

RESURGENT CULTURE



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ABOUT THIS EDITION

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PREFACE

What man needs is not philosophy or religion in the academic or formalistic sense of the term, but ability to think rightly. The malady of the age is not absence of philosophy or even irreligion but wrong thinking and a vanity which passes for knowledge. Though it is difficult to define right thinking, it cannot be denied that it is the goal of the aspirations of everyone. It is not that anyone would deliberately wish to think wrongly, and wrong thinking, is that attitude of the mind, where the false is mistaken for the true. This is a deep-rooted prejudice which it is hard for most people to eradicate. Error has become so much a part of man's thinking that there seems to be no one in position to point it out. One cannot, at the same time, be a judge and also a party summoned for examination. It is necessary that some effort has to be put forth in tackling the problem in its core.

There is often a complaint that today the world has lost all philosophical or religious consciousness and that there is no receptivity to higher values. In this connection it is always forgotten that the higher values do not suddenly fall from the skies and they have to be inculcated into the mind with some care. It is impossible that consciousness can reject truth, for the two are inseparably related to each other, and, in their highest states, the two are one. What is needed is the presentation of truth in a proper form, fitted to the particular stage in which human consciousness finds itself. What is said should be neither too much nor too little, but suitably adapted to a given situation of the human mind.

This means that the educational method varies for the different levels and, though the same truth can be taught to all, it cannot be taught to everyone in the same way. Methods of instruction differ, though the truth does not vary. Our present-day education has become a failure because of the wrong methods adopted in stuffing the student's mind with information that cannot be easily digested. Education is not accumulation of information but assimilation of reality by degrees. When educationists forget this fundamental truth

behind the educational process, education becomes a travesty and life a meaningless adventure. This is exactly the condition in which most people find themselves to day and there cannot be remedy unless a vigorous attempt is made to come face to face with the main point in question.

There is also a complaint that life is very busy and there is no time for philosophy or religion. But philosophy and religion are not activities which require time,—they are not works to be done but identical with right thinking, which does not require of one time. Just as one does not require time to exist, though time may be needed for doing something, the question of lack of time does not arise in the case of an effort to think rightly. It is like maintenance of health, which is more a natural condition to be aspired for than a business to be dealt with or executed.

Teachers of philosophy and religion have been persistently making the mistake of suddenly commencing to teach the outer forms rather than the essence of this knowledge. What the students require to be told in the beginning is not Plato, Kant or Sankara; Hinduism, Buddhism, or Christianity, but the rationality behind the structure of existence and life as a whole, a systematic envisagement of the actual facts of life in their completeness and their ultimateness, so that the real problem before us is faced both inwardly and outwardly, at a single grasp. It may be called, if we would so like it, the philosophy and psychology of religion, understood in its proper sense, and not in terms of the schools of thought in the history of philosophy or the forms of practice in the history of religion. It should always be remembered that the student's mind is to be approached with caution, for it rejects what it cannot understand or absorb into its constitution.

To be rational is not to be dogmatic but sympathetic and tolerant. Toleration is the mark of real religion. It is impossible to have one religion for the whole world in its outer form, though its essence and content are one, even as

we cannot have a common form of diet for the whole world, though it is true that everyone needs food. Religion is not so much practice of form as living of its essence. When this is achieved, true culture emerges.

It is my intention to present to modern students certain broad outlines of the fundamental principles that can pave the way for world-understanding and conduce not only to social prosperity but also personal solace and real freedom which everyone seeks. I have attempted to lay in this book the foundations of that impersonal meaning on which the personal forms of philosophy and religion are constructed. I shall regard myself as amply rewarded if the studentworld finds here profound suggestions for deep thinking and research.

Swami Krishnananda
Sivanandanagar,
1st March, 1968

Discourse I

THE GOAL OF LIFE

What Is Truth?

We say we live in a world, because we perceive and experience certain phenomena which impinge on our senses and make us feel that we are in an objective environment. This supposed environment in which we appear to be placed is felt by us to be a complex situation that influences not only our individual personalities but also other individuals whose existence we observe intuitively, as it were. We are aware, by analysis, experiment and observation, that broadly speaking, we have three avenues of knowledge, two of which are in direct relation to our normal world-experience, and one is unknown to most of us. These channels of perception are sense, reason and intuition.

Sense-perception reveals to us that we are in a world from which we are cut off as knowing subjects. The world, again, is separated from us as a non-intelligent principle placed in the context of an object which is differentiated from the knowing subject in that the latter is endowed with a principle which we call intelligence, while the former is apparently bereft of it. And how do we perceive the world through our senses?

Any cautious intellect will be able to understand that the special feature that we observe as characterising anything in the world is change. Change appears to be the order of things. Everything moves, flows is in a state of becoming. We have never seen, nor have we any chance of seeing, anything in this world, that is not subject to some kind of transformation or the other. Even our bodies, our senses, nay, even our own minds exhibit this subjection to the inexorable law of change. In short, we are in a process, not being.

And how do we know that there is change? The obvious answer would be that we see it. But here we have to raise a

question, as rational beings who will not be easily satisfied by a dogmatic statement that there is change just because we see it. A truly great person is he who has the patience and the ability to first investigate himself, his power of knowledge and his fitness for judging the nature of things. Are we correct in assessing the value of the phenomena that we observe through our senses? What is the standard of correctness? When we say that everything in the world changes, do we also include ourselves in all that changes? Now, just imagine: can we know that something changes or is in a state of transformation, if we ourselves are a part of this observed flux? Can there be knowledge of change if the knower himself changes with the change? The fact that it is possible for us to recognise such a thing as movement or process shows that we somehow find ourselves standing as witnesses of what we observe. For the observer himself cannot be observed, and change itself cannot be its own knower. We say that a river flows, because the bed of the river itself does not flow, and we do not flow with the waters but stand as witnesses on the bank. This is an observation easy of understanding, that we cannot know the distinction between one part of a process and another unless we, as observing intelligences, are able to bring together the two distinguished parts by a link of understanding or consciousness which cannot belong to any one of the parts, and which, yet, has to be equally present to both the parts. The knower is different from the known.

