction is: Consider your ideal,--the self which you would be if you could choose. Consider it even from the point of view of the so-called palpable world about you, and having considered proceed to realize it in yourself. It may be very far from a perfect ideal but at the moment it is your best and therefore it clearly indicates the path along which you must travel to the Land behind the Looking Glass. No two ideals can be, or indeed ought to be, the same, and this was recognized in India in the four great divisions of caste to which I must not diverge at present.

The first definite rule is that a man must labor steadfastly at the duties he has chosen or that have chosen him, and that, doing this faithfully, the *results* must not trouble him. They are not his concern. Example. Benefit others in so far as it is possible, but do not let the question of their gratitude or ingratitude trouble you. Accomplish to the limit of your powers, but if they attract the world’s notice set no value on the fame they bring. That is not your concern, and the reason why it is not is obvious. The desire for fame is one of those things on which

the sense of personality, selfhood, egoism, feeds and fattens. Therefore it stands as a lion in the way of achievement in a system which demands oblivion of self and realization of union.

It is unnecessary to recite the moralities common to all humanity (it may almost be said) of duties to parents, husband, wife, children, friends, the poor, and as a citizen. But there are instructions in this Indian system of Yoga as a means to an end which differ from the Christian ideal and are certainly worth consideration.

The householder is to work as an ordinary man at his profession and the things which concern him and his family. The profession must not be one which in itself implies wrong-doing. He must do his best to succeed in his profession and the acquisition of wealth by fair means is in no way forbidden. He is to be a center in life and in social matters and the distribution of his wealth along right lines will advantage all. The house-holder who acquires wealth by good means and for good purposes is walking the Way (though it is another Way) to the same end as surely as the ascetic. In him we see a different aspect of the selfsame virtues of self-surrender and self-oblivion. He must not gamble, however; he must not move in the companionship of the wicked; he must speak the truth always. He must speak gently. He must not be the cause of trouble to others. The householder by aiding great social aims goes toward the same goal as the greatest yogin beyond the bondage of the three spheres. If the householder dies in battle fighting for his country and faith he comes to the same goal as the yogin does by meditation.

But now comes the difficult part. The freedom of the soul is the goal of all Yoga however reached. By action men may attain the same goal which the Christ gained as a Bhakti (the path of utter love and devotion) or the Buddha as a Jnana (that of high intellect and philosophy). But how is he who lives and works in the ordinary concerns of the world “to free his soul”?

He is to work like a master, not a slave; his work is never to bind or attach his soul. It is all to be done through freedom and love, for all selfish work is slave’s work. When a man can love his wife, children, countrymen, mankind, the world and the universe, and when his actions spring from that root, he is a true yogin of work, and his spirit is unattached and winged.

Do you ask a return from your children for what you have done for them? Do so no more. Work for them and let the matter end there. In what you do for persons, cities, or the State, expect nothing in return. If you hold the position where all you give is given without the least thought of return and as a free offering to the world, then your work will never bind you. Attachment follows only when return is expected.

So in the sacrifice made by the householder-birds in the parable quoted above, no fetters held them to life and they were free as the immortal gods. Surely the Yoga of action, of the man who lives in the world, is at least as difficult as that of the ascetic, and it is no wonder that It should lead him straight into the hidden heart of Reality and Power.

And here I will use another Indian parable which illustrates this Yoga of action.

A young sannyasin (ascetic) had given himself to the strictest Raja Yoga discipline. Meditating in the forest one day some leaves fell about him and looking up he saw a crow and crane fighting. Fury possessed him at the insult to his quiet, and a flash of fire shot from his head and destroyed the birds. He rejoiced to recognize power and to feel himself a yogin of full attainment. He went into the town to beg his bread as usual and, at the entrance of a house, called: “Mother [the usual Indian address], give me food.”

“Wait a little, my son,” said a voice from within.

Pride at once assailed him and in his heart he thought:

“Wretched woman--how dare you keep me waiting!”

Instantly the voice answered:

“You are thinking too much of yourself. Here is no case of the crow and the crane.”

Dumb with astonishment at this, he waited until the woman came with her alms and then he fell at her feet.

“Mother, how could you know?”

She answered:

“My son, I know no Yoga practices. I am an ordinary woman, but all my life have struggled to do my best. My husband was ill. I could not leave him and so you had to wait. And such duties, as daughter and wife, are all the Yoga I have ever practiced. But since I know so little, go on and you will find a butcher from whom you may learn much.”

And he was horrified and startled because in India the butchers belong to the class of the “untouchables.” There are none so low. But he could do nothing but go on until he saw before him the butcher at his revolting work. And looking at the young sannyasin the man said:

“The woman sent you to me. Be seated, please, until I am ready.”

He waited, and the butcher finished his day by serving his parents and then turned to the sannyasin.

The young man questioned him on the high subjects of Yoga and in answer the butcher spoke like one inspired, delivering a discourse that contained the highest flights and concentrated essence of the Vedanta philosophy. And when he had finished his great teaching the young ascetic asked:

“Sir, why, with your knowledge, do I find you thus?” And the man answered;

“No duty is ugly; none is impure. To this I was born, to this devoted. But I have done my best, and I serve my parents and fulfil my duty as a householder. I know no Yoga, nor have I ever left the world. But illumination has found me because I have worked with a spirit free and unattached.”

This parable perfectly illustrates the point that the feeble may confute the wise. These two, the woman and the butcher, had received the great Illumination. So much for the Yoga of Action.

Next follows the Yoga of Intellect, and here I own I always picture the mathematicians leading with their pure and austere knowledge, though of course it is not necessarily so. This is the Yoga that walks fearlessly along the mountain-peaks of the highest intellect, which from its own altitudes sees through and over the lies of the senses and knows that the world is far other than it appears. Here I must use the word “maya”--so often used in the Western world to signify “illusion” in the belief that such is its Sanskrit signification. But its real meaning may more truly be described as “phenomena,” and as representing the world of appearances which the untrustworthy senses report to us. They are not illusions, though an Indian sect at one time argued that point of view, but they are things wrongly perceived through a medium which presents them to us as they are not, so that we take them as it were by the wrong handle and cannot use them as we should and could if we knew them as they are.

There is a passage from one of the ancient Indian books which sums up the meaning of “maya” very finely.

“Because we talk in vain and are satisfied with the things of the senses, and because we are running after desires, therefore we cover the reality as it were with a mist.”

And again in one of the ancient books:

“Know nature to be *Maya*, and the Mind, the ruler of this *Maya*, to be the Lord himself.”

Now, in a very deep sense, the highest, most piercing, most searching form of intellect may most truly become the Lord of *Maya*, in the sense that it may by sheer luminance of insight so light up the misleading forms which the senses offer us as to make them transparent and see through them to the truth behind. Of this form of Yoga the Buddha is the highest known example.

He had practiced the ascetic discipline of the Raja Yoga to which I devote the whole chapter following this, but certainly also he cast it aside, perceiving another path upon which his super-normal intellect could lead him. There is nothing more interesting to those who care for such things than to study the deep reasoning contemplation to which he gave himself under the Tree and to read the stages by which it soared through all the clouds and mists of the senses until it reached the (to others) almost unbearable illumination of pure truth--naked but radiant. Naturally the powers followed such strength like tamed hounds, and from his height he surveyed them and found them comparatively meaningless because he beheld things so far above and beyond them.

There is no intellect, probably, that could tread the path of the Buddha, but such insight into causes clears the way for other minds belonging in their lesser degree to the same order, and this is the road that the great philosophers, mathematicians, scientists, and others like them may tread to the Land behind the Looking Glass. They will search into the question of man's boasted “individuality,” and will find that it does not exist. The body is a flux of constantly changing particles, the mind an ever-changing whirl-pool passing from the imbecility of the infant to the imbecility of unmemoried old age, and through all this *Maya* they will pierce and find their way to the One and Unchanging of which we are all a part. They will realize at last, by their sheer power of destroying interposing veils by reasoning, that the “individuality” of man is a distortion of the truth; that only infinite Spirit is individual, that nothing infinite can ever be divided or changed, and that every man is in himself the infinite, the unchanging, though the phenomena of life, while they are believed to be real, make him appear to change, like colored lights playing upon white surfaces.

And when a man has realized this he knows that the universe is his and he, and the secret places of the universe are as open to him as the street in which he lives--and more so--and the occult is the happy alphabet of the new language the psyche in him has learned to speak. Of course he cannot tell all he knows, for, as has been said, it takes two to tell the truth--the one to hear and the other to speak,--and there are not many yet capable of hearing the truths that the yogin who has trodden the road of reasoning can tell. “There are a few whose eyes are not darkened with dust. They will hear. None others.”

It would not be suitable or possible to open here all the high teachings on this head. They need a volume of their own. Their watchword is realization of the great truth, “Thou art That.” By pure intellect and reason a man may gain the truth that the universe is one and he one with it, and having gained this eternal foothold he knows the central truth of the central thought of ancient India.

“He that seeth about him the manifold goes from death to death.”

He who sees the One has beheld the Vision and holds power in the hollow of his hand. So much for the intellect and reason.

The third Yoga is known as Bhakti Yoga, and this way is open to all who possess passionate love and devotion to the occult, the Hidden Treasure. There is no Yoga that is not based on renunciation, for the reason that the individual self must be forgotten or it obscures all the rest of the universe. But this third Yoga dreams on self-renunciation, adores it, is absorbed in it. It sends rays of love to all that lives and moves and has its being, and in a sense this is the easiest Yoga of all because no renunciation is difficult where there is love. If a man loves the marvelous animal life which lives beside us and which, as Cardinal Newman said, man as a whole understands less than he does the archangels, is it difficult to him to refrain from killing, wounding, maltreating those whom science knows to be our brothers, or slaying them for food? No, indeed. And it may be added that their lover secures for himself joys wholesome, clean, uplifting to the true Yoga and understanding, which the man with a gun or knife can never know. If the heart is given to another all service for him is pure and exquisite joy, and so, in reading the lives of the saints, Eastern or Western, one sees that actual pain became pleasure when the call of the Divine was heard. The martyrs swept the flames about them like water, the tortures of the dungeons were assuaged with secret passionate incomprehensible joys. And, as the Swami Vivekananda has said, the path of love is the easiest advance to the higher consciousness because the lover does not lament the loss of what he has left behind. I myself should add that nothing is ever left behind,—all is included and carried on. (I condense.)

“A man loves his own city, then his country, and the intense love for his little city subsides smoothly, naturally. He learns to love the whole world and his fanatical patriotism for his own country drops off without pain. An uncultured man loves the pleasures of the senses, then, as he becomes cultured, he begins to love intellectual pleasures, and sense-enjoyments mean less and less to him. So, when he gets into a plane higher than the intellect or that of inspiration he finds a state of bliss in which all pleasures of the senses and even the intellect become as nothing. When the moon shines the stars dim.

“And when this love and adoration reach supreme devotion the man is free. He resembles the ship in the fable which coming near the magnetic rock lost all its iron bars and bolts, and his fetters drop. The adorer, the lover of the highest, need not suppress his emotions [as in the other Yogas] but needs only to intensify and direct them to the highest.”

When this point is attained the yogin sits smiling, enthroned above pain or change. I suppose in our own Scriptures that St. John may be taken as the type of the Bhakti-yogin, the man who has attained through utter love and devotion; and it is very clear that he was regarded by the early Christians as a mighty master of the powers, as much as, if not more than, St. Paul, who may rather be regarded as a yogin of pure intellect. This is not to say that the yogin of intellect does not love and that the yogin of love is incapable of reason, but each has trodden a different road to the occult. Both have lost the impeding ego, though by different inspirations.

I might give many illustrations of the three great paths of Yoga which have been trodden in the West, though perhaps with a less definite consciousness of the goal ahead than in the East, but I have said enough to indicate their significance and to urge some readers to study these ways in a deeper degree for themselves. It cannot be denied that in these three there is a way for every one to the occult and the powers, from the simplest to the greatest and most highly developed soul.

In the following chapters I treat of a Yoga far less known and practiced in the West than in the East, though in many a lonely monastery and cloister in Europe the road was unconsciously and therefore ignorantly followed which guides the eagle flight of the psyche to union and the powers.

Yet let it not be thought that Raja Yoga--the royal Yoga--is greater in any way than the other three. It may perhaps in some respects be a straighter if a harder road, though even that is open to question.

What may be said to anyone whom the irresistible music of the unseen draws is this: Take the road in which you can move most simply, steadfastly and easily to attainment. Each has his own Yoga.



## Chapter 9

I now pass on to the strange and ancient system of training and discipline by which India taught the science of concentration which she considered the key to reunion with the forces of the universe and therefore control of the powers which in India are called the *Siddhis* and in the West are (so far as they have been heard of) connected with the occult and the miraculous.

I need scarcely say how profoundly I was interested on finding that in India has been built up for ages a perfect and coherent system of self-education, the gymnastic of the “Occult” powers which rightly used lead to the highest attainment but in any case to the Key of the Land behind the Looking Glass where all the good things wait to be chosen. I have dwelt on the adventures which await the entrant there in a novel I have just finished, and they are all true to this teaching. Attainment, far other than is possible in this thwarted world we have created out of our physical sense-perception, is not only possible but certain there, for those who think the effort worth long pains and trouble along the lines indicated in this book.

This subject is such an enormous one, ramifying into every department of life, that I feel I can give only the silken thread with which the beetle climbed painfully upward to the prisoner in the tower. But at least the thread is silken, and the coiled rope lies below it.

And I hope that this very truncated statement may not be quite useless in aiding realization of the truth (that what desires and hopes are in a man he has the power to supply, not derived from any supernatural being but from his own relation to the forces of the universe: He who has the entry to the Land behind the Looking Glass may do what he will. And as I learned from personal experience it ceased to be astonishing that in Indian teaching the utmost stress was laid upon the comradeship of the body in the adventure. They said:

“The body is the boat which will carry us to the other shore of the Ocean of Life. So it must be taken care of and kept free from all disease. Never was there a wise man who had not to reject pleasures and enjoyments of the senses to acquire his wisdom.”