Extending this observation to the entire world of perception, we come to the conclusion that, if at all it should be possible for us to know any such thing as a world,—its contents and diversities,—we have to accept, by implication, that our consciousness should be at least as wide as what we know, and this consciousness cannot be subject to separation or isolation as the perceptible objects are. Here we come to the crux of philosophy, the pivot of true scientific thinking. Are we in a world of truth?

And what is truth? A great philosopher-saint of ancient India, Swami Vidyaranya, has observed in his great work, the Panchadasi: *Satyatvam Badharahityam*—Truth is that which stands the test of the principle of non-contradiction. What is never seen to change at any time, what is not subject to transcendence by any kind of experience, what is not dependent on anything else, what is its own proof and requires not other proof to establish its existence, is truth. Truth is that which is absolutely necessary to account for our experiences in life, and which, when negated or abrogated, contradicts all experience, and cuts the ground from under our feet. Truth is the ultimate Reality of the universe, internal as well as external,—gross, subtle and causal.

Modern Science: Its Implication

As students of modern science, and as enlightened persons interested in studying the advances of present-day researches in the realm of physics, you would be acquainted with the fact that science today has surpassed the old view that the world is made up of crass material stuff, or that it is really diversified in the manner we ordinarily see with our senses. Once upon a time we were told that the constituents of the physical world could be reduced to less than a hundred ultimate principles,—call them chemical substances. Later came the discovery that these substances are not really ultimate but could be reduced to minuter elements called atoms which were supposed to differ from one another in certain specific characters they possessed. But research did not end here. Today we are said to be placed in a mysterious universe of forces, of electrical charges, of dynamic powers which are discovered to be the essence of even the atoms. Even the pluralistic notions involved at the present moment in the concept of the stuff of which the atoms are made are slowly getting narrowed down to the recognition of an immanent energy which is supposed to be the matrix of all things, the essence of the world, of our own bodies. We are in a world of energy, in which there cannot be any further

differentiation, and which is not merely the cause of the substances of the world but is itself the real substances. We are told that this energy is called light when it has an impact on the retina of our eyes, is called sound when it impinges on the eardrum, is itself taste, touch and smell in accordance with the senses by which we come to feel its presence. It looks, of course, a wonder that we assert our own segregated bodily existences, with their passions and prejudices, while intellectually we are made to conclude that even our bodies are in essence parts of the cosmos of forces. And if we have to believe in what we understand to be the truth, we have no right even to think as individual personalities. We are the cosmos!

Well, let us agree that we are in a universe of energy, as the latest developments in modern physics would indicate. But what is the nature of this energy? What is it made of, and what do we mean by energy? Is it a quantitative substance, an object with dimension, and has it any quality, without which we can know nothing at all? You know, we usually say that something is seen because we observe a quality in it, a character which enables us to differentiate it from another. Has the cosmic energy of the scientist any such perceivable quality? If it has either a quantity or a quality it should be a material substance, and has to be known by something other than itself, viz., an illuminating intelligence.

Here it will not be out of place if I make a reference to a habit that is prevalent among man which makes out that even intelligence is an off-shoot of matter. Now, such a contention really defeats itself, because it involves a self-contradiction. Is matter identical with or different from intelligence? If it is one with intelligence, then what prevents us from assuming that there is only intelligence and no such thing as matter devoid of it, especially as it is very clear that we cannot even assert the existence of matter without an intelligent mind? On the other hand, if matter is different from intelligence, what is it that distinguishes matter from

intelligence? Is this differentiating principle matter itself, or is it intelligence? For, there cannot be a third thing. If the difference is matter, then we have to find out the difference between this first difference and intelligence, which argument would lead to an infinite regress. If the difference is intelligence, we will find ourselves in no better predicament, for, again, there would be an infinite regress. Moreover, it is incorrect to think that intelligence, whose essential illuminating character is quite different from the nature of matter, can be its effect. The cause should be at least as rich as the effect. If there is intelligence in the effect, it should be present in the cause, also. Matter would itself be then conceived as a reservoir of intelligence.

More careful physicists like Arthur Eddington and James Jeans have perforce jumped from the land of physics to that of metaphysics. Eddington comes to assert a general or universal consciousness, a universal mind-stuff of the universe; and to Jeans the world is more like a huge mathematical mind manifesting itself, than anything else. The great genius of modern science, Albert Einstein, the discoverer of the theory of relativity, takes us, by the implication of his discovery, to a realm where our ordinary space and time are not, and our objects lose their significance and meaning in a vision integrating our experiences in an incredible manner. He was forced in his later years to accept, by feeling, the presence of a pervading intelligence which staggers human thinking and makes human speech dumb. We are in such a world, a world of mysterious truths which we cannot comprehend. Here we revert from science to philosophy.

The Changeless Consciousness

The methods of philosophy are usually certain developments of the logical methods of thinking and rationalistic processes of thought. Our faculties of understanding, thinking, feeling and willing are, however, found to be subject to certain fixed categories, such as

quantity, quality, relation and mode, or, to put it concisely, space, time and cause. On a careful examination it is seen that, even as the findings of science are not ultimately reliable due to their being influenced by the changing characteristics of the senses of perception and the instruments of observation, the philosophical method, as it is usually understood by many, is not free from certain types of subjection to outward laws. It may be that these restrictive laws are so intimately related to the constitution of the mind that it is ordinarily impassable to distinguish between the operation of these laws and the ways of thinking. But, nevertheless, it is a restriction to the fuller freedom that is necessary to make any categorical judgment of truth. For we can never see, or hear, or even think anything outside the limitations imposed on us by the presence of such fundamental categories of phenomenal experience as space, time and causation. The moment we think, we think in terms of space, quantity, extension and succession. This is an old prejudice of the mind, which it is not able to overcome. This inseparable relation that is mysteriously established between our essential modes of thought and the laws restricting them goes by the names of relativity, phenomenality, and the like. And under these circumstances, truth unchangeable cannot be known. Truth can brook not limitation of any kind, for it is established not on any other proof of knowledge or mode of perception, but in itself.