No doubt the first wish is to develop the body’s powers for the body’s own sake. That wish is soon forgotten when it is realized as an instrument of the psychic. I read with complete understanding in the ancient books of India that a human being is a channel for the flow of that ocean of power which vibrates and billows through the universe, that if the channel is kept clear the flow will be eternal, that if it is choked the flow will be delayed to the man’s great detriment and loss until slowly and painfully he reaches higher stages of development. How he uses this force when he achieves it is his own responsibility. The world has had examples of many sorts of choice and their results. India has always taught in parables the doctrine of evolution of the body and soul. That of the body is taught perhaps most clearly in the wonderful birth-stories of the Buddha, where he is represented as evolving slowly upward from the lower planes of life, gathering and developing the experiences of each as he climbs along the chain of evolution. The doctrine of psychic evolution is of course taught almost throughout Asia in the parable of reincarnation, which conveys an idea, impossible to be stated definitely in human terms, of the soul’s return to the schoolroom of life-experience until it is fully developed and capable of reunion with the Source.

It will be interesting to give a list of some of the powers which the highest authority of ancient India declares are attainable by a man who follows the bodily and spiritual discipline

laid down for the purpose of psychic attainment. And if it be objected that these are miracles and that there are no such things as miracles India fully endorses the latter statement:

“There are no such things as miracles. There is nothing superhuman, but humanity is in itself a part of all the power of the universe and recognizing this and living by the law that guides it can develop ability to use the same force as that which drives the tides, the winds, and more. There have been men who knowing this have used and use these powers in higher and lower degrees, and the day will surely come when this force will be more generally studied and understood in its full normality and transcendent power.

“The man disciplined and obedient to the law can know all that is in another man’s mind by using the proper means. A man disciplined may apparently vanish. He does not really vanish but none will see him. This can be done only by one who has gained by concentration the power in which the form and the things formed can be separated. Such a man can enter a dead body and make it arise and move even while he himself is inhabiting his own. Or he can enter a living body and direct that man’s mind and organs and for the time being act through the body of that man. For each individual mind is but a part of the universal mind though from ignorance it believes itself separate and can therefore only work through the nerve currents of its own body. Therefore when a man has freed himself from the nerve currents of his own body he can work through other bodies also. Such a man does not sink in water. He can walk on thorns. He can die at will. When he wills, light can flash from his body. His body can acquire the lightness of air and he can pass from point to point.”

When a man is *born* with these powers it is because he has reached that stage of evolution. There are other powers, but I mention these for they will recall the misnamed “miracles” of the Christian religion (now so discredited) and of the other great faiths. What if these people were right? What if they were true manifestations of a law forgotten and discredited now in the West and perhaps slipping slowly into oblivion in the Orient?

What if the Indian thinkers were right who said, “The soul is the only reality and we have forgotten it. The body is a dream and the average man thinks he is all body”?

It would follow from that fact that the dimly perceived powers which we call Occult are the natural right and heritage of every man, and the achievement of those who care to develop the seeds latent within them into growth, blossom, and fruit.

It should be remembered that science along various lines is making a steady approach to the certainty that the universe in all its manifestations is not bounded by the conceptions of it presented by our senses. Mathematicians, physicists, all are breaking a way through. It may be distant but they also will one day proclaim the truth so magnificently stated in the ancient books of India:

“Never the spirit was born. The Spirit shall cease to be, never.  
Never was time it was not. End and beginning are dreams.  
Birthless and deathless and changeless abideth the spirit for ever.  
Death cannot touch it at all, dead though the house of it seems.”

If India has solved the problem the occult is to be understood and used but with the deep caution that every increased responsibility throws upon a man, for power is always danger or deliverance. In the beginning--the training of the body seems a very little thing for ends so extraordinary--I can only repeat what the greatest Indians have taught: Experiment if you like, but with caution, for many bodies are so degraded and weakened with wrong usage that they can only respond with difficulty and danger or perhaps not at all to a higher law of life. Such must await their hour. The wish to achieve is at all events something which will bear fruit further along the chain of evolution. But remember that the reward of wandering from

the right path is perilous in the extreme. A true teacher is needed and experiments should never be attempted alone.

And the warning is issued by a great Indian: “In modern times many so-called teachers of Yoga have arisen in all countries, who are worse than those of India because the latter know something while these modern exponents know nothing.” I repeat that in many sects and groups in the West people are playing with great forces which they do not understand. And much modern psycho-analysis is working on mistaken lines. It deals with the vacillations of the mind and of the subconscious self. Yoga is intended to cultivate that power in the mind of looking back steadily into its own depths and deeper, until every process of the physical, the intellectual, and the psychic lies like an unraveled skein of silk before the student, and the powers, though not the object, are naturally the result of this insight and knowledge.

## Chapter 10

It is my own opinion that the West, now searching even passionately for a clue to the mysteries of psychology, will do very well to listen to the voice of India on the subject.

It will not be perfection for it has filtered through the human medium and human language, as is the case with every pronouncement of every faith, but there is much to be learned from it, especially in some of its strange foreseings of the conclusions of modern science and its equally strange departures from them in cases where it is impossible for all but the deeply initiated and those who have attained the higher consciousness to pronounce which view is ultimately right. Having said this and thus indicated some of the difficulties, I proceed, and I say in truth that I never meet a Western psychologist (and I have met many) without feeling against how blank an opposition they must contend, how poor, how material are the theories they offer in place of practical guidance in the way of comprehension. To repeat the analogy I have used throughout these chapters the Western psychologist is brought up all standing against the hard glittering surface of the Mirror in which our senses reflect the world about us. The Eastern psychologist passes through this, as if it were mist, to the reality which lies behind. I hope I shall be able to make a part of this ancient system of psychology clear and comprehensible, though I realize that I can say only enough to set others on a track which leads far and higher and in which the *motive* of research matters profoundly.

I must say in beginning that it is bound up with the most ancient form of religious thought in India, and I cannot wholly ignore that, though I shall dwell on it as little as possible. But just as when in the West we speak of visions, dreams and telepathic occurrences, we must cite such notable religious examples as Joan of Arc, St. Theresa, Francis of Assisi, William Blake, Walt Whitman and others who have possessed what is technically called "the higher consciousness," so in giving this great Indian system one cannot wholly ignore the relation to religion--for I repeat that always there is something in deeply felt religion which plays like a skilled musician on what I may call "the psychic nerve," exciting it to its highest harmonies and powers.

In the West, it has been truly said, we never troubled ourselves with examining scientifically the question of why these supernormal experiences happened to these people and their like. We did not at all understand them, did not like them, and were inclined to think them a form of mild or intense religious mania, which no one would wish for himself or for his relations, though it might be well enough if it had happened long enough ago to be placed on the respectable footing of Biblical miracles, which could be comfortably taken as occasions of direct Divine intervention and the suspension of all law and order. If anyone had said to us, "The miracles of the Christ, St. Paul, Joan of Arc, the visions of William Blake, of Boehme the cobbler, and so forth, were perfectly natural things, manifestations of a law as natural as that which governs the radio set in every house, and they were born to these powers because of experiences in past lives," we should have thought this statement either irreverent or entirely incredible unless the person so speaking was prepared to show us the way in which the whole thing works. This, India has been always prepared to do. She comes into the open with her system of psychology, and takes her stand under this statement: "Some men are born with these powers because they have earned realization of them in former lives. Others must earn them by discipline and training. As to credibility: direct perception, inference, and competent evidence are proofs." If you will concede that these are sufficient she will state the psychologic law as she has tested it and as you may test it for yourself.

But there is not and never can be an easy system of acquiring psychological knowledge. Many, as in the study of modern science, have fallen victims by the way. I had a friend who was a pioneer in the medical use of the X-ray. First, one finger, then a hand, then an arm was attacked by cancer and finally he died, his life generously spent in blazing the trail for others. So with this Indian science of psychology where the body is compelled to a discipline not to be exceeded in rigor by the strictest monasticism ever laid down in the West for unconsciously following the same winged hope. The hope is there but the way is often dangerous.

The great authority--or rather the authority which collected knowledge and opinions on this psychology in the second century B. C. (for it is said to be four thousand years old) is an Indian known by the name of Patanjali, whose "Yoga Aphorisms" survive to this day as the foundation stone of the science of psychology which in India is named "Raja Yoga"--or the Royal Yoga--the word Yoga signifying union or concentration since it is only by union and concentration with or through the forces of nature that results can be achieved. It must not be thought that Patanjali was the originator of this system. He only collected the experience, already very ancient, of many experimenters. I shall draw on his words for what I am about to say, and on those of deeply learned disciples of his philosophy who themselves constantly experienced what is known in India as "samadhi"--i.e., the state of higher consciousness in which perception beyond all reason is possible.

To begin with, India wholly denies that so-called "miracles," "answers to prayer" and the strange powers of faith, are due to any super-natural intervention. She says: "Yes, they happen. They are imitated, faked, but they happen and abundantly, only they are never supernatural for nothing exists in the Universe which is not obedient to the law of Nature." India states that belief in the possibility of supernatural interferences with law inculcates fear, superstition, and therefore cruelty. It belongs to the dark places of the earth and must be cast out by the clear daylight of knowledge.

But there are in nature gross manifestations of force and subtle ones. The subtle ones are the causes, the gross the effects. The gross can be perceived by the senses, the subtle by a consciousness in ourselves which requires cultivation and discipline, conscious or unconscious, before it can open its eyes and see. And because the higher branches of this Way are at least as difficult and new to the unskilled as (for instance) climbing the Alps, India holds that a teacher is a necessity, and that only certain lower branches of the discipline can be studied in safety alone. With this reservation she offers what she calls a science of the mind, and says the mind itself is the instrument by which the mind must be observed. The powers of the mind are like rays of light cast abroad, illuminating a vast space; but when concentrated and condensed they form a beam so powerful that flung on any subject they will illuminate it to translucence. Thus, to understand the mind and its powers the search-light of the mind itself must be turned inward and steadily focused; and, if you come to think of it, that is the one thing which in the West we are never trained to do. Our whole system of education turns our minds to external things, the common branches of learning, observation of the world about us and so forth. But to concentrate mental observation on the mind itself, to force it to self-analysis, is a thing rarely or never done in the West, where there is not one man in millions who can focus his mind on its own powers and, understanding, use them.

So the goal of this ancient science is concentration on the mind and its powers, and it demands no faith or belief. It only demands trial and the hard discipline and training which would be needed for passing so high and difficult examination where body mind, and spirit participated in the competition.

It is natural that a great part of the discipline must be physical. Everyone knows roughly that if he wants to be clear-headed it is not wise to eat a heavy meal and wash it down with abundant alcohol. He may deduce a good deal from that broad statement if he thinks it over carefully. The Germans have an excellent punning proverb, "Was man isst, das ist er" ("What a man eats, that he is"), and in this connection, it is very true. Therefore a discipline which insists that the mind is intimately connected with the body and is actually a finer part of it will insist also that as the mind undoubtedly acts on the body, so the body also acts on the mind. It states that we have very little control of our mind, because of the powerful pull of the body, and that not until the body is sufficiently controlled can we compel the mind to focus on what we will. Now remember that according to this teaching the external world as we see it is only the gross form of the real and subtle world. Therefore the man who has learned to pierce through the external forms to the real, and to manipulate them, is about to learn how to do things which will appear supernatural to the man who sees only the gross forms discoverable by the senses; he must face all the sacrifices of the explorer and pioneer. Western science is always trying to get back to the unit out of which all the outward forms of the universe appear. Raja Yoga on the contrary starts from the unit to study internal nature and acquire mastery over it.

The path of attainment in Raja Yoga as in Buddhism is divided into eight steps.

Life must be extremely simple, sane and wholesome. As a first step the student is trained and tested by the commands that there must be no slaughter for food and that truthfulness, honesty, continence and the avoidance of luxury must be made the basis of life.

The next step is the practice of extreme cleanliness of mind and body, contentment, renunciation of such practices as stand in the way of concentration, study, and self-surrender to discipline. To a student it must be impossible to injure any human being or animal by word, thought, or deed.

It will be noted that these two foundations of the science of psychology are moral, and India declares that without them no man can really attain control. She does not deny that a man may in certain conditions have sporadic sights and flashes of power, but he will not have control and sooner or later such knowledge as he has acquired without control will turn and rend him and possibly others. Therefore it is a very dangerous thing to adventure in this path without the moral foundation of perfect self-control. And it can be seen, I think, how universally this truth has been recognized by the various religions (which are more or less schools of psychology) in the disciplines they have laid down for their pupils.

When the moral foundations are well and truly laid the next step is posture. Much discipline has to be worked through and a position easy and natural for the body must be found, and a man must choose that in which he can most easily forget his body, for it will be subjected to great changes during this discipline. Nerve currents will find new channels. New vibrations will be felt. And as the main part of these will be along the spinal column, that must be held free by sitting erect and holding the chest and throat and head in a straight line supported by the ribs. A man sitting slouched, with the chest caved in, cannot concentrate; it requires a certain alertness.

After posture comes breathing-control. Stopping the right nostril with the thumb, inhale air through the left according to capacity, then without pause expel the air through the right, closing the left. Reverse the process, beginning with stopping the left nostril with the thumb and so forth. Practice this with three or five inhalations and exhalations at four points of the day: before dawn, during mid-day, in the evening and at mid-night. This is called the purifying of the nerves. The body must be kept in sound good health, for when it is not it

obtrudes itself and whines for attention. The thoughts must be as far as possible calmed and concentrated on the aim in view.

When this stage is mastered comes concentration on the control of the great world force. The universe is composed of two forces, one of which is called Akasha. Everything that has form is evolved from akasha--the heavenly bodies, human, animal and plant bodies, all we see and sense. But this force in itself is subtle beyond ordinary perception and can be perceived only when it has taken form. In the beginning was nothing but akasha, at the end of the cycle all will melt into akasha again. And in the next "creation" all form will proceed from it.

How is akasha thus made manifest in form? By the power of "Prana," the infinite power manifesting itself as the sum total of all the forces in the universe, mental or physical. The different forms of energy are interchangeable and indestructible and their sum total remains the same throughout. At the end of a cycle these energies sleep and are potential. At the beginning of the next they wake, and the force behind prompts the different manifestations.

Therefore the understanding and control of this latent force opens the door of power. The question was asked in ancient India: "What is that which knowing we know all?" The answer is--this force which is generator of the universe.

To this end all the discipline of Raja Yoga is shaped, for the vital energy of all is this.

The reason for the training in breathing is that this is the fly-wheel setting the other energies of the body in motion. It is our most obvious connection with the Universe.

It is declared that after the first few months of steady effort one begins to find that the thoughts of people near one appear to one, at first dim and afterwards in clear picture forms. Or, concentrating all the energies upon something at a distance, a clear thought-form of it will appear in the mind. Or, concentrating the thoughts (say) on the sense of smell, one may perceive a beautiful perfume. Flashes of such perception will tend to strengthen courage, but it must be remembered they are only marks of progress, and the end is the "freeing of the soul" as it is technically called. We are to remember that body and mind belong to us, but are not ourselves. Thus, in an Eastern poem, after death it is declared of the body, "This was mine. It is not I." The body is but the name for a series of changes, like a river forever and never the same. Yet, such as it is, we have no other instrument until we are set free from the senses and their bonds.

It may be said here that the early morning and evening are the two best times for concentration. They are the hours of calm in nature--a calm reflected in the mind of man unless artificially obstructed. And one should not eat shortly before practicing the lessons. In India it is a part of the training to feel no hunger in the morning until students have bathed and gone through the practices.

Also the place in which they are carried out is important. This can be understood by referring again to the way in which the various faiths (or schools of psychology) have set aside certain places for special concentration on certain thoughts. And it must be a place which suits our own vibrations or it will not help them. To me all such set-apart places are helpful, and I have felt the cold and cleansing breath which precedes "union" alike in the noble silences of Westminster Abbey, the dimness patterned with splendid color of Notre Dame de Paris, the uplifted golden platform and dizzying glittering shrines where the Buddhist Shwe Dagon of Rangoon flames to the sun, the deserted rock temples of Mamallipuram in India or those colored sanctuaries buried in glooms of great pines where the spirits of the mighty Shoguns of Japan are remembered night and day. Because, for me, where the soul of man has concentrated upon these deep psychologies the air is visibly and veritably charged with a force which communicates itself to and possesses man in the exact degree in which he is

capable of absorbing it. So, for these concentrations which are to be freeing to oneself and to others, a place of quiet should be chosen and one where if possible one can be alone. Solitude is necessary until heights are reached where a man can isolate himself in the midst of multitudes--as witness instances in the histories of the Christ, the Buddha and others. In India they set flowers in some little room kept for the purpose, or sometimes, as often in old Indian stories and even in modern times, some place in the open air is chosen, a garden, a field, or perhaps best of all a forest. Some people will find the occult perfume of incense helpful; a secret the churches also have discovered. I do not care for it myself. In such a place gradually those vibrations will accumulate which the faiths have desired and have often gained in their sacred places, but in your own chosen place it will be individual, not congregational, and the vibrations will be your own vibrations at their steadily rising best, which means attunement with the vibration of the universe.

Of what sort should meditation be? Sometimes it partakes of recapturing the, as it were, dead memory of former lives.

You enter your place of quiet and relax. "Then you begin to think backward, passing over the events of the day in inverse order as though you were swimming up the stream of memory. At first you can only remember the incidents of the past few minutes, but the memory is astonishingly amenable to cultivation. You will find as you perform your meditation for a few minutes to an hour a day that whereas at first you had to jump from stepping stone to stepping stone of the more important events you will soon find yourself able to swim up the stream of thought smoothly, omitting no smallest detail in your memorizing backward." These you will increase to a week, a month, a year and as you diligently practice you will find your memory blossoming, until you can control the memory of the whole of your life and until even more opens before your mind.

And for another and most important form of meditation there is this, the practice of thoughts severally of love to all beings: of compassion for their suffering, of sympathy with the joy of all who are rightfully happy, and of aloofness from the deceits of the senses. "And in doing this you will know more than any intellectual appreciation can tell you how utterly true is the teaching of the illusion of the senses, for you will then see all they present to you as a little cloud upon the surface of that vast consciousness upon which you then function."

It is most important that all practice should invariably begin with these thoughts of peace and good will sent out to all the world--but most especially to those against whom one may feel one has any grudge. There is a strong psychic as well as spiritual reason for this, because when the body is disturbed with any ripple of fear or anger it is poisoned. It cannot function in peace. We know that fear can kill, that the angry nursing mother can poison her infant, that no function is normal under such influences, and control is never complete.

It was not for mere piety's sake that the Christ exhorted his disciples to pray for those "who despitefully use you," but because he knew unless this is done the spiritual attitude is hopelessly out of joint for attainment. It really matters very little about prayer or deliberate thoughts akin to it for those we love, because every current of our being, every vibration, is unconsciously and incessantly sweeping all good towards them. But the other is really important; in fact no control is possible without it, and with it comes peace like the first cool breath of dawn on untrodden dews. For oneself, one's thoughts and desires should be always for nothing but knowledge and light. When that frame of mind is attained the goal is in sight, and with the above reservation (and not always even with that) a man may choose what he will from the treasures of the universe. He will probably choose wisely certainly in another incarnation if not in this. But each man has his own possibility of achievement in every life which he can develop by developing his consciousness along one of the four ways of Yoga.



## Chapter 11

Now comes an interesting and compelling stage. India believes in something that may be summed up as the Omnipresent and All-penetrating, recognizing it as the quiescent energy which can be and is transmuted into form and force, and she believes also in a power which transforms or manifests this quiescent energy in the forms of the universe we know. This force manifests itself as what we call thought-force in the nerve-currents of the body, and so down through all gradations to the lowest physical force.

Scientifically it is known that the different forms of energy in the universe are interchangeable and indestructible, and their sum total of force is, I repeat, called in India "Prana." The object of this discipline is to give control of this sum total of force.

Let us suppose--for there are of course great gradations in this knowledge--that a man partially understands the means of controlling this universal force. It must be realized that controlling this means controlling everything in the universe according to the degree of attainment. Knowing and understanding it, we know all in so far as we can receive knowledge. To acquire this control it has seemed to great Indian minds that any sacrifice was worth while, and this is the goal to which the true Yoga discipline steadily aims. But I cannot too often insist that in certain conditions and vibrations a quite untrained mind may have a flash of it and its power, and that this is as dangerous as for an ignorant man or an animal to play about with uninsulated electric wires. But in this system we may drill and discipline our own bodies and minds and acquiring control of the little ripple of universal force which is ourselves launch outward into the great ocean. Consider at this point how in all countries people are attempting to control this force without understanding its A B C; healers, hypnotists and many more. Is it not wiser to learn the way? In India these studies are forbidden without a teacher.

The simple steps I have already given sound ridiculously inadequate to the aim, but what they give first is control of the muscles of the body and that is very important in a world where everything is related with everything else. I used when a child to say that I could not imagine why health had not been made infectious instead of disease. I have learned that rightly understood it has. The vibrations of bodies can be transferred to one another for strengthening and healing. And as to personal control, as I have told of a modern Indian teacher skilled in this science, when in pain he was able to transfer his consciousness from the seat of pain and suffer no more. But in true healing it is not by rousing faith that the cure is accomplished; it is by raising the vibrations of the patient into concord with your own highest vibrations and there sustaining them. That vibration will be a stronger or weaker one according to your stage of attainment. In some, historically recorded, it is tremendous, though taking very different forms and developments of power. Consider the different gradations in which men become channels of this universal force. We have some very eloquent educated speaker on religion and he fills his church or hall and there it ends. You get a camel-driver in Arabia, Mohammed, and the consuming force in him became a sword that armed millions and may yet drench the world in blood and tears. You get a highly skilled admiral or general who wins or half wins a war by sea or land and dies and with a salute of guns is forgotten, and yet take Nelson, with such a whirling force in the frail little body of him that when he looked a man in the face, "The spirit of Nelson was on him and each was Nelson that day," and his name is immortally one with victory. Or Napoleon, the little shabby Corsican with those gray-blue eyes whose fire none could face unmoved, seeing in them the flame that was to devastate Europe.

We call this genius and wonder at its mysteries but need not. It is Prana, the universal force, sometimes possessing, sometimes controlled by a man consciously, wisely, and helpfully, sometimes unconsciously and perilously, but always force irresistible. This is in truth a world of ideas, not of solidities, and must be interpreted by different and evolving stages of consciousness and not by any science of physics.

So, in learning to control the muscles and nerve-currents of the body, balance and poise are learned and the equal distribution of force. And all this must be gradually done because the results involved are so stupendous, and though some achieve much in one life, others must evolve through many.

“Other heights in other lives,” says Browning.

But through discipline and meditation lies the only way of direct attainment. Is it realized how little any of us use our minds and think at all? We watch a series of outside pictures imperfectly presented to our minds and there our mental life begins and ends.

Now comes a state which can only be believed through experiment. For all I know the description may only be symbolic or a parable, but the result is there.

It is taught in India that along the spinal column is a nerve current on either side and a canal running through the spinal cord. At the base of this canal is a storage of nerve power which can be roused into action by the above discipline and, when roused, like a mounting tide, attempts to ascend this canal which runs through the spinal cord. As the tide of nerve power rises, layer after layer of mental power is opened until it reaches the brain, and the inner, the true self becomes detached from the bonds of the mind and the body and acquires control.

It is taught in this system that only those who are skilled in the discipline have opened this canal in the spinal column, but that the nerve currents on either side act in all, though uncontrolled. The opening of this canal for the transmission of power is perhaps the most important stage in the discipline. The way to it is regulated breathing, steadily practiced and gradually increased. Perfect rhythm must be attained in the body. The importance of rhythm is being very gradually realized in the West. In Asia the very workman turns his blow or stroke or pull into pure rhythm, using generally some sacred word as the beat. So in the practice of Yoga it is usual to time and make rhythmic the breathing (as taught above) by using some sacred word as the beat. The one generally used is “Aum,” the ancient word which represents the Trinity of Power, and this word flows in and out harmoniously with the breath, until both become automatic. This applies especially to the second lesson in breath, where measured breaths are taken, using the nostrils alternately, filling the lungs through each nostril in turn and exhaling the air through the other. It is claimed that the use of this exercise over a considerable time will result in such calming and rhythmic influences throughout the body that harsh lines disappear from the face and the tones of the voice assume new beauty.

And after this comes another stage. As you fill the left nostril with air, stopping the right nostril with the thumb, concentrate the mind on the nerve current it produces. Then close both nostrils with thumb and forefinger and believe that you are sending the nerve current down the spinal column and striking on the store of force at its base. Hold it awhile. Believe then that you are slowly drawing out that nerve current with the breath into the other, and taking the thumb off the right nostril expel the breath. Reverse the process and repeat. Unused as we are to full breathing in the West this should be begun with only four seconds' inhalation (or less), retaining the air for sixteen seconds and expelling it in eight. Think always of the force at the base of the spinal column while you do this breathing. Four times in the morning and four in the evening are enough for the beginner, and the exercises must be very slowly

increased as you find ease and pleasure in the practice. It is taught that along the lines of this discipline all the sexual forces can be eventually transmuted into purest energy and that this is why in all the faiths chastity has been proposed as the most exalted virtue--a circumstance otherwise difficult of explanation in some respects. This accounts for the fact that every great faith (or psychological school) has instituted a monastic discipline, sometimes without clearly explaining, or even with misrepresentation of its reasons why under a recognized rule of men or women vowed to celibacy may very likely appear (as has often happened) the great psychological expert.

Then comes the next stage. The mind must be freed from being controlled by the representations of the senses.

The mind leaps about from thought to thought like a monkey in the boughs of a tree. It cannot fix or concentrate. It spills over on everything. You cannot hold it to one thought, for, slippery as an eel, it escapes you and is gone. You must unharness it from the hastily running pictures of the senses and by practice quiet it and reduce the waves to ripples and the ripples to a mirroring calm, and at this stage becomes possible the deep calm of concentrated meditation which in Asia is called "the one-pointed state of mind," when the mind, conscious of its grip that nothing can relax, clenches itself on to some chosen object, turns it inside out, sees it through and through and absorbs it into perfect union.

And when this is attained the next step is to reharne the mind to far other things than the sense-impressions. Fix your mind (for practice) on some point in the body and imagine it as filled with light. It is good to focus on light because that supports the imagination in several obvious ways. At this stage sounds will be heard like music, seeds of light may be seen floating in the air. And so by this focusing and concentration every part of the body can be gradually brought under control. Men skilled in the discipline can bring the very heart-beat under perfect control. And when all these things are attained and the body is an obedient slave and no longer master comes the attainment of the higher consciousness which is called "samadhi."

India teaches that beyond reason, beyond all mental powers, is a state of consciousness in which the highest wisdom and power are attainable.

I have described the threshold of this state as the higher consciousness and I have said before a man may stumble into this state. He will then believe what he has learned to be an inspiration from outside himself or a divine intervention, and will probably surround his knowledge with hallucinations, explaining it by such earthly knowledge as he has hitherto possessed. Take the case of Mohammed. He rose into this high consciousness, untrained, undisciplined. He reports that the angel Gabriel set him on the heavenly horse Haraq and he visited the heavens. Yet that man beheld wonders of truth and in the Quran truth and superstition are distractingly blended. So with many other famous instances.

But in Yoga all the different stages, physical, mental, spiritual, meditative and so forth, lead scientifically and in gradual development to this state of higher consciousness in which the force and knowledge of the universe are open to a man as a treasury from which he may help himself according to his capacity. It is impossible that in a book like this I should do more than sketch the hasty outlines of a vast subject. I should say much more on meditation, its subjects and objects, on the patience necessary, the strict rule, and much else. For some the way is much easier and simpler than for others. I suppose that is conditioned by the stage of evolution already reached. For all round us are souls in different degrees of evolution and the battle there, as always, is too strong. I will give a short Indian parable which expresses the instant union that may befall some, for it has a general application.

A great yogin passed through a forest and by a man who had been sitting there long absorbed in discipline and meditation, and this devotee asked, "When shall I attain full knowledge?" The yogin replied, "In four more births," and the man wept in despair. So long yet! So little done! He passed another who asked the same question. He answered: "As many leaves as you see on this tree, so many births await you before you receive full knowledge." A flood of joy transfigured the questioner's face. "So soon? And I who have done so little!" And even as those words passed his lips he received full knowledge and enlightenment, for he had perceived the truth that time is nothing in the attainment of wisdom.

I feel I have said little and there is so much which should be said. This austere Indian wisdom sounds very strangely in the clash and hurry of modern life. And when I give the following beautiful description of the true disciple of psychological science, it is like a lost music, exquisite but out of reach.

"Abiding alone in a secret place, without craving or without possession, he shall take his seat on a firm seat, and with the working of the mind and senses held in check, so let him meditate, and thereby reach the Peace. He who knows the boundless joy that lies beyond the senses and is grasped by intention, he who swerves not from the truth, is as a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker."