The foregoing analysis reveals the fact that our entire waking experience, being confined to the heavy operations of the categories of the understanding, or thinking, is unsuited to any genuine attempt at the discovery of truth. Our dream-experience fares no better: it is, in the structure of its activities, similar to the waking experience. Unfortunately, we know of no other conscious human experience than waking and dreaming. Thus it is that we often hear it said that truth is not given to the human mind. Profounder methods of philosophy, such as those adumbrated in the system of the Vedanta, take into consideration the deeper

implications of the state of deep sleep, which has been very unwisely set aside by most of the Western philosophers in their analyses. We are bereft of all consciousness in the state of dreamless sleep, we cannot know ever our own existence then. But that we do exist in sleep cannot be gainsaid. Our existence here seems to be asserted notwithstanding the absence of the consciousness of existence! But if you think carefully you will notice that no assertion of any kind is possible without some sort of consciousness. And yet, what is it that makes us affirm ourselves in sleep? Definitely, not direct perception. We have a memory of having slept and of our having existed prior to our falling asleep. Yesterday I was, and today I am,—thus does the individual assert itself. A phenomenon of this type discloses the fact of there being a connecting link between the state preceding sleep and the one succeeding it. The prior and the later states being involved in consciousness, we cannot, as we have already observed above, suppose that the link between them can be an unconscious principle. The link, too, has to be a conscious one. We never assert that we are ignorant beings in our essence; even a stupid man does not wish to be called so. The essence of intelligence is continuously affirmed, even unwittingly.

Further, that we have a memory of sleep shows that a kind of perception was going on even in sleep, for there can be no memory without a previous perception, and no perception can have a meaning unless it is attended with consciousness. If memory has a meaning, the conscious perception that ought necessarily to lie antecedent to it cannot be denied. We had consciousness, and we existed as consciousness in deep sleep; but we knew it not. Some mysterious darkness was veiling us. And this veil is nothing but the inactive latency of the possibility of objective experience in terms of the phenomenal categories described above.

The Vedanta, thus, takes us beneath the surface and makes us dive into an ocean where we discover the pearl of truth, the truth that we are essentially not only conscious existences but consciousness itself. We are not beings possessing consciousness as an attribute of ourselves, for then we would be reduced to unconscious bases of a conscious attribute. This cannot be, because the knower can never be said to be an unconscious principle. The knower ought to be consciousness, not even a mere possessor of consciousness as a quality. Our existence then, is an indescribable splendour surpassing all light and radiance known to us in this world. Saints and sages point out that words are not meant to describe the transcendent Being, for all speech, together with the mind, is in the position of an after-effect and cannot be expected to illumine its own cause and presupposition. This consciousness, which is our primal essence, cannot be conceived to be limited in any way for the very idea of the limitation of consciousness would prove that consciousness is beyond limitation. The idea of a boundary proves that there is simultaneously the idea of the existence of something outside the boundary. To set limits to consciousness would be a self-contradiction; the limitation cannot be outside the purview of consciousness. Consciousness is infinite.

The consciousness of the continuity of our personalities through the various vicissitudes and changes of life goes to prove that it itself is changeless. The fact that it is indivisible proves that it is infinite. To know this, then, is to know truth. This alone can be the great uncontradictable experience. This *we really are*. In knowing this we know ourselves as we truly exist. This defies all diversity, and, consequently, all desire, attachment, hatred, anger prejudice, and the like.

The Underlying Unity

In this connection it would be profitable for you if I recall to your memory an interesting system of philosophy expounded in recent times by the famous professor, Alfred

North Whitehead, on the basis of the discoveries made by Einstein in his theory of relativity. It is the opinion of Whitehead, not a mere fantastic belief but a rational conviction, the things in the world do not exist as localised bodies or static substances in a three-dimensional space, but are really certain phases of force entering into one another and forming a marvellous completeness wherein everything is a cause and an effect at the same time from different points of view. In an interrelated cosmic family we cannot say which is dependent on what, for all are mutually included, and nothing is independent. There can be no being but only becoming and process in this world of relativity. The Vedanta, however, goes above the concept of Whitehead and envisages the Eternal Being existing at the background of the world process. In fact, the conclusions of the theory of relativity shift the entire position of scientific thinking and even the commonplace method of popular philosophy, and brings about a reorientation in the conception of matter, motion and force. The discovery that perceptions depend on the position and velocity of the observers makes it impossible for one to state anything as an invariable truth about the things of the world. Curiously enough, the observers themselves would be relative to one another, and there would be none to observe even the fact of relativity! Here we rise to a tremendous intuition, above all thought, and visualise an incredible infinite which ought to be the real Observer of the whole universe of relativity. The 'ingressive evolution' of Whitehead gives a hint to a terrific unity underlying all evolutionary process. Whitehead himself does not seem to have noticed the great significance of his system,—it points to something beyond what he intended to tell us. We are lifted to the eternal, the immortal.

Let me make the matter clear to you by another observation. You are acquainted with principle of gravitation, a law by which bodies attract one another in a particular manner. The centres of gravity should be relative, because there is attraction of everything towards everything else,

under the governance of the same law. Not only material objects and masses of matter but even we as bodies are relative centres of gravity, determining one another in characteristic as well as existence. That there is an internal relationship among bodies, which is exhibited in the form of gravitation and attraction, indicated that the bodies of the universe are in some mysterious way held together by a single force—we may call it the universal centre of gravity. Unless such a centre is accepted, the system, the order and the method observed in the working of the universe cannot be explained. Mystic philosophers are used to say that this cosmic centre is everywhere, with its circumference nowhere. We may call this the God of the universe, if we so wish.