Yet it is attainable and, to those who have attained even a little step, which of earth's prizes can seem worth a moment's consideration? Of them it may be said:

"As men do children at their games behold,  
And smile to see them, though unmoved and cold,  
Smile at the recollected joys, and then  
Depart and mix in the affairs of men."

So are those who have attained even a little knowledge of the psychological prizes awaiting the seeker. Yes, these are truly the affairs of men. The world and its societies have been formed from chaos by men who have seen these things, have entered into Realization of them, and so swayed the minds of the peoples into some faint responsive harmony with their vision. What right have those to speak on the subject of true psychology who have not studied along the line of those who have attained and have wielded the powers which have transmuted the world? It is a great and possible power to heal the sick, to walk on the water, to penetrate the thoughts of others, to transport oneself through space, but these are little things beside the power of transmuting the thoughts of other men into an energy that shall possess the world with the realization of the universal as it truly is and of their place in it. And it is only along the path so very poorly indicated in these pages that this has been done, for this path, consciously or unconsciously, has been trodden by all the great world seers. And what interest can compare with it? Here is a source of energy almost untapped which connects up with every form of force physical, mental and spiritual which exists. To meet an objection which may be raised I will quote the remarks of a German observer, Carl Kellner. After comparing this Yoga with those of the hypnotic or dream states artificially induced, he says:

"It [Yoga] makes of its true disciples good, healthy and happy men. Through the mastery which the yogin attains over his thoughts and body he grows into a character. By the subjection of his impulses to his will and fixing the latter upon the ideal of goodness he becomes a personality hard to influence by others and thus almost the opposite of what we usually imagine a medium (so called) or psychic subject to be."

I have given only a very brief synopsis in these chapters of an enormous subject. Those interested must study it in the ancient writings and trustworthy modern interpretations. Many are not trustworthy.

## Chapter 12

In one point all who have seen agree, namely that Love is the basis of the Law on which the universe moves. I need not refer to this point of view in our own Scriptures. We are all acquainted with the thesis--though the harsh experiences of life leave some of us with, as we think, very good reason to doubt its truth. But why should it be so? Why should love lead us to realization of the powers? Why should St. Paul speaking in the very language of the Fourth Dimension assert it is necessary "that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height-----" But all can finish the sentence. Here we must turn to India again--that great commentator on the "occult." As Max Müller says of her:

"That which we can study nowhere but in India is the all-absorbing influence which religion and philosophy can exercise on the human mind. So far as we can judge of a large class of people in India, not only the priestly class but the nobility also, not men only, but women, what was real to them was the invisible. What formed the theme of their conversations, the subject of their meditations, was the Real which alone lent some kind of reality to this phenomenal world. This is the side of India which deserves our study because there has been nothing like it in the whole world. This is the highest summit of thought which the human mind has reached."

And these men and women were a branch of our own race. The language they spoke was drawn from a common source with our European languages. Their thought is our true heritage. It appears to me, considering its immense influence in Asia and also in Europe, that there is none better worth our study. The teaching of India is the unity of the universe and of ourselves with it, and this is really the teaching of the occult. Surveying man, beholding his greedy grasping ego with the desires and appetites which he has been taught to call personality and himself, India declares this ego to be the creator of ignorance and illusion, blinding us to the facts of our own world and the Land behind the Looking Glass, ignorant because it can know only through the channel of its fallible senses and can think only within the bounds of time and space which are its prisons. It is therefore unable to see anything as it is in itself and can visualize it only as it appears when viewed through the narrow slit through which its senses and consciousness command the world. To an organism built differently from ourselves all would appear quite differently and we cannot tell how. Thus we are imprisoned and cut off from the occult which is in truth the Real.

But in every man, hidden under the carapace of this ignorant, false and ape-like self, lies a true self which is immortal because it is a part of what India calls That (because it is indescribable) and which we call God. Very deep down in most of us lies that Self, forgotten save by fits and starts, unrealized, hidden by the objective ego which transacts all our daily business and usurps the throne of the true monarch. But it is there, and until a man recognizes the truth of its existence and essence he walks blinded in a world of false concepts and beliefs created by his ego, totally miscomprehending his relation to the universe and as much beyond as we cannot conceive. The realization of this truth is enlightenment; the man opens blinded eyes and gradually perceives the world, not as it seemed, but as it *is*, perfect in the beauty of Law, and himself an integral part of it; a relation nearer than any sonship or brotherhood, being Union. He will then gradually learn that what held him apart from his rightful ownership of power was the illusion of individuality which concentrated his desires on such illusory prizes as personal success and all it connotes, on a personal heaven and immortality, and baser preoccupations than these. For desiring these individual possessions he is deflected

into the sandy desert of selfishness and is imprisoned more and more terribly in its solitudes of egoism. He has not learned the Law that this ignorance is utter darkness, weakness, and inability to react to and use the great currents of force sweeping around us. This deception of false-selfhood is as alluring and seemingly natural as it is dangerous. Edward Carpenter has a useful analogy:

“Each little leaf on a tree may very naturally have sufficient consciousness to believe that it is an entirely separate being, maintaining itself in sunlight and air, withering and dying when winter comes. It probably does not realize that all the time it is supported by the sap which flows from the trunk, and that in its turn it is feeding the life of the tree; that its self is the self of the whole tree.”

So also beneath the tossing wave-crests is the urge of the illimitable ocean, and the individuality of each leaf, each wave is illusion. There was One, there is One, and but One, and we are a part of it.

Thus, being the tree, the ocean, the cosmic consciousness, we see that India accepts no doctrine of original sin but offers instead that of original power. We are the king who being drugged forgets his kingship in a nightmare of mad desires which though seemingly won can never assuage his divine homesickness with their dance of dying dreams. The Western faiths have recognized their unreality:

“Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.”

But India strikes higher. “I,—man though I be—I myself am the Unchanging. I sit victorious above pain and change for I too am divine! I too am fathered by the starry sky! What I will I can do and be. Death has no power on that immortal Self.”

But how is this great knowledge attained?

The consciousness of this mighty self in us must evolve as the body evolves from lower types on its upward way. As it has taken ages to disengage the divine strength of the Apollo from the brute strength of the ape-man, so it takes time and experiences many and great to give a man the wisdom enabling him to realize and act on the knowledge that within the rocky shell of his false ego lies the Pearl of great price—which is power and realization. And, seeing what time and experiences are needed for so vast a triumph, return again and again to school in some form awaits not only humanity but all life, until it has attained self-realization of the True in itself and therefore in the whole—piercing through the deceptive layers of personality to the inmost kernel of being, which is Divine and universal instead of individual and partial. “For,” says Paul, “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” That is the higher race developing its super-consciousness with the attendant powers.

But all creation is in different stages of evolution and there are those who are near the goal or far from it, living in the midst of self-sown conditions and reaping the fruit of their own acts as ascent or descent in the evolutionary scale. For error to be “forgiven” is as impossible as for virtue “to forgo the high reward of its own increase,” and therefore every man is compelled by the law of his being to reascend any height from which he has fallen in accepting, though but for a moment, the code of a lower level of soul-evolution, which once having out-soared he should have left forever. But the Law knows neither wrath nor pardon. Neither the thought nor the deed can be undone and the only thing that matters is to climb out and up. If an animal having developed lungs commits himself to life in the water he must take the consequences. It was well enough while he breathed through gills. It is madness now. There is no question of forgiveness. He must get out and understand conditions better. And

that he may do so that law of the universe which is called Karma (the result of deeds and thoughts whether high or low) will, if he has retrograded, flog and persuade and discipline him, if needful, through eons of accumulated experience, until he listens to the voice of the Divine which is his own and knows that a plunge into an outgrown element is unthinkable. There is no discipline worth the name but what one gives oneself.

This Law applies to all life of every sort and kind throughout the universe, for all must hear the voice of its own divinity. All is steadily working out the realization of the Divine Selfhood which is One, Alone, and Self-subsisting, in whom we live and move and have our being, for outside that there is nothing, "as certain also of our own poets have said.

The aim of all experience in however many existences, under whatever form, is to develop love. And why? Because love is the unifying cosmic force. All the loves and relationships of life work in harmony with that aim. They each and all transcend individuality and break down the bars of egoism. This is seen with parent-hood, with the love of man and woman, with all love. Says India: "In truth, not for the husband's sake is the husband dear but for the sake of the Immortal Self!" Patriotism also transcends individuality, and need I speak of the mystic's yearning and self-consuming fire at the heart of all true religious passion? There is no love which does not toil with passionate energy at that cosmic end of breaking down the poor individuality on which we pride ourselves and restoring us to the Whole and to the climbing way which leads to power and unity.

See how the dog's love for man and the answering love meeting it break down the barriers between the two great families of life, overleaping the gulf of lack of speech and uniting and setting each a stage higher. How instinctively we worship every act which illustrates this truth of love. We know, though all logic is against it, that if a man of infinite attainment sacrifices his life to save an imbecile child he has done well, and in doing it has served vast ends. For every love with faithful hands destroys the prison of selfhood, brick and bar, until "there is neither day nor night remaining any more, no existence or non-existence, but only One." Or, in the words of Paul: "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

The separate, the individual, must pass as starlight is extinguished in blue air and sunshine, and for this reason Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

This is the teaching of the one Absolute Reality. It does not for a moment assert that the phenomenal world about us is illusion, but it does assert that our false concept of selfhood working through fallible senses and bounded intellect prevents us from seeing the world as it really is and until we know it as it is we cannot act upon it with power. "Know Thyself" was the inscription on the Temple of the Delphic Oracle, and it sums up all that can be said of life, for the man who knows himself as he is knows his powers and can use them.

Our vital need of this knowledge explains the passion of those who know to share it with others. Hear the words of Krishna in the Song Celestial of India:

"Meditating on the Real Self, blended into it, seated firmly in the knowledge of it, loving it with fierce devotion, the wise are freed from bonds. Their eyes are cleared from the smoke which fills the eyes of men blinding them and they pass into those high states from which is no return to the lower planes. Blessed beyond measure are such. Verily those who see the Real Self underlying all that seems to be,--the only Reality in the world of apparent reality,-- find inexpressible joy in the knowledge and consciousness of the Real Self. And having entered into this consciousness they pass into the kingdom of Eternal Bliss and Peace."



I give another example from that strange and ancient Christian Gnostic Gospel, the *Pistis Sophia*, which some scholars refer to the second and some to the beginning of the third century after Christ. The Christ is teaching his disciples on the Mount of Olives:

“And Andrew answered and said: ‘Lord, I marvel exceedingly how men in the world and body of this matter if they come out of this world can pass through the firmaments and the great Invisibles and inherit the Kingdom of Light. This matter is hard for me. [In other words, how men can realize and use their powers?] And the Spirit of the Saviour was roused in him and he cried aloud and said: ‘How long am I to bear with you? Have ye not understood and are ye ignorant? Know ye not that ye and all angels and archangels and Gods and Lords and the great Invisibles and their whole glory are one with another, out of one and the same paste and the same matter and the same substance and that ye are all of the same mixture?’ And they all threw themselves at Jesus’ feet, saying: ‘Lord, forgive our brother the sin of ignorance.’”

That is, what the highest can do, man also can do. A great and true teaching. And later:

“The disciples cried out and said: ‘Thou hast made us very exceedingly frenzied because of the Height thou hast revealed. Thou exaltest our souls and they become paths on which we travel to Thee because they issue from Thee, and they travail mightily, yearning to go forth from us to the region of Thy Kingdom.’”

So was Andrew informed that he was “of the same paste” as his Master, yet it is not to be supposed that in that moment he saw with the same diamond-clear perception. These processes are gradual, each secure on its basis before the next can develop and even when they appear sudden there is a long history behind them.

Power follows knowledge, and such knowledge brings an almost incredible liberation of force and energy, appearing “miraculous” to those who do not understand the law of being. This fact to which the faiths bear witness is of profound interest in view of the enlarging empire of science for, though our false concepts imprison us in a world where we are physically and mentally bound in the fetters of the three dimensions of length, breadth and height, these fetters fall at the touch of universal consciousness and we are admitted to perception of the occult world which lies about us and of which we are unconscious denizens, where time is not, where powers transcending the normal of our concepts are as natural as breathing, where perceiving the world as it is we act in accordance with it, as inevitably as we do here with “the world of false appearances.” And those imprisoned by the normal concepts cry “A miracle!”

But it is said: “How unreasonable! We fell into illusion as to our relation with the Divine and must struggle back to what we need never have lost. Why?”

There is not a faith which has not had to wrestle with that question, and not one has answered it categorically. Israel, in the beautiful symbol of the lost Eden, shadows forth the teaching of the Upanishads, but is silent as to cause. Adam is at one with the Divine. Suddenly he develops separate consciousness and falls into duality and ignorance and loses his powers. On bleeding feet he must retrace the long ascent to union. The Buddha, approached with entreaty to reveal the secret, replies that the truth cannot be told, adding that if a man does certain things, molding his life according to the Law of Being, the Truth will meet him face to face when he is capable of receiving it. It does not concern him now, what does concern him is the Path which leads to it. This is what India calls “the noble silence of the wise.” I have sometimes wondered whether the solution of this mystery may not be in the words of that great percipient St. Augustine, but otherwise applied, “Thou findest those whom Thou hast never lost,” and our drama of loss and regainment be a part of the cosmic play or “Lila” as

they call it in India, which we ourselves may smile at when we have waked from the hell of disunion, realizing that we were children dreaming ourselves in the dark, with the light all round us.

No doubt all the faiths are stuttering attempts to communicate this high knowledge each in its own language and all have their percipients, but I think the relation of man to the universe has never been so fully stated as in India. So many has she filled with the influx of wisdom that she may be said to have been the world's highest inspiration. China and Japan, Burma, and Ceylon, Java and the high solitudes of Tibet have knelt at her feet. Persia and Greece owe her their deepest thought and that great melting pot the city of Alexandria, which molded the spirit of the writer of our Fourth Gospel, drank of her wine. The greatest of the Greek philosophers breathed her fine air.

In the West she has met with much misunderstanding. We have lost touch, if we ever had it, with the wisdom of our own race in India. Accustomed to a more florid metaphysic, the West has stamped the utterances of the Buddha "(who taught the annihilation of sorrow) as pessimism! He taught that the weary round of rebirth ends in a state "deep, immeasurable and fathomless as the great ocean," and she asserts that he taught complete annihilation at death! She asserts that his teaching is only for the scholar and the intellectual when a little child may follow the Way. "Do and you shall know," is the teaching, though it adds that to reach the point where spirit, mind and body meet in a fusion of comprehension and power is a long process of evolution. She calls that teaching a religious egoism, the pivot and center of which is the destruction of the greedy grasping ego in man. Would that she would study the words of The Utterly Awakened!

It is said these truths are dreams of mystics and cannot be applied to practical life. Ask the mathematicians! They in the white fire of their winged science know how little worth are the logic of daily life and our crippled concepts of the universe. They of all people would not limit the boundless future which awaits the race.

## Chapter 13

(I am indebted in this chapter to Ouspensky's remarkable work, "Tertium Organum")

I hope in this chapter to demonstrate that the views of the occult which I have put forward are meeting with strange confirmation in Western Science though there approached from a different angle. To put a very difficult subject briefly and clearly it is now thought that the universe of three dimensions (breadth, length, and height) in which our senses inform us we live and move and have our being is a universe wrongly seen and understood by those five very fallible observers and that in many respects the universe corresponds in truth with "The World behind the Looking Glass" as I have called it. In other words, that the so-called "occult" affords us glimpses of the world as it is beyond the perception of the senses of touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing.

And science now adumbrates the possibility of a verifiable perception of its own transcending the senses on the mathematical side and this is the reason why we hear talk of what is called "The Fourth Dimension"; for it is found that the three dimensions of length, breadth and height by which we measure the world and on which all our logical and geometrical conclusions are based are not equal to the demands made upon them by late scientific discoveries and many advanced thinkers are crying out for a wider and very different definition to supplement and elucidate the real relation of man to the universe. This is profoundly interesting from the occult point of view for reasons which I shall indicate.

It is the fact that though the body of man could be made to conform to the three dimensions of length, breadth, and height, the intellect and the psyche in him, which have made all religions and all thought possible, could not. The psyche of man has always gone off on its own adventures and has declined entirely to be conditioned by the limits of breadth, depth, and height. Not only so, but the life and the psyche in animals and the lower forms of life, even down to plants, have been equally unaccommodating. They too have refused to be enclosed (if I may so put it) within the limits of length, breadth and height. A gallant fight to capture them was made by the Positivists, who, mistaking the machine for the man behind it, clung as long as they could to the belief that brain-movements accounted for Christ and Shakespeare. Like those of other dupes of the senses their theory lies dead on the dusty road of the past. The possibility that life may soon be produced by certain combinations of elements does not in the least support their assertion, for the cause of life resulting from the combination and its inherency in each one of the combining elements has still to be explained.

It is interesting to consider a few remarks of Plato's made rather more than two millenniums ago. And let no one be startled by the great name of a great philosopher, for much that he said is really more interesting than the very best-selling novel of the present day, and of vastly more consequence. This quotation will show how very ill he thought we were served by those trust-worthy five reporters of ours upon which we absolutely depend for knowledge until we find the way into the World behind the Looking Glass. And few persons since have been able to question seriously the issue he raises.

He records a dialogue of Socrates with an extremely interested friend in the course of which he gave him a very neat and striking allegory of man's position until he has learned the way of realization (I condense and therefore to a certain extent paraphrase, but have kept rigidly to the essential):

“Behold a set of human beings living in a sort of underground den. They are chained in a manner which prevents their turning their heads. Behind them is a light and between them and the light a raised way along which pass figures of men and animals and so forth. And some of these passengers are talking and some are silent. These men who are chained and cannot move their heads can therefore see only the shadows cast before them. Is not this so?”

“But they would suppose that what they saw was actually before them? And what they supposed to be truth would only be the shadows of the images?”

“Very true,’ answers the friend.

“Now suppose one of these chained men is suddenly freed and taken into the sunlight: Will he not be in a difficulty and at first believe that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects now shown him?”

“And suppose the light dazzles his eyes: May he not even be unable at first to see any of the realities now affirmed to be the truth?”

“But when at last he can see the sun as the cause of all he beholds will he not rejoice in the change and pity those who are chained? Will he not endure anything rather than live and think after their manner? But the chained men will say of him that there is no use in even thinking of ascending to the light and if anyone tried to loose another and lead him up to the light if they caught the offender in the act they would kill him.’

“In this allegory the prison is the world of sight [i.e., the senses] and you will understand that those who attain to the blessed vision of truth are unwilling to descend to human affairs, but their souls are ever hastening to the upper world in which they desire to dwell.”

The thing cannot be better put and the experience of the world has proved, only too well how ready it has been to slaughter the man who attempts to knock the chains off the prisoners and lead them into the light of reality. What Plato has said may be summed up in one phrase. We live in the real world, but we perceive it wrongly. The entry into what I have called the World behind the Looking Glass means that we then perceive it rightly--each in his different degree. For that there are many degrees of perception none can doubt.

What we have to do is to understand the Real and decline to be misled by the shadows. Thus we shall apprehend what is called the occult--or the Hidden--which really lies all about us for observation the moment we are capable of observing. We walk about like savages in a library with the wisdom of the ages there for the taking and--we cannot take it for our own. That there are difficulties in the way I do not deny, though they have in instances which I shall give been triumphantly conquered. One great and pressing difficulty is language, for our languages (be it remembered) have all been evolved by Plato's chained prisoners, sitting in the dark and taking the shadows cast before them for real. Therefore we must unfortunately use words quite inadequate to the truth some of us know. I am perfectly certain that when Plato's emancipated man returned from the sunlight into the underground den he was extremely at a loss to convey his meanings to the cave-dwellers. Probably the real end of the story is that he sat down and gave it up as a bad job and they beat him to death--their legs and arms being the only free part of them. Analogous stories have very often ended thus in real life. The witnesses, however, have increased in number since Plato's day and the vocabulary has enlarged, though by no means to the necessary point. We are still striving to express the inexpressible and a good deal of it still sounds almost impossible for that reason, but we are quite certainly beginning to realize “that this earth is the scene of a drama of which we only perceive scattered portions and in which the greater number of the actors are invisible to us.” And, it has been said that when we understand that drama we shall see that the so-called “solid” world of length, breadth and height does not really exist as we conceive it because we

perceive it so wrongly that our perception is as illusory as the movement of the country past our eyes when we are rushing through it in a train.

I remember, as a child, being immensely impressed with what was put to me as a kind of catch or riddle, namely that there is really no such thing as motion because you are always stationary at some one given point. Think that out and you will find it very difficult to counter. To my surprise I met this poser the other day in the thoughts of an ancient Indian philosopher. Science, at the moment, is confronted with a difficulty of the same nature with regard to time, which according to our common conception is a form of motion because it is always flowing past us.

I paraphrase. Usually we think the past already does not exist. It has passed, disappeared. The future also does not exist. It has not arrived nor formed. By the present we mean the moment when the future changes into the past. In other words the moment when one non-existence changes into another non-existence. And this moment being only a fiction, we have a full right to say the present does not exist. For the present is not to be seized--it is always changing into the past, and strictly speaking neither past, present nor future exists for us, which is so absurd that it becomes clear that there is something very mistaken in our conception of time. When a man leaves New York for London only the memory of New York is left. And London does not really exist for him until he arrives there. But an observer at a sufficient height with sufficient vision could see both New York and London as steady points. In the same way we say: "Spring is gone. Winter is not yet here." But we know it will come just as the man leaving New York knows that (bar accident) he will reach London. The new conception of time tends to be that at a sufficient height--i.e., in the more developed consciousness, spring is always there and winter also--and that the notion of the flux of time is pure guess-work at a thing we do not understand, and pure illusion, and that the truth is that there is no flux of time but the "Eternal Now" of the ancient Indian thinkers into which if we could look with clear understanding we should perceive everything as coexistent and co-eternal.

I pause for a moment to say if this is so how clearly it explains the gift of prophecy or clear-seeing. In the flashes of higher consciousness which I shall describe the seer declares that a certain thing will happen. That is inexplicable on the theory of a future as yet non-existent. But if he sees the event he describes as part of the Eternally existent and unchanging it becomes by no means impossible to understand why under certain conditions such a sight can be obtained.

So the ordinary man goes forward blind, tapping his way with a stick, substantially believing only in what he touches at the moment, which alone exists for him. The man who can see beholds all round him the points by which he guides his course. The relation of the higher consciousness to the lower is as sight to blindness. The considerations which witness to the development of a part of our race into the possession of the higher consciousness are of amazing interest. Yet for those who have developed it in the cases we know, it has its terrors. Such a man is in the position of an aviator who from the sky watches two trains on earth rushing to the inevitable collision and cannot warn them. His consciousness rises above the plane in which the consciousness of the man in the street sees events divided by periods of time. The man of the higher consciousness will see all cause and effect as one, crime and punishment, sunrise and sunset, the birth and death of a man. Here again we touch on the wonders of Indian thought in the Upanishads and later, which indicated clearly many centuries ago the riddle with which science is to-day confronted. They saw that as long as science concerns itself with physical happenings only it stumbles in a blind alley, and that the

only way out is in the development of the consciousness of man. On that all true science must ultimately be based.

In this view they received strong support from the great German philosopher Kant (born in 1724). According to his famous book everything known through the senses can be known only in terms of time and space, and nothing can be received by the five senses except in these terms. And what we perceive are not the properties actually belonging to things but what our senses ascribe to them and that in reality things exist quite independently of time and space and the conditions we impose by our limitations in this respect. Thus time and space have no real existence in themselves but represent our conceptions in the same manner as when looking through green glasses we perceive the world green.

It follows that we do not know the true relations of things among themselves, and that we possess only phantoms or visions of things, and for beings differently organized from ourselves the world would present a wholly different aspect. Briefly we have created a world (in which we believe) conditioned entirely by our limitations, just as we know that creatures of a more limited consciousness than ourselves perceive the world within still narrower limits and find it impossible to aspire to the comparatively boundless splendor of our point of view. It is a case of relative truth. No doubt our conceptions are higher than those of the mollusc or the snail, but it would be a bold materialist indeed who could be found to declare that the true universe is revealed to our conceptions in all its dimensions and possibilities. It must be made clear, however, that Kant does not attribute to us a confused perception of the real world. No. It is a very acute perception of an entirely unreal world--so acute that as a rule we never question it, and are difficult to persuade that it is mistaken.

Here we have to ask, What is space? As we perceive it, it is for us the form of the universe. We can measure it only in three directions independent of one another--i.e., length, breadth and height--and we therefore call our conception of space three-dimensional.

Yet there are things in the world which cannot be defined in these terms and yet most undoubtedly do exist, and with power. Ouspensky uses the illustration here of a house and an idea. You may destroy the house; the idea you cannot destroy--it will even thrive on your efforts at destruction. And so there are many different forms of existence. A book exists, but also, and in a different category, its contents. A coin, and its purchasing value. In fact every physical fact has its metaphysical side. Therefore it has been said: "Matter does not give us any trouble. We know all about it for the very good reason that we invented it. Strictly speaking matter exists only as a concept."

Our senses prove its solid existence to us, but our senses unfortunately are untrustworthy witnesses who cannot be heard in the Court of Law to which man's psyche appeals.

A great part of what most deeply concerns us in relation to the so-called "occult" is our sense-relation to time. It is necessary to ask why we are convinced that we perceive time as a form of motion running past the narrow five-paned window of the senses through which alone we can observe the world, and why we cannot, as it were, lean out of that slit and get a broader view to right and left of us which might revolutionize our conclusions. It is because our consciousness is usually chained to the plane of the three dimensions of length, breadth, and height by our senses.

Our sight extends for a certain number of yards, if unblocked by solid bodies; our hearing is in the same case and though, as Ouspensky puts it, the range of sight can be extended by ascending to greater heights or by the use of telescopes and magnifiers, this is only extending the range of the senses, not escaping them--a very different proposition.

All motion that we can perceive is conditioned by time. Can we transcend the idea of time as motion--can we imagine it as stationary? Kant declares that the motion or flux of time is created by ourselves as a part of our receptive apparatus for convenience in perceiving the outside world. If this is true and if the slumbering psyche in man is not bound by what may be called physical forms of consciousness, then it is conceivable that in different forms of consciousness man might perceive so much more of the world as it really is as to gain knowledge which he can never receive through the medium of the senses.

One great key to unlock the Gate is undoubtedly the true realization of time as a fourth dimension. This explains many a problem of clairvoyance, clairaudience, distance-apparitions and so forth, which has been inexplicable on the usual theories. It must revolutionize almost all our ideas of what is possible.

Thus we see that the knowledge which is opening on us with the enlarging consciousness of man is what will gain for science that hitherto dubious and hidden world known as the occult--which is really the sphere of realization of things as they are in themselves and in truth.

There must come a point where all science based on the senses guided by reason will find itself met by a "Thus far and no farther." That point is not distant. But to the consciousness of man, which is a part of the Infinite, there can be no bounds. All it needs is training and discipline *and* the necessary stages of evolution to bring it to the realization of its transcendent powers as exemplified here and there in those who have partially attained.

For the question now opening before us is stated in the great mathematician Minkowski's brilliant generalization of Einstein's new principle. This was quoted by Professor Oumov at a convention of Russian scientists in 1911.

"In Nature all is given; for her the past and future do not exist. She is the eternal present: she has no limits either of space or time. Changes are proceeding in individuals and correspond to their displacements upon world-ways in a *four-dimensional eternal and limitless manifold*. [Italics mine.] These concepts in the region of philosophic thought will produce a revolution considerably greater than that caused by the displacement from the center of the universe by Copernicus."

"We are present," added Professor Oumov, "at the funeral of the old physics."

And again I must quote Ouspensky.

"The world as we know it does not represent anything stable. Phenomena which appear to us unrelated can be seen by some more inclusive consciousness as parts of a single whole. Phenomena which appear to us complete and indivisible may be in reality exceedingly complex, may include within themselves different elements having nothing in common. Therefore beyond our view of things another view is possible--a view, as it were, from another world from 'over there.' Now 'over there' does not mean some other place but a new method of knowledge, a new understanding." I may add, a new understanding of the world we live in. We shall certainly agree with this if we have arrived at realization of the fact that man "is a toy in the hands of elemental forces, he is merely a transforming station of forces. All that it seems to him he is doing is in reality done by external forces which enter him through air, food, sun-light. Man does not perform a single action by himself. He is merely a prism in which a line of action is refracted in a certain manner. Just as the beam of light does not proceed from the prism, so action does not proceed from the reason of man."