We know the world; but what about that by which we know it? How can we know the knower? The great sage, Yajnavalkya, prominent in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, makes a significant reference in his immortal instructions to his consort, Maitreyi, to the awe-inspiring existence of the Self which is the seer and the knower of all things, but which itself cannot be an object of anyone's knowledge. This Self is not an element among many others in the world, for it is the observer of the elements. The two different elements—beginning from two common objects up to the individual as set against the universe,—cannot be known except by a consciousness which is all-embracing. The intimacy that subsists between the knower and the known is accounted for by the objects being phases of *Vishayachaitanya*, or consciousness in a state of configuration. We understand, then, that matter is nothing but spirit discerned by the senses.

A great French philosopher once sat contemplating on the problem of human experience, on the methods of arriving at truth, and on the possibilities of confronting errors at every step in this hazardous attempt. He thought: May be that I do not see clearly, nor think rightly. It may be that I am

forced by some imp to think wrongly and to observe imperfectly and distortedly. It is likely that nothing that I see or know is certain or capable of being designated as an uncontradictable truth. Everything may be doubtful. I may doubt the existence of my body, of the world or even the validity of the very processes of my thought. There is only a sea of doubt, nothing else. Well, accepting this position tentatively, can I come to the conclusion that the true state of affairs is that there is only doubt, doubt about even my own self, and nothing beyond? Though it may be a fact that I have the right to doubt or disbelieve everything, I have definitely not warrant to doubt that I doubt. The fact of doubting itself cannot be doubted. The doubter is indubitable. The doubter exists as an uncontradictable fact. I am, and this cannot be doubted.

And I know that I am finite. I have an innate feeling that I have to be perfect, that I should achieve unconditional perfection. Naturally, this means that I should be unrestricted and be wanting in nothing. In short, I wish to possess the infinite, and I can conceive of it as an idea. Now, this idea of perfection, of infinitude, has arisen in me, and this idea, being an effect, must have a cause which is at least equal to it. The idea arises from me, and therefore I am the cause of it. The idea, having relevance to the infinite, presupposes my own existence as having a similar relevancy. An idea of the infinite cannot be supposed to arise from a finite cause. I should be essentially infinite. We may give this stupendous Being any name, it matters little. That there is an intimate relation between the essence of the subjective knower and the reality of the objective universe cannot be doubted. In fact the two are one and form a unitary being. Reality is non-dual.

For purpose of clarity in understanding, we may explain the constitution of the universe as in many respects similar to that of our own body. Our body is not an indivisible whole; it is made up of discrete organisms, called cells. Each cell is

different from the other, with gap in between, and yet we have a definite feeling that we are one impartite personality. The consciousness that is immanent in us as a single being is responsible for this feeling. Such a feeling expanded to the cosmos would be the feeling of God. This God-consciousness stands opposed to the individual body-consciousness in that the latter has an object to be known outside it, while the former is an integral fullness, a plenum outside which nothing can be. In the assertion of the cosmic I, everything existent or conceivable is included.

A great hymn of the Rig-Veda, called the Purusha-Sukta, or the Hymn of the Cosmic Man, visualises in a grand poetic image the Supreme Being as endowed with thousands of limbs, thousands of heads, eyes, feet, and so on. All that was, is and shall be is said to be comprehended within this Almighty Purusha. The idea behind this majestic vision is that the universe is one body, and even as the different limbs of our body are integrated in our personal and individual consciousness, the different limbs of the universe—including our own bodies,—are integrated as sublimated essences in the Almighty, whom we call God, Isvara, the Essence, the Substance, the Reality, etc. A correct understanding of the significance of this concept of truth will at once reveal to us our position in the universe, our relation to others, and our supreme duty in life. What can be a higher duty and a responsibility than to strain every nerve of ours in attaining this consummation of our existence in the Absolute! Where can be a goal other than this for us to achieve in the different walks of our life? Viewed in this way,—and there can be no other way worth the name,—the foremost duty of the human being is anything that is directly or indirectly connected with the realisation of this highest end. We live for this, we move towards this, and we have our being in this. When we know this, and this feeling enters deeply into our hearts, we live the true life, and we are blessed.

Discourse II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE INNER MAN

Relativity of Perception

We noticed that our essential Self is the highest reality. Even doubt and denial of it really affirm it. In our ordinary external life we are prone to believe that our eyes are the seers of objects. This is the uncritical opinion of the common man. But it is not difficult to perceive that the eyes by themselves have not the power to know things independently. The matter comes into high relief in the states of dream and deep sleep, when, even if the eyes be kept open, nothing external can be seen or observed. No sense-organ seems to function in these states. The ears, even if they are kept open, cannot hear sounds. If we place a few particles of sugar on the tongue of a sleeping man, he will produce no reaction and have no taste of it. The very existence of a body is then, for all practical purposes, negated. The reason, as you will immediately understand it, is that the mind in these two states is withdrawn from the body and maintains no contact with the senses of knowledge. When the mind pervades and activates the senses, they seem to work as intelligent agents of knowledge. But then they are deprived of relation with the mind, they lose all their value. The mind is the real perceiver, and to it even the sense organs, such as the eyes, stand in the position of objects.

But deeper analysis has shown us that even the mind has an objective character, inasmuch as it is seen to be deprived of all life in the states of swoon and deep sleep. It is intelligent when it is awake but non-intelligent when it is made to wind up and adjourn its activities. A consciousness higher than the mind enlivens it and gives it meaning. The mind is a psychological organ, not a metaphysical principle. It is on account of the relative activities of the mind that we have a diversity of experience in the world. It is the mind that creates a gulf between the objects and our reactions to them, between existence and value. This distinction is made not

only in respect of the things of the outside world but also the different aspects of our own personality, viz., the physical body made up of the five gross elements,—earth, water, fire, air and ether—; the vital body consisting of the vital forces and the organs of motor activity; the mental body consisting of the faculties of understanding, feeling, willing, memory and the like, together with the five senses of perception; and a primal causal element which is experienced by us in the state of deep sleep. For purpose of simplicity we may use the term mind to designate all the psychological functions together. The manner in which the external world is felt by the mind is very much dependent on the latter's constitution and inherent shortcomings.

The above thesis is amply demonstrated in the several experiences of our daily life. Take for example a mother's attitude to her son. It appears that the son of an old mother had to go abroad on military service and did not return home for several years. A rumour seems to have been spread that the son passed away in a foreign land, and the shocking news broke the heart of the mother. The fact, however, was that the news was unfounded and the son was alive. Just imagine the situation wherein the condition of the son is the cause of psychological experience by the mother. It is not that the health and the life of the son is the cause of the happiness of the mother, for, if that were so, the mother, in the instance cited, ought to have been happy, because nothing untoward had actually happened to the son. Nor can it be said that the sorrow of the son, or even his death, is the cause of the sorrow of the mother, for the mother would have been quite happy even if the son were dead, if only that news would not reach her. What, then, is the central pivot of a conscious experience? Not so much an external object or an event as an internal feeling and a reaction.

Life a Process and Activity

The philosophy of the Vedanta makes a distinction between existence as such and the experience of any type of

existence. We may say, if we would like, that a fact or an existence is absolute so far as it goes, and a subjective experience of it is relative. Human life is a psychological process, and not an Immutable existence. A knowledge of the functions of the mind is essential to understand life in its fullness. In the observation of the mind we can have no instrument, such as the ones we use in observing, measuring, examining or cleaning outward things. The mind is the student as well as the object of study, when life as a whole is the theme that we wish to investigate and comprehend. In a famous image given in the Kathopanishad, the inner self of man is compared to a lord seated in a chariot, the body to the chariot, the intellect to the charioteer, the mind to the reins, the senses to the horses pulling the chariot, and the objects of the senses to the roads along which the chariot is driven. The Upanishad gives a caution that the supreme state can be reached only by him who has as his charioteer a powerfully discriminative intellect which directs the restive horses of the senses with the aid of the reins of the mind, and not by any one else who may have a bad charioteer. The meaning of this analogy is that the human individuality and personality are outer forms and instruments to be properly used by the inner directive intelligence towards the great destination of life, and not be taken as ends in themselves or mistaken for reality as such.

Not only the body and the senses but even the self conceived as a limited individual centre of consciousness is a process of intense activity, moving, changing and evolving incessantly. The individual self is the basis of knowledge as well as action. Due to confinement to a spatial existence the individual self is dominated over and harassed by certain urges, felt within itself, pointing to certain external objects and states. The desire for food, clothing and shelter, for name, fame, power, sleep, and sex, often appears in the human individual as a violent force which cannot be easily subdued or even intelligently controlled. These deep-rooted urges are an immediate consequence of the self's restriction

to a dualistic perception of the world and an arrogation of ultimate selfhood to itself, while the truth is otherwise. The individual has a morbid habit of unconsciously asserting itself as the centre of experience and considering the other contents of the universe as adjectives or subsidiary elements meant to bring satisfaction to it in some way or the other. In this respect, we should say that all forms of human knowledge are different types of activity to achieve certain ends other than themselves. Man never is, he is always to be. This predicament is, as it would be clear, a corollary of the feeling that we are localised entities forming a mechanical whole, which we call the universe, of which it seems that we can never have a simultaneous knowledge. Our perceptions are always in a series, we know things one after another, and not at one stroke. We never see one and the same picture at two given moments in a cinematographic projection, but yet we seem to see a continuity of the existence of forms on account of a very quick succession and motion of the pictures. Strictly speaking, we never see one and the same thing in a particular act of perception, but the rapidity of the psychoses is so tremendous that there is an illusion of the perception of a static existence. And above all, there is that absolute Self behind all mental functions, from which these draw sustenance, and borrow existence as well, as light.

Metaphysics of Thought and Its Functions

Every action, viewed in this light, becomes a symptom of the restlessness of the relative consciousness in any of the human sheaths in which it is enclosed. There is an unceasing attempt on its part to break boundaries, to overcome all limitations and to transcend itself at every step. The environment called life in which it finds itself is only an opportunity provided to it to seek and find what it wishes to have in order to exceed itself in experience in the different stages of evolution. The universe is a vast field of psychological experience of multitudinous centres of individuality for working out their deserts by way of

objective experience. The universe is another name for experience by a cosmic mind, of which the relative minds are refractive aspects and parts. The desirable and the undesirable in life are nothing but certain consequences which logically follow the whimsical and unmethodical desires of the ignorant individuals who know not their own ultimate destination. What is desirable today need not be so tomorrow, and today's painful experience may be a blessing for the future. It does not mean that all that we want is always the good. We often grope in darkness and find a cup of poison which we avidly drink, while we are really in search of some soothing food to appease our hunger. There is no error in the world or the objects; it is in the painful fact that we have no knowledge of what is really good for us. It is not enough if a physician knows merely that a particular drug has the power to suppress a particular ailment, he has also to know what other reactions the drug will produce in the living organism. In our life, the mind has to act as its own physician, and in this work it has to exercise great vigilance born of right perception. No thought, feeling or willing can be said to be healthy when it is not in consonance with the health and peace of the universe as a whole. That we are members of a single undivided family demands that we have to be mutually co-operative, and think and act in terms of mutual welfare, which, in the end, is the welfare of the whole. When this knowledge is not given to the mind, it acts blindly and errs with the idea that what appears to bring a temporary sensation of pleasure to it is the true and the good. When it does not learn the lesson of life by enlightened reason, it has to learn it by pain.