From all these conclusions follows another and a most important one. It is that, the psyche of man manifesting (except in supernormal conditions) through the action of the brain, we can (except in supernormal conditions) observe only those reflections which are similar to

ourselves. We can know only about the existence of psychic lives similar to our own, and can know no others at all unless we can enter into their plane. Transcending this stage of consciousness we see and hear quite differently. This is the true realm of the occult--the real World behind the Looking Glass, and when attained it is no longer strange and occult but the natural home of our psyche. And from it proceed the strange manifestations and powers which startle and bewilder us coming in the alarming and sporadic way which is all that the average man can formulate as yet of their proceedings. It is little wonder that they have been met as they have, with alternate incredulity and fear.



## Chapter 14

That the powers have been attained in East and West (though in a far lesser degree in the West) there really can be no question, in my opinion. I have cited a few cases, avoiding Western instances in so far as I could because they are contentious ground and my aim has chiefly been to suggest the study of Eastern thought. But attainment of supernormal powers by flashes or in continuance has been noted and borne witness to, not only in all the faiths but in many other credible sources, so often as to set doubt at rest. It may be safely asserted that the supernormal does occur, that it has its laws, and that they may be studied and watched in their working out in manifestation by those who will take the trouble and who are qualified to take it. There is much to be learned yet. We are as men who have landed on the shores of an undiscovered country and have seen a part of its beauties and wonders but have not yet stood upon the mountains from which the whole land may be surveyed.

I myself believe that there are records in the great faiths where death has been transcended and the mountains climbed though it was impossible for those who stood on the conquered peaks to convey the fulness of their vision to us in the valleys below. I have tried to set forth why this difficulty must exist and why it is necessary to evolve an audience as well as a Teacher.

In this chapter let us consider whether there are any lower in strength and vision than the Greatest, who have here and there stood for a moment on the mountain peaks (possibly by the mercy of some great perfected soul) and beheld the spiritual vision on which the faiths of the world are based, however they may have distorted it in their earthly record. Have we instances of men and women who have entered upon the highest ecstasy and have realized psychic existences high above our understanding? I describe from the experience of the Greatest what this state and vision appear to be, and we can consider whether celestial flashes of it, as if a door opened and shut almost instantly, have happened in the experience of others less highly evolved. In this book I have told strange stories of things that have been observed and believed in times past and our own, and I must leave it to my readers to judge whether these have proved this stupendous fact in the sense in which a mathematical fact may be said to be capable of proof by man's reason. But if that proof is possible in the lower forms of the Occult it is impossible in the highest spiritual flight of the consciousness. It is beyond the judgment of our reason. If we do not feel and understand by union we must wait our day.

Therefore in this chapter I touch upon remarkable experiences of what has been called the cosmic consciousness (needing not only volumes but libraries to describe them with any fulness) which lead to the gate of the mystery by which it appears man's consciousness may be brought into relation with the highest source of light and power.

It is therefore necessary to speak of the mystics of all parts of the world and of all faiths, for the reason that they have perceived, by what may in part be described as intuition, the basic fact that in the universe is no duality but only One of which man is a part. On this all true appreciation of the "occult" eventually centers.

We now enter the region where dwell those who have been possessed of what may be called the highest form of Consciousness that man can conceive, though no doubt there are higher still beyond our ken. Professor James says:

"There is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. This is the liberation of the soul."

Liberation from what? The bonds of time, space, and motion and all that binds a man to the earth as we know it.

There has come to some men and women of many races a sudden enlargement, a sudden consciousness and certainty of universal things hitherto unknown which has changed all their conceptions of the world and its values. And if it be objected that religion need not necessarily have anything to do with the “occult” let me repeat that religion is the strongest force known in the world for energizing what I may call the psychic nerve and arousing it into an activity of vibration which appears to relate it to other hitherto unfelt vibrations. And even where the impulse has been what is called “religious,” very often the results have entirely transcended all popular conceptions of religion and the realization is not that of confirmation of any dogma but of a great and universal liberation and much more. I will take some Indian examples first because in former chapters I have given the Indian method of discipline and training which they considered led the way to this realization and the attainment of what are there called “the powers.”

Let us take as example one of the most world-moving experiences, that of the Indian Prince known as the Buddha; because, though its results for the world were incalculable, it presents a typical case of what I endeavor to describe, and he was a man born of a branch of our own Aryan or “noble” race. He renounced the sensual luxuries and pleasures of the world. He cannot be said to have renounced love in leaving his wife and child because love in that connection was simply transmuted into a higher form of love. He essayed and abandoned a useless and cruel training by asceticism, then, adopting a reasonable form of disciplining the body, he gave himself to concentration and contemplation and at last, seated under a tree after the manner of many of his predecessors, he received what he and his disciples have since named Enlightenment. He is said, as the perception reached him, to have cried aloud, “Unbounded Light!” and to have henceforth perceived the world in quite other aspects than those it had hitherto presented and to have attained “the powers,” though he considered them in themselves so far transcended by other considerations that he seldom used them or commended their use by his disciples. He was known henceforward in India as The Supremely Awakened One.

What had he perceived? To what had he awakened? Here language suited to and invented by the commonplace perception of our senses breaks down. ‘We must get as near as we can but it will be only a shadow of the truth. As Walt Whitman (who had flashes of the higher consciousness) says:

“When I undertake to tell the best, I find I cannot.  
My tongue is inefficient on its pivots.  
My breath will not be obedient to its organs.  
I become a dumb man.”

The Buddha perceived what is described as the Formless, the Beautiful, perfect Bliss, utter Enlightenment, a solvent in which all the sorrows of the world are dissolved and disappear. He perceived that all the universe is One and that the sorrow which breaks and bruises us is caused by belief in the separate and individual self in man, which belief is the root of all selfishness and grief and their concomitant crimes of ignorance. And he found that in realization of unity lay not only deliverance from sorrow but realization of powers more amazing than the sudden gift of sight to one born blind. He found that all life is One. And I believe it to be certain that when science extends its survey from the materialistic to the realm of ideas and consciousness the Buddha will be found awaiting its arrival with the serenity of The Utterly Awakened, he who achieved and knew by direct cognition the laws behind the phenomena revealed by the senses. He perceived an ordered universe, the smallest movement

definitely caused and itself the cause of action, and he perceived that when these are understood *power* follows as a necessity. He became a Master of the Occult, a Master of Yoga by the two roads of asceticism and contemplation.

I pass to lesser cases in India and, as one, to the teacher famous in India in the middle of the nineteenth century, known as Sri Ramakrishna. His life is a wonderful record of realization and the powers that follow upon it, powers which in themselves did not particularly interest him, drowned as they were in the knowledge of the higher vision, but allied with the purpose of this book and therefore to be noted. Realization came to him in the typical way--devotion, longing for liberation from the bondage of the senses, and then one day, suddenly, a flood of light and the temporary loss of self-consciousness.

I will mention some of the powers it brought with it. They are described as "characteristics distinctive of the highest degree of concentration." He would meet his disciples at the door, and begin to answer, without being asked, the written questions they carried in their pockets. He could tell by touch the character of anyone who had even come in contact with his food, clothes or mat. He would say of one from whom he shrank, that the contact "burnt" him. Sometimes--"Look, I can eat this. Some good soul must have sent it."

His disciples have told of the strangeness with which they would listen to one side of a dialogue carried on for hours while Ramakrishna, resting, evidently believed himself to be communicating with beings they could not see. He had his own nervous force so completely under control that during his last illness he could remove all consciousness from the cancer in his throat and allow it to be operated upon as if under a local anesthetic. He could interpret the smallest detail of the physical constitution of others as expressing their inward personality. He would throw a disciple into the hypnotic state and learn from his subconscious mind all that was lodged there. At times, he said, men and women seemed to him like glass and he could look them through and through. Above all he could by his touch (and this power is strangely related to the central Figure of our own Scriptures) exercise a compelling power over other lives. Through this touch they also received flashes of the higher consciousness which molded their futures.

An example is given of his placing his hand on the heads of a row of persons with a different phrase for each, and each receiving a different gift. With one, overwhelming joy; to another a great light which never left him, so that he could never pass shrine or temple after without seeming to see there in that light a Form which he described as "the Spirit that dwells in the images," and so forth. One of his disciples says, in speaking of the usual talk of men's consciousness: "Consciousness? What does consciousness matter? It is as NOTHING compared with the unfathomable depths of the subconscious and the heights of the superconscious. In this I could never be mistaken, for had I not seen Ramakrishna gather in ten minutes from a man's subconscious mind the whole of his past, and determine from that his future and his powers?"

Of this disciple Ramakrishna eagerly asked when he first saw him, "Tell me, do you see a light when you are going to sleep?" "Doesn't everyone?" asked the boy, in wonder. He had indeed a consciousness of light so great that he took it for granted that someone had placed a bright lamp behind his head. When he was to speak in public, which he did frequently and with power, he would hear at night in his room a voice shouting at him the words he would say next day. It was given to him. This man was the well-known Vivekananda.

One might multiply such instances as these Indian ones, but I will come near to the greatest within our own intimate knowledge.

Who does not remember how on what may be called the initiation of the Christ he saw the heavens opened (again the great light) and after that the powers, and so much else that does not enter into the sphere of this book? Or the blinding flash outside Damascus that communicated the powers to St. Paul to which he so often refers with the perfect simplicity of true experience--"occult" indeed if not understood as realization of the world as it really is and the consequent power to use its forces as they exist in their might.

But there are many lesser who have plunged (to quote Professor James) "into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely 'understandable' world." There is the case of Boehme, the inspired shoemaker who in 1600 A. D. saw this great light and from a state of ignorance suddenly became one of whom it could be truly said:

"He learned to know the innermost foundation of nature and acquired the capacity to see henceforth with the eyes of the soul into the heart of all things, a faculty which remained with him even in his normal condition. In so much as viewing the herbs and grass he saw into their essence and properties and in like manner he beheld the whole creation and from that foundation wrote his book 'De Signature Rerum.'"

In a third illumination it is said, in a beautiful analogy, "that which had in former visions appeared to him multifarious was now recognized by him as Unity, like a harp of many strings of which each string is a single instrument while the whole is only one harp." He says himself:

"The gate was so opened to me that in one-quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been for many years at a University. For I saw and knew the being of all beings, the abyss and the byss. So that I did not only greatly wonder but exceedingly rejoice."

There is an English instance of the same illumination, if possible more wonderful than that of Boehme. Those who wish to understand the bright illumination of the higher consciousness cannot do better than study the life of William Blake--the great poet, artist and mystic. Every word he wrote, every line he drew, is worth deep consideration, though I admit that for some of his prophetic poems psychological insight akin to his own, however far below it, is needed.

He had his first insight into the Land behind the Looking Glass of the senses between the ages of eight and ten, and ever after that seems to have been free of certain lovely aspects of that strange land, and even to have climbed some of its mountains. Of his first vision it is told that walking on Peckham Rye, near Dulwich, he looked up into a tree and saw it filled with angels for birds, their bright wings radiant as stars in the boughs. Coming home he innocently told what he had seen and was only saved from his indignant father's thrashing by his mother's entreaties. A little later, among the haymakers in a field he saw winged figures moving and shining. About the age of twelve he wrote one of his loveliest lyrics. He developed rapidly as an artist and his father decided to apprentice him to the famous engraver Ryland, engraver to the King, in the highest circles of literature and society and of delightful appearance and manners. The elder Blake took his boy to see his future master expecting great things from the interview, but as they left the studio, the boy spoke:

"Father, I don't like the man's face. He will live to be hanged."

Twelve years later Ryland got into embarrassment, committed forgery and was hanged. Gilchrist, Blake's puzzled biographer, hovers between prophetic gift and natural intuition for an explanation of this strange incident. It needs little explanation to those who know the A B C of the rules of true sight unconditioned by the senses, and it is interesting to compare it with Ramakrishna's like power. When he was still a young man a beloved brother died, and Blake, by the bedside, saw the freed spirit soar upward, clapping its hands for joy. In a letter

to a friend he describes metrically a true vision of the Land behind the Looking Glass, which he saw while living in Sussex.

“In particles bright  
 The jewels of light  
 Distinct shone and clear,  
 And each was a man  
 Human-formed. Swift I ran,  
 For they beckoned to me,  
 Remote by the sea,  
 Saying: ‘Each grain of sand,  
 Every stone on the land,  
 Each herb and each tree,  
 Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,  
 Cloud, meteor, and star,  
 Are men seen afar.’  
 Till the jewels of light,  
 Heavenly men, beaming bright,  
 Appeared as one man . . .”

And so the vision proceeds until he is lost in its radiant beauty. He may have seen a perfect truth. All things are possible in the Land beyond the senses! It was here that he saw his vision of a flower-spirit’s funeral. “Did you ever see one?” he asked a woman who sat by him.

“Never,” she answered in natural astonishment.

“I have,” he said, “but not before last night. I was walking alone in my garden; there was great stillness among the branches and flowers and more than common sweetness in the air. I heard a low and pleasant sound. At last I saw the broad leaf of a flower move, and underneath I saw a procession of creatures of the size and color of green and gray grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a rose-leaf, which they buried with songs and disappeared. It was a fairy’s funeral.” In other words, he could perceive the indwelling spirit in all and recognize it as a part of the spiritual and divine.

He writes to a friend:

“I am under the direction of messengers from heaven daily and nightly. But the nature of such things is not without trouble and care.”

And:

“I have traveled through perils and darkness not unlike a champion. Nothing can withstand the fury of my course among the stars of God.”

And so he goes along the flowery lanes:

“With angels planted in hawthorn bowers,  
 And God himself in the passing hours:  
 With silver angels across my way,  
 And golden demons that none can stay.”

It is most interesting to note that in the visions of the higher consciousness the geography and inhabitants of that lovely and terrible land behind the Veil of the Senses take the shape that will be most familiar to the percipient. It is not so in the ecstasy of the *highest* consciousness. There the Universal is perceived in blissful union. But Blake will see the winged angels and the figures of the Christian story, beautiful as the pictures of Fra Angelico, moving in blue

and crimson against golden backgrounds of pure light, and Ramakrishna will see the Great God of the Himalayas with the young moon in his hair, and both be true and both divine though not the highest form of perception. This must be so until the flesh and its limits are utterly transcended, and I believe Ramakrishna had attained that vision and I cannot deny that Blake may have done so though I do not find any authoritative evidence that he did.