The mind, in the Vedanta philosophy, is conceived not as any independent entity opposed to matter, as is the case in several systems of Western philosophy, but is understood to be an aspect of the material principle itself appearing in a more rarefied form. The psychology of the Vedanta is a highly scientific methodology evolved out of the fundamental concept that the supreme reality is Absolute Consciousness

and anything that may seem to be opposed to it can only be a phase of itself. The fivefold base of objective perception, viz., sound, touch, form, taste and smell, is found to be inseparable from and reciprocally related to the senses of knowledge working under the direction of the mind. The theory of the Vedanta is that the mind, constituting mainly the functions of understanding, thinking, feeling, remembering and willing, is the resultant of the collective totality of the purified forms of the essences of the five substrata of sensations enumerated above. The sympathy that is observed between sensations and their objects is thus explained by the fact that the cause of the appearances of the two are essentially the same. Not only this. There is the presupposition of the greater truth that at the background of the mind, the senses and their objects, there is the Absolute itself as their very reality. The Vedanta psychology is a direct consequence of its basic metaphysics which lays down that existence is non-dual. It is on this foundation of the ultimate inseparability of the knower and the known that we have to envisage the law governing the universe and regulating individual and social life.

The highest law is accordingly conceived as Dharma based on Rita and Satya. Rita and Satya are two terms that occur originally in the Vedas, signifying the eternal cosmic order and the same as manifest in the diversified world. Dharma is nothing but one's duty as an individual stationed in the cosmos, as its integral part. This at once explains by implication one's duty as an individual stationed in the cosmos, as its integral part. This at once explains by implication one's duty towards family, society, the nation and the world at large. The fulfilment of this Dharma is expected to be achieved not in a slipshod way or by leaps and bounds, but in a gradual manner following closely the evolutionary process of the cosmos. Material welfare, the enjoyment of desires and relations to society are given due consideration and are equally regulated by Dharma which, at the same time, works with Moksha or the ultimate realisation of the

infinite as its aim. Dharma is the ethical value, Artha the material and the economic value, Kama the vital value and Moksha the infinite value of life. As the infinite included all the finites, the aspiration for Moksha naturally implies the fulfilment of the ends of the other desires and the execution of all other duties in life. This sublime aspiration arises in the mind when it has an inherent feeling of 'enough' with the things of the world. This is the 'divine discontent' which acts as a forerunner of the struggle of the spirit to grasp and know itself in the Absolute. It is here that true knowledge dawns.

Ordinary psychological experience is usually marked off from a life of spiritual insight. The path of the pleasant is differentiated from the way of the good. What the senses report to us need not necessarily be the true or the good. Often they give us false intimations and involve us in tantalising mirages which recede from us as we try to approach them. It is because of this unfortunate predicament that we go on experimenting with one object after another, seeking final satisfaction, but do not find it anywhere. This fruitless pursuit continues until thinking of benefit in terms of separateness discovers until its own futility and gives way to a search for peace in terms of more and more integrated realms of being. The individual expands to the family, the family to the community, the community to a wider society or the nation, the nation to the whole world, and the world to the cosmos, wherein the process of expansion finds its limit and begins to turn inward into the centre of experience which, in the end, is recognised to be identical with the Supreme Being. Bearing this in mind, the sage of the Upanishad warns us with the great rule of life that everything shall desert us if we consider it to be different from our own essential self. As we have already noticed, nothing in this world can be considered to be merely a means to the satisfaction of another, for in this mutually-determined whole there are only ends, not means. The Bhagavad-Gita states that all pleasures that are born of the contact of the

mind and the senses with the external are wombs of pain, for outward contact is not the way of contacting reality. The dissatisfying consequence of sense-gratifications, the fear that usually attends upon them, the chances of getting addicted to the habits and impressions produced by such pleasures, and the inevitability of the rise of further desires and greater distractions, in addition to the wearing out of the senses, should rouse in the man of discrimination a consciousness of the higher life.

Secret of Right Action

No action is seen to fully bring to us the intended result, because it is bound up with several factors not under the control of the actor. It is meaningless to think that a divine way of living is not the usual way and that it is some mystic segregation and introversion not normally connected with life. This misconception arises on account of a misunderstanding of what spiritual life is and the aim of life should mean to us. When every type of action is visualised as a process of the universal activity of God, or the Absolute, individual and personal agency drops out from the scene altogether. Behold the soul-stirring dictum of the Bhagavad-Gita, that the wise one should always maintain the feeling that the agent, the process and the result of action are only modes in the universal design. Here becomes explicit the truth of the saying that we are to regard ourselves as only instruments and not the real doers of any action. This is Karma-Yoga, that master technique of converting every work into duty and a veritable self-sacrifice, self-dedication and self-consecration in the beatitude of God. And Karma-Yoga is said to be based on Buddhi-Yoga or the art of right understanding, the understanding that man is ever in a state of attunement with God. Even the springs of instinctive action are found ultimately to be rooted in a distortion of the desire for self-possession in the completeness of the Divine. Only, instinctive action suffers and labours under the ignorance that the body and the mind have an existence

isolated from other bodies and minds. This misery is Samsara, the aberration of the soul from itself, and the searching for itself in the not-self, the phantom and the imagination.

The reason why we think and feel as we do or act as we are accustomed to, lies in the why and how of individual existence itself. The body and the mind receive a universal sustenance, they are not only maintained but even constituted by an ocean of force which appears to manifest itself in spatio-temporal configurations. Our central urge is to overcome spatial limitations and temporal restrictions in an experience which is self-dependent, self-determined and perfect in itself. This state is referred to in the Upanishad as the Plenum of Felicity, where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else and understands nothing else. It is also said that should be considered transient and paltry in which one sees something else, hears something else and understands something else than the Self. Under these circumstances it would be mere vanity and a futile attempt to try to arrogate reality to any personality or individuality. This self-arrogation is termed selfishness, and is a folly.

In this mysterious cosmos, which is more like a reverberating chamber where every little sound is loudly heard everywhere and in which there can be no such thing as privacy, every thought, however feeble it may be, announces itself spontaneously and gets recorded in the subtle realms, never gets destroyed, and is repaid in a befitting manner. Every thought is a tiny ripple, a wave in the sea of existence, and has a claim to exist and be evaluated as any other thing existent or conceivable. Everyone of us, therefore, has at his background infinite support, infinite help, infinite sympathy, if only we would be careful enough to evoke it, by being aware of it. The unity of religions, the concord of philosophical thought, the meaning of universal brotherhood and the necessity for universal love in life is here explained, and we are now able to recognise it not as a fancy, a dogma, a

creed or a tenet, but as the one law of life, the rule of individual and social survival, the principle and significance of our very existence.

Every bit of thing in the world, from the lowest to the highest, every little thought, feeling and action has to be viewed, judged and evaluated in the light of the unitary law that we have thus discovered as relentlessly operating within us and also outside us. True morality is the determination of the lower by the higher, the envisaging of every step that we take as a necessary precondition of the next step. Life in the world is a means which, when it evolves itself completely, takes the shape of the end, and the end is already present at every stage of the developing process of the means. The world is thus teleological and not mechanical. We, individuals inhabiting this universe, are held together not as pebbles or stones forming a heap but as organic parts which are inseparably related to a living whole that cannot be cut or divided without being mutilated and destroyed. Our social relations, which have a deeper meaning than is seen on the surface, should apprise us of the existence of a universal Self, and of our duty to it in all the strata of life. In our perceptions we perceive it, in our feelings we feel it, and in our actions we stumble upon it every moment, though we, at the present state of ours, are not endowed with an adequate knowledge of it. Human psychology is a study of the mental behaviour of the human individuality, and this individuality is, as we have observed above, a conglomeration of certain involuntary urges that seek satisfaction in things they know not. The only saving factor is the higher reason which sometimes points to a higher life above them. We cannot be profound psychologists possessed of an understanding of the hidden implications of our behavior unless we have patience enough to listen attentively to and intelligently sympathise with the clamouring cries that are heard from within ourselves. We cannot cure our illness without knowing why we have fallen ill, and psychology as it is understood in the present Western sense of the term has not the requisite apparatus to fathom

the depths of the human personality, it being confined to observed phenomena that are presented to the intellect which often merely plays second fiddle to the ignorant senses. Reason should also be able to know its limitations, and also the reason why it should be so limited. Our present-day psychological analyses cannot be the last word in the field of inner research, for we have other means of knowledge than mere sensation. The mind, when it is disturbed by the revolting noise of the senses, cannot properly reflect in itself the true state of affairs. When the five senses of knowledge stand fixed together with the understanding and the faculty of thinking, and the intellect does not oscillate, that, they say, is the supreme state, declares the Kathopanishad. That, again, is called the condition of Yoga wherein the consciousness does not get objectified through the avenues of the senses, and the mind rests in itself. Yoga is at-one-ment with the Infinite. No science of the mind or study of the inner behaviour of the human being can be exact and meaningful when this mighty truth is lost sight of, and the endeavours at right knowledge are confined to the belief that what we see with our eyes is the all. Far from this is the goal we are seeking, and we require an altogether different education to be able to appreciate this point of view.

Discourse III

SURE WAYS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE

Yoga an Art and Science

The Yoga system, especially that propounded by the sage Patanjali, is a masterly science of psychology. We are asked to control the modifications of the mind-stuff in order to be able to have clear perception and true insight. Patanjali points out that we become normal only when we cease from thinking in terms of forms of the mental modification and begin to adopt quite a different way of perception. In other words, we have to rest in our own selves, first, in order that we may be healthy and also have a healthy perception of things. All types of objective thinking are considered in our system of Yoga as certain diseased conditions of consciousness, for in these states the consciousness is not-in-itself. Whenever it is not in a state of rest in itself it gets identified with the forms of the mind, and assumes for the time being their spatio-temporal shape. In this empirical process the individual consciousness often comes in conflict with other such centres in the forms of other persons who have their own special modes of self-identification with other types of mental transformations. Human misery has its roots in this self-contradiction born of ignorance of the structure of the perceptible diversity and its basis in the One.

A successful life, and a happy life, is possible only when one is able to adjust and adapt the different sides of the personality in a harmonious way and the entire personality with the others that form the constituents of the world. In this sense, life is an art. What does an artist do? He has a definite idea of an end to be executed and achieved, he collects the necessary material as means for the purpose, and arranges the material in a methodical and harmonious manner. He selects the proper requisites, removes what is unshapely, adds what is necessary, and brings about a system and completeness in his work in consonance with the nature of the purpose in view. This is the case with great

works of art, whether architecture and sculpture, painting and drawing, or music and literature. The essence of art is the arrangement of material to produce rhythm, symmetry, order, fullness, and a sense of perfection so far as the mind can conceive of it. We have to arrange the pattern of life, with its forces of the outward Nature and inward impulses, so that there may not be any jarring element or inharmonious appearance unsuited to the purpose of realising the equilibrium of the universe as reflected in our personal lives, in the life of society, the community, the nation and the world. We do not belong merely to ourselves, not even merely to any particular society or country, but we are citizens of the universe to which we owe a tremendous duty. And this duty is nothing but feeling and acting in a way that may not negative or violate the truth that the essence of the universe is an indivisible fullness. This art of self-adjustment with the entire creation is called Yoga. It is an art that appeals to the being within, which is also without, at the same time. Yoga is an art insofar as any successful practice of it demands of us a sort of genius and uncommon insight which cannot be expressed in mathematical or logical terms. But Yoga is also a science in the sense that it follows certain fixed laws and its principles are eternal, irrespective of class, creed, place and time. It is the knitting together, as it were, of the various springs of thought and action to form a connected and beautiful fabric in the universal scheme. It is the science of peace, of inner delight, and it requires that at one and the same moment we have to be at peace not only with the different levels of our being but also with the various strata of external life. A happy man who has been able to lead a successful life is one who is thoroughly friendly not only with the structural demands of his own body, mind, emotions, and intellect but also with the different elements that go to form the world outside. The Yoga system, by its technical terms, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, expresses in a highly mystic way the need for perfect discipline of the body, the vital forces, the