It is easy to understand that for those who see by means and at times when they should not, the things seen may be horrible, revealing terrible depths in their own subconsciousness.

“For all things exist in the human imagination.” So said Blake himself, using the word in its great creative sense which proves us indeed part of the force which “moves the sun and the other stars.”

The death of Blake is one of the most blissful, radiant things ever recorded. “Just before he died his countenance became fair, his eyes brightened and he burst out into singing of the things he saw in heaven.”

I wish I could give more space to the divine simplicity and serenity of his visions. Happy are those who see! Poor and neglected, he livid in the valley of vision, fulfilled with joy anvil beauty.

I might multiply instances. It is from overfulness and not paucity of material that I pass on. I must mention the occult relation of animals to men which is so fully recognized in India, and of which many of us are vaguely and some clearly conscious. When that is understood as it is by the superconscious race beginning and slowly evolving “amid the half-formed creatures round,” our attitude towards the animal world will be completely changed by the new realization and consciousness. I shall give a closing chapter to this. But before quitting this subject of the higher consciousness I will give an interesting quotation from a modern realization of the higher consciousness.

“The subject was in the beginning of his thirty-sixth year. He and two friends had spent the evening reading the poets and especially Walt Whitman. They parted at midnight and he had a long drive. He was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment. All at once he found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame-colored cloud. For an instant he thought of fire, some sudden conflagration in the great city. The next, he knew the light was within himself. Directly afterwards came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Into his brain streamed one momentary lightning flash of the Brahmic splendor which has ever since lightened his life; upon his heart fell one drop of the Brahmic bliss, leaving thenceforward forever one after-taste of heaven. He saw and knew that the cosmos is not dead matter but a living Presence, that the universe is so ordered that all things work together for the good of each and all, and that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love. He claims he learned more within the few seconds during which the illumination lasted than in previous years of study, and much that no study could have ever taught. The illumination continued but a few minutes but the effect was ineffaceable. A new and higher order of ideas. Years after, he met a man who had had a large experience in the higher life. His conversations with this man threw a flood of light upon the meaning of what he himself had experienced. He saw the significance of the subjective light in the case of Paul and in that of Mohammed. The secret of Walt Whitman’s transcendent greatness was revealed to him. He came to the conclusion that there exists a family [I should myself say “a group”] living among but scarcely forming a part of ordinary humanity, whose members are spread abroad throughout the advanced races of mankind and throughout the last forty centuries. Their eyes have been opened and they have seen.”

Of this I think there is no doubt, and the more one examines history--especially the history of ideas--the more it will be conceded. Those who have the flash of Brahmic splendor--what Walt Whitman describes as "ineffable light, light rare, untellable, lighting the very light, beyond all signs, description, languages"--are not and cannot be as those who do not know. But their numbers will grow. This is the eventual destination of the whole human race.

## Chapter 15

In a book dealing with such a subject as the hidden and yet open mysteries it is impossible to end without considering more fully the occult bond subsisting between humanity and what is called animal life, the reason being that union and sympathy with all is one of the straight ways to the Land behind the Looking Glass of the senses. That life is admittedly related to us biologically and on the lower planes of consciousness so intimately that the sharper lines of distinction drawn between it and our own have tended to disappear in the light of modern knowledge. What remains--not to be discovered, for discovery has already been achieved, but to be fully understood--is the inward relation of the subconscious of humanity and of animals. That this relation recurs often in the vision of the higher consciousness is known to mystics, and there are cases where it impinges on what we call the Divine.

This bond has been acknowledged though ignorantly by every people known to us, savage or civilized, in lower or higher forms. Among savage peoples the totem beliefs cannot be dismissed as either chance or mere analogy. Study that wonderful book "The Golden Bough," take the totem stories rooted, as Fraser asserts, in myth and legend. Read them in the light of the ancient Indian teaching of the Unity of the Universal with, in, and through all that is, and new meanings will flash from every page. Myth and legend! We talk as if men deliberately sat down and invented childish tales to amuse or alarm themselves in guessing at the meaning of their surroundings. It should be remembered that in some ways the subconsciousness of the savage is more alive than that of the heir of city-bred generations--he has not left Nature far behind, he communes with her more closely, especially where she becomes obviously animate and vocal as in her children of fur and feather. He has learned from them mysterious things which he feels but cannot pass on to ears and eyes dimmed and dulled by civilization. Therefore he half deifies certain animals, places himself under their protection, walks in fear or in love of them, and attributes to them occult influences which may either degenerate into what we call magic or rise into the true psychic. Some of his legends are true but not on this plane of consciousness. Others shadow truth in parable.

This is seen on a much higher step of the ladder also. Take as an example the half or wholly animal gods of ancient Egypt. Why does Anubis, one of the gods of the dead, wear the mask of the jackal? Why was the Bull worshiped as Apis? Why does the deified beauty of Hathor bear the full-circle moon poised between the horns of a cow?

We are told by scholars that the Bull received worship as representing virility and reproductive power, and though it is difficult to trace the presentation in all instances this may be granted as representing the material point of view which the average mentality of mankind, incapable of penetrating beyond the surface, would naturally accept. It found even cruder and more obvious illustration. But still the Bull persists in India as the inseparable companion of the god who, seated on the loneliest Himalayan peaks, is known as the Great Ascetic, and to those who realized and realize that animals are like ourselves phenomena or manifestations of the highest Thought of the universe that explanation never did nor can cover all the ground.

There is a mystic bond between ourselves and them which nothing can break, causing an agony of revolt in the spirit most highly developed in psychics at the thought of any cruelty to them. It is realized that in this we are torturing not only ourselves, for all life is one immutably, but something deeper even than that, to our inevitable and well-nigh eternal loss.



Take the lines of Blake, that prince among mystics. (I write in a foreign country and without the book but the quotation is not far astray.)

“A robin-redbreast in a cage,  
Sets all heaven in a rage.  
A horse misused upon the road  
Calls to heaven for human blood.  
A dog starved at his master’s gate  
Predicts the ruin of the State.  
Each outcry of the hunted hare  
A fibre from the brain doth tear.”

And so it continues through its litany of cruel-ties and their punishments. I remember when this revelation broke on me in its final fulness. I was walking along a country lane in England and a despairing hunted hare broke through the hedge to my feet with the pack of beagles upon it. I could do nothing and there they tore it to bloody rags under the enthusiastic eyes of the Master (a woman) and the crowd. For a moment like Blake I saw them as devils who find their joy in the sight of agony. That passed and it became possible to remember the callousness produced by ignorance which the Buddha describes as the very mother of sin. And my thoughts traveled on to what in writing of vivisection Professor William James describes as “the helpless dog shrieking before his executioners,” in regretting that when suffering such torments the dog cannot have the satisfaction of understanding that his tortures may alleviate the sufferings of the human race which inflicts them. There are not many men who even when properly instructed would complacently submit to be dissected alive or infected with abominable diseases to serve that end, but even that side of the question is scarcely as important as the effect on the men who do these things and the nations which permit it. In the deepest reasons of the true occult such things are crimes and their so-called justification a plea of cowardly convenience or selfishness. And be it remembered that if such pleas are accepted they stretch further and to frightful ultimates. If it be said that manliness of a country must be fostered by these sports and its diseases cured by knowledge so attained, I reply that truer manliness may be learned by wise austerities of self-government, and rather than so cure diseases it is better to prevent them by adopting a simple and healthy way of living which also excludes the slaughter of animals for our food. Those who have cast aside the antiquated superstition of its necessity know the true gain to body and mind and still further and more profoundly to national prosperity in other ways. The wise and great Sir Thomas More in the reign of Henry VIII pointed out how far more costly and wasteful is pastoralism than agriculture: how little employment the first gives in comparison with the second and how pastoralism depopulates a countryside, whilst agriculture fills it with labor. “The sheep,” he says, “do eat up the men.”

As for the relation of food to psychic progress, the world-wide experience of the great faiths demonstrates this, as I have before pointed out.

To return: Note, in the high civilization of ancient Greece, how each divine being is attended by and partly manifested through some animal which becomes as it were a part of the divine effluence. Athene, the goddess of wisdom, must have her owl--wise to see in the dark that blinds others; Zeus his eagle soaring against the sun-light that dazzles lesser creatures, Hera her peacock, many-faceted in color as a jewel. In India the wise god, the Lord of Obstacles, wears the elephant’s head with his kindness of strength. By Vishnu, the Preserver, sits Garuda, his man-bird: Saraswati, the Divine Learning, rides her peacock. Passing on to China and Japan, amongst others one sees the Divine Compassion (Kwan-Yin in China, Kwannon in Japan) bearing the sacred fish. And this recalls the Christian symbol of the Fish connected

with the Greek initials of the Christ. Our Scriptures teem with sacred animals, from the Four Beasts of Revelation full of eyes within and without “who rest not day and night crying ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’” before the Throne, to the terrible image of the scapegoat driven out to die in the desert accursed and bearing the sins of the people--evolving later to that of the Lamb on whom it is declared are “laid the iniquities of us all.”

Analogies, illustrations only, many will say. But no. A symbol is neither; it is a deeply felt unity seen from quite another angle than that of the material. Felt, not stated in logical terms, but known none the less by the deep undying knowledge which makes us a living part of the universe.

Leaving the subject of the recognition of the divine consciousness in animals let us consider our daily relation with them. Note how when man is exiled by sin or misfortune from his fellow men he is never alone whilst *life* is with him. Animal companionship is truly the highest form of this, but man’s sanity and something greater in him can live on the presence of a growing plant whilst the companionship of a mouse, a rat, even a spider, can supply him with food for courage and cheerfulness, and solitude ceases to be solitude--for it is peopled with all the mysterious promises and fulfilments of eternal life.

And taking the more highly evolved forms of psychic life--such as the elephant, horse, cat, dog--what does not humanity owe to recognition of the unity between ourselves and them? What has not intercourse done for them also? It is a marvelous mutual reaction. India, never failing in courage of statement, proclaimed the unity between us and took as a part of her teaching the evolution of soul as well as body from those lowlier forms of life, asserting that man sums up in himself all living experience and could not be man were it otherwise. Such also is the view of Plato--greatest of the Greeks. If this is the explanation of some of the instincts and strange wisdoms latent in our psychology it explains much that is obscure otherwise and lights up many dark and profound sympathies which we take as chance and meaningless until we consider them deeply. This is very apparent to all who have acquainted themselves with folk-lore in all nations. Here we have talk of the occult powers of animals whether manifested in anger or protection. All the fairy-tales of the modern world that are worth while are founded on this folk-lore--it is alive and lovable in such stories as those of Grimm, Hans Andersen; it is absent in the modern mechanically invented fairy-tale written by those who no longer *know* and take refuge in a kind of artificial prettiness and glib flippancy of invention. I am sometimes inclined to think the latest of the Masters was George Macdonald. He knew. Read his “Phantastes,” “The Golden Key,” “The Carasoy,” “At the Back of the North Wind,” and you will understand that of all deep realizations in the world the understanding of animals is what we have most closely at hand for invaluable psychological advance. Cardinal Newman (I think in the *Apologia*) remarks that we know less of these lives lived about us than we do of the archangels. They concern us infinitely more at present, and the true understanding of them is a direct gateway into the higher forms of psychology.

I have seen a dog (who in other hands might have been “shrieking before his executioners”) lead a man or a woman straight into realization of Unity by the power of love (the great Unifier) and the knowledge it invariably brings with it. Such a result I have indicated in a short, profoundly true story, “The Openers of the Gate,” and I know that this is a subject worthy of closest observation and experiment. Not even the divinity of a child can open the Gate more surely than the other when it comes with the needed moment and to the person who is ready.

Furthermore, those who have gained foothold in this little-charted country are aware that some obscure physical stimulus which makes for health of mind and body comes from the

companionship of animals--especially the domesticated ones, but not necessarily these. The horse, dog, and cat occur at once to the mind with their different powers of stimulating and soothing by their mere presence. They can unfold in a man traits hidden even from his own inmost knowledge of himself. They can make revelation to him in the great mystery of instinct, which is one of their forms of the subconscious, and they can communicate with those who understand this in a way impossible of any analysis in words, but intimate and near and possibly prefiguring some means of understanding much closer than speech.

Among themselves their means of communication are most interesting. I have observed closely and with sympathy and understanding and am convinced that they have more than one means of this. One, I believe, corresponds with our telepathy and it is used also as an understanding between people who have reached a certain stage of psychic evolution and the subconscious of the animals they love and who love them. Another, also a good deal used between themselves, is contact. Expression and sound they use as we do but in a lesser degree, having quite other means. This mystic intercommunion may be touched too in the volleying of great winds or breathing breezes in trees, in the giant glee of waterfalls thundering down stark precipices, or in the rejoicing of the jubilant abyss of ocean. He that hath ears, let him hear! And hearing can be developed. And so on the psychic side also. We are discarding the belief that our ancestors were in all things more gullible or more mendacious than ourselves. They felt, they believed, and because they did so they set down intuition and belief as a record. We have dismissed both as ignorance and credulity at best; They held that in animal life, even in plant life, the psychic sense abides (though they did not call it that) in varying degree. They felt, if they did not say it, that these little servants of the Law also are of "the dateless brood of Heaven and Eternity." They share with us these experiences of love, life, and death of which Schopenhauer wrote:

"I should point out how Beginning and End meet together and how closely and intimately Eros is connected with Death: Now Amenthes, as the Egyptians called him, is not only the receiver but the giver of all things. Death is the reservoir of life. Everything comes from Orcus--Everything that is alive now and was once there. Could we but understand the great trick by which that is done all the world would be clear."

It is interesting in connection with this quotation to note that in the Song Celestial of India, dated about the beginning of our era, this verse occurs:

"Know that That which pervades this Universe is imperishable. This is never born and never dies, nor, after being, may its being cease. This unborn everlasting abiding Ancient is not slain when the body is slain. For to those who are born death is sure, and to the dead birth is sure."

If Schopenhauer had considered the Indian teachings more deeply than even he did I think he would have understood "the great trick" and have had a soul at rest. So, though they could not put it in that language, the wiser of our ancestors knew that death did not, could not extinguish the psyche of the animal they had loved or dreaded, and on that presumption they spoke and acted.

Again, to those who watch animals with care and understanding it is clear that what we dismiss with ignorant superiority as "mere instinct" covers many mysteries of which we might well covet the key. Pan instructs his children well. They are conscious of Presences to which we are blind. Nature, dumb to us, speaks to them myriad-tongued. It is possible to certain people to have moments of revelation through the consciousness of some animal very completely in touch with them, and though people are chary of talking of experiences scorned by the vast ignorances of mankind, those who have known can assert that knowledge lies

along that way,--as surely as on the physical plane we should see, hear, and smell in wholly new flashes of experience if the keenness of the animal sense could be added to ours.

They have their terrors also for us in many a ghostly parable.

In Japan the ghost-foxes clustered under mid-night trees with dreadful power upon any human being who opened a chink by which their influences could enter. Hiroshige has recorded with weird brush a gathering of these perilous creatures pallid in pale moonlight, waiting their moment of attack. In China the ghost-tiger slouches through snow to his dreadful work. But the animal-psyche is more often friendly and wise in the tales of all countries. A singing bird guides the way to the imprisoned princess who is the Ideal. The dog, who in life lifted his ears and stared at dangerous presences his master could not see, is swift after death to guard him from them. The cat, dangerous to those outside Realization, employs all her subtlety and wisdom in her master's aid when she returns as a spirit. And in the ancient belief animals are often shape-changers and can slip in and out of the human body at will. Some of these things are profound parables; others, as we shall learn, are true, when we ourselves have realized the immanence of the Eternal Spirit in all, and the world as it is rather than as it seems.

It is worth while waiting and watching for the sake of even a little understanding of the great truths which underlie the hints I have given. If, as many know, a lonely man or woman can rise to realization of the Love that moves the World through the companionship and understanding of one of "the lower animals" it is time we considered their manifestations more carefully. They know, they see, things we do not, just as we know, we see, things they cannot. Nothing but Realization can bring the necessary fusion.

And there is another form of union which can be gained from the gradual approach made through animal life,--oneness with the life of nature. Here too it is only possible to hint, for words are lacking. What it aims at is Realization of the Universal Spirit manifesting itself in personified forms in nature. Consider what the Greeks aimed at in their high teaching of the Universal Pan,--or All,--of the spirits innate in tree, mountain, rivers, and oceans. How can these things be devoid of an indwelling spirit? Florensky touches this in an essay on "The Humanitarian Roots of Idealism":

"Are there many people who regard a forest not merely as a collective pronoun and rhetorical embodiment--i.e., as a pure fiction--but as something unique, living? The real unity is a unity of self-consciousness. Are there many who recognize unity in a forest, i.e., the living soul of a forest taken as a whole,--Voodoo, wood-demon, Old Nick?"

Yes, just as in a crowd, a mob, the collective spirit possesses them and is one, moving them to deeds grotesque and terrible, so also the spirit of a forest is one and not the spirit expressed in the individual lives which compose it. They individually resemble the cells of the human body and collectively form a whole as does the body which is the summing up of the cells and has a higher psyche than any one of them.

I have realized this with insight in the great jungles of the tropics, but it is impossible to word why and how one knows what one knows, and to those who do not it is utter foolishness. There is nothing stranger than the contempt of one plane of knowledge for another. Doubtless the solution of all the riddles is simple enough and we have obscured simplicity by our own conceit of complexity.

Bain, says Ouspensky, defines genius as the power of perceiving analogies, and this is a definition which goes deep in the occult, though none can deny that surface analogies are misleading. He proceeds to quote Professor James's remarkable essay on Fechner as a percipient. I paraphrase, in my own words and with addition.

Fechner asserts that the entire earth we live on must have its own collective consciousness. So must each sun, moon and planet. If so how true was the inspiration of the Greeks in recognizing a great Earth Spirit to which they gave the worship due to a goddess. Fechner sees the Earth as a divine Spirit, the stars as Shakespeare saw them singing in their orbits, “still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.” So Fechner concludes it is with the human consciousness. Yours is yours and mine is mine. Yet they are known and used together in a higher consciousness than that of the human race into which they enter as constituent parts. To quote Fechner:

“On a certain morning I went out to walk. The fields were green, the birds sang, the dew glistened, the smoke was rising. Here and there a man appeared; a light as of transfiguration appeared on all things. It was only a little bit of earth. It was only one moment of her existence and yet as my look embraced her more and more it seemed to me not only so beautiful an idea but so true and clear a fact that she is an angel--an angel carrying me along with her into heaven. I asked myself how the opinions of men could ever have spun themselves away from life so far as to deem the Earth only a dry clod. But such an opinion as this passes for fantasy.”

Not to those who have assimilated the great Indian teaching of the Unity. They will subscribe to Fechner’s belief that human life and, I would add, animal and plant life are the sense-organs of the Earth-Soul. They know from what bow is loosed that unearthly shaft of beauty and how straight it flies to its mark. They know that together we all stand or fall and therefore it is that to any even partial understanding of the true occult, deep perception with regard to animal life is needed. It is an easier approach than to that of more remote and silent Nature. It has revelations to make far nearer our comprehension. It is as amazing as it is piteous that we have done so little yet to cross the gulf which we have permitted to divide the speechless from the speechful.

It is quite possible to argue that our acquisition of the art of speech with its limitations may have closed to us some other more psychic means of communication and that we have lost as well as gained by taking the line of least resistance. As the development of psychic powers proceeds it becomes certain that this is so. Telepathy and audible vision are not bounded by the feeble intermittent action of mouth and tongue, and it becomes evident that animals whose evolution has proceeded on different lines of development may have certain compensations very difficult for us to comprehend for their much less developed power of reason. Reason by no means has the last word on the Universe. There are points at which it becomes an obstacle, an ally of short-sighted materialism. Wordsworth and greater minds than his have been content to learn from what we proudly call the lower forms of life, and this necessity will be realized more fully as the spiritual thought of the East enkindles our own.

A great perfection in their utterance is achieved in the Song Celestial (the Bhagavad Gita) of India, written probably towards the beginning of our own era. Here is given the vision of Arjuna, the Pandava prince, when Krishna as the Soul of the Universe instructs him. In the precedent division Krishna has revealed to him the secret of the One in All and All in One--the royal, the hidden wisdom--and the Prince passioning with insight prays for a vision of things as they are. He says:

“Of Thy grace to me hast Thou related the supreme mystic tale called The One Over-Self, and thereby my bewilderment is dispelled. If Thou deemest, Lord, that it may be beheld by me, then show to me Thy changeless Self, O Sovereign of the Rule!”

The Lord spake.

“Behold, son of Pritha, the hundreds and thousands of my forms diverse, divine, various of colors and shapes. Behold now, O Wearer of the Hair-Knot, the whole Universe, moving and unmoving solely lodged in this my body and all else that thou art fain to see. But since with this thine own eye thou canst not see me I give thee a divine Eye [the higher consciousness]. Behold my sovereign Rule.”

Thus speaking, the Lord of the Rule showed to Pritha’s son his sovereign form supreme.

Of many mouths and eyes, of many marvelous aspects, of many divine ornaments, with uplifted weapons many and divine, the boundless God facing all ways.

There the son of Pandu beheld the whole universe in its manifold, solely lodged in the body of the God of Gods.

Thereupon the Wealth-Winner, smitten with amaze, his hair standing on end, bowed his head and with clasped hands spake to the God.

“I behold Thee massed in radiance on all sides glittering, scarce discernible, casting forth Splendor like fire and sun immeasurable.

“Thou art the Universe’s Supreme place of ward. Thou art the Warden of everlasting Law.

“As moths with exceeding speed pass into a lighted fire to perish, so pass the worlds with exceeding speed into Thy mouth to perish.”

This is possibly the most interesting statement of the vision of the higher consciousness in Eastern literature. In its vastness it includes all as the infinite must do. But it includes the infinitely little which is also a necessity of the Law, and the smallest thing which creeps or flies or floats its leaves on the ocean of air is as much and as necessary a part of it as we with our vaunted humanity. And there is not a leaf, or an insect, bird, animal, or man, which may not be an Opener of the Gate into the wondrous land which lies behind the glittering, misleading looking-glass of our senses. For, says the Song Celestial,

“When such a one draws in his sense-instruments altogether from the objects of the sense-instruments, as a tortoise draws in its limbs, he has wisdom abidingly set.”

And he being sense-free who holds a flower in his hand or looks into the eyes of a dog may know more truly than by the tongues of men and angels what the Divine is in the least of these his brethren and in himself. He will be aware and awake for all the hauntings of loveliness taking personal form in the deep solitude of the woods or on trackless oceans. Desiring no throne for himself, crowned and clothed with humility, he will claim no place in the universe because all is his. And fear can never touch him, because in the world of the true occult nothing can happen or exist that is not in conformity with law and therefore with a man’s own inmost knowledge of the absolute fitness of things. Given the pure heart and tested, disciplined will none need fear to adventure. But indeed these two are not easy to acquire and in any case the wise will begin with the simplicities and so go on from strength to strength.

For the teaching of Indian thought is that not only are all things one with each other and one with the One, but that each in its place is the very keystone of the arch of the universe and the crown of Law so that without its existence all would ruin and fall to pieces; and this applies to what we call the animal kingdom as fully as to ourselves. It is probable--nay, certain, that no wrong can be done to any member of this great Unity without sending a shuddering vibration to the outmost orbit of the outermost star. Only of late years has material science begun to realize that the transplantation of a plant or an animal from its own sphere to another may bring disaster in its train, and things material are but the faint shadow of the spiritual

reality behind them. One smiles in reading these great truths to think that they have been attacked because India, once their fervent believer, has in the mass followed other gods and has lost herself in the morasses of rite and formalism, though not even then with the materialistic results among ourselves. Her sufferings are material and temporary, her hopes spiritual and eternal even now. Whereas in the West our sufferings and hopes are alike for the most part material. But, be that as it may, truth being eternal can always afford to wait its day and demonstration.

The summing up of that matter is that because each thing is the keystone of the arch, when the soul is prepared by purity and high discipline the opening of the Gate may and probably will come by so simple a means and with such perfect naturalness that those skilled in the wisdom of this world would disdain it. But it comes and brings with it such blissful certainty of life, exquisite, abundant, eternal in and for all, that the man who knows may smile in thinking of earth's prizes.

Is the true occult, then, religion? Religion is certainly a part of it, for nothing is outside its circumference. And therefore the one impossible question to answer is, What is it not?

It is at least to know the truth in all things and to love it, to be a glad inhabitant of the darkness as of the light, to be the friend of the whole gradation of light to the highest, to call nothing common or unclean, knowing that all are one in a mounting perfection. Of such it may be said in the words of India:

“Death and fear I have not, nor caste nor creed, father and mother I have not, nor birth nor death nor friend nor foe, for I am Existence, Knowledge, Joy. I am the Blissful One, the Blissful One! How should I be bound by happiness or misery? No book nor pilgrimage nor ceremony can bind me. The body is not mine nor mine its decay, for I am Existence, Knowledge, Joy.”

## Epilogue

Looking back through these pages I realize from what very small beginnings, what a very humble and dubious observation of the “occult” I started and to what vast conclusions it led me. I do not for a moment say it would lead others in the same way, for every man has his own dharma as it is called in India, his own right, wrong, physical, circumstantial, spiritual consciousness by which alone he can live in any full sense.

I have inclined to wonder whether it would have been better to write the whole thing as a finished statement rather than as creeping painfully from step to step of insight and revelation as I have done. But I decided against recasting it, for its gradual climb is more human and is as it truly befell and therefore possibly more helpful to others in these perplexities. I have not of course told all my personal experiences. That would not be possible. But there is one thing I should like to make very clear. The powers can be attained. Of that there can be no doubt. The faiths are largely based upon the fact that many have attained them, and they bring great things in their train. But let it be remembered that those who have attained them set little value on the powers in themselves. *Realization* is what matters, not the power to startle or awe the multitude. Here we have all who have attained the higher consciousness, who have known the truth, in full agreement. The Buddha unfrocked a monk for exhibiting a “marvel” without due occasion and sternly discouraged such “show-off.” A very much later teacher in India, when a disciple came with triumph to show him that he had in sixteen years acquired the power of walking on the water, replied:

“Why waste sixteen years in attaining what the ferryman can do for you for a penny?”

St. Paul points out that the powers such as speaking with tongues and others must vanish away but that love (union) abides eternally. A great Indian saint said of these powers:

“They may have a certain use in establishing the truth of our statements; even a little glimpse gives faith that there is something beyond gross matter, but those who spend time on such things run into great dangers. These are *frontier* questions. The boundary line is always shifting.”

This was said by one who had practiced the sternest asceticism, who had frequently entered the state of ecstasy--who could so forget the body that it became perfectly insensitive.

Professor Radhakrishnan most truly says:

“The supernormal powers are really obstacles to *Samadhi* [the higher form of consciousness]. They are by-products of the higher life. They are the flowers we pick on the road though the true seeker does not set out to gather them. He who falls a victim to the magical powers goes rapidly downward. Devotion to the Divine is one of the aids to Yoga.”

These warnings are very necessary, for in India and elsewhere are instances of the degradation of this research into most repulsive and terrible practices and consequences. From these the original Yoga is pure. But, as in all mountain-climbing, the heights have their perils. I could multiply instances of the teachings of the saints in all the faiths that the power to use the super-normal in this way matters nothing and may be dangerous unless in circumstances of perfect understanding. What does matter is to understand, to know, to realize. I think this cannot be too strongly dwelt upon. I will end with another truth. In India the wisest have never talked of good and evil. They have talked of knowledge and ignorance.



And those two words cover the whole realm of the “occult” and the whole of life, and may themselves be summed up and obliterated in the one word--

“REALIZATION”

For that is the key of the universe, and it sits above “good and evil.”

I conclude with a quotation from Professor Radhakrishnan that offers the conclusion to which my own experiences and those of many others have led me.

“The normal limits of human vision are not the limits of the universe. There are other worlds than that which our senses reveal to us, other senses than those which we share with the lower animals, other forces than those of material nature. Most of us go through life with eyes half shut and with dull minds and heavy hearts. It is good to know that the ancient thinkers required us to realize the possibilities of the soul in solitude and silence and to transform the flashing and fading moments of vision into a steady light which could illumine the long years of life.”

This is the true Occult.

THE END

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**I'm Julie, the woman who runs [Global Grey](#) - the website where this ebook was published. These are my own formatted editions, and I hope you enjoyed reading this particular one.**

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