senses of perception, the functions of the mind, the intellect and the reason from the standpoint of the universe taken as a whole. Life is a preparation for self-accusation, a training ground for the individual to transfigure itself in a self-dedication to the Absolute Reality. Some have compared this earthly life to a temporary halting of pilgrims in an inn, which is not the destination but only a means of help in the journey. We are not to take the experiences of this life as ends in themselves but as processes of self-advancement and chastening of the inner spirit for a higher fulfilment. Our joys and sufferings, our exhilarations and griefs, our prejudices and ideals are not to be valued as realities in themselves but as certain conditions which we have to overstep, and which will mean nothing to us when transcend in a deeper wisdom. Our present life is a flow of events, and nothing that changes can be called the real.

Sacrifice and Dedication in Life

Herein comes into high relief the significance of the teaching that we have to perform actions without regard for their fruits, because the fruits are not in our hands, they are determined by the ultimate law of the universe, which, in the present condition of our minds, we can neither understand nor follow. Our duty is to act, act in the right way, bearing in mind that we are fulfilling an inviolable and unavoidable imperative, not forced upon us by any outward mandate, but by the law of our own being, to ignore which would be nothing short of folly. To work with any fixed ulterior motive beforehand would be like naming a child before it is born. The position is that no one can clearly envisage or understand the nature of an effect which would follow a particular action. That we glibly talk of fixed results of visible causes and hope for desired ends of our actions only shows that we have a very narrow outlook and forget the fact that nothing in this interrelated universe is absolutely self-dependent but requires the co-operation of infinite centres of force for it to come into being at all. Just take a concrete

example. I say that a book placed on a table has the table as its support. Am I right? Perhaps you would say I am. But we do not stoop to think here that the table itself is supported by the floor. And where is the support for the floor? It is perhaps kept fixed by certain beams placed crosswise beneath it, which again are supported by walls, the walls being supported by the foundation, and the foundation by the earth. Is the position of the earth self-dependent? No. The earth's position and motion are governed by the attraction of other planets in relation to itself, and we should not forget here that the planets are held in position by the terrible gravitational force of the sun. The whole solar system is said to be rushing with a great velocity to another destination in the vast ocean of Milky Way. Where are we, and where is the book placed on the table? The existence of things is really marvellous, and, surely, our life is precarious. What right have we, then, under these circumstances, to expect what we have in our minds? We can be justified in hoping only for that thing which is sanctioned by the unitary law of the universe taken as a single whole.

The Bhagavad-Gita, for example, exhorts us not to have attachment to things. Obviously, any outward attachment is not permissible in the scheme of things as they truly are. To which object am I to be attached, when everything outside me is inseparably related to me, and we all mutually inclusive and determined in this magnificent home of God's creation? Where is that special endowment of reason, of which man so much boasts, when he acts as an animal in thinking that he can have special attitudes to particular objects and yet hope to be let off scot-free? Every action has a reaction which comes with an equal force of nemesis and retribution, for every action is a sort of disturbance produced in the equilibrium of the universe, and the universe shall ever maintain its balance by rebutting the force of disturbance created in its being in the form of an action of thought. How marvellous is life, how grand, how just, and yet how relentless!

The correct spirit with which we have to work in this world is one of self-sacrifice and surrender to the Supreme Cause of all things. As a famous verse has it, whatever there is as this vast world, visible or heard of,—all this is pervaded inside and outside, throughout, by the Eternal Spirit. Another verse tells us that we have to see the immanent Divine in earth and water, in the mountains and the flame of fire, and that the whole world is nothing but the appearance of God. The correct perception is designated as Ishvaradrishti, the practice of the presence of God in each and everything, in every quarter and cranny, everywhere, and at all times. The essence of the Gita teaching is this, that the universe is the body of God, nay, it is God Himself appearing to us through our senses, the mind and the intellect, that there is nothing outside of God ever existent, that man is bound to have prosperity, victory, happiness and lawful polity when he acts with this consciousness,—with the deep feeling that he is an instrument in the hands of the Absolute, that his actions are really not his but Its, and that suffering is inevitable the moment he cuts his consciousness off from the Divine. The happy and the normal life is, therefore, the Divine life.

Inner Discipline

This is a grand concept, and this the goal. But there are certain lesser aspects in our life which we cannot ignore if we are to be successful in our different endeavours for perfection. First, we have to use our emotions properly and adjust them in such a way that they do not create any discord in life's harmonious process. Second, we have always to attempt to make a fuller use of our personalities than we actually do in states of misconception, prejudice and ignorance. There has to be brought about a complete reorientation of our ways of thinking, in the light of eternal facts amidst which we exist. There is that absolute necessity to bring about in ourselves those necessary changes, now and then, to attune ourselves to the vast universal environment. Think properly about yourselves, and

understand your position in the expanse of the environment around you,—whether it is family, the community, the country, or the world. Face your weaknesses with an adamant will, but know also your strengths, and use them to adapt yourselves to the circumstances in which you find yourselves to the circumstances in which you find yourselves at any given moment of time. In this you have to be very diligent, sincere and honest. Remember, always, that what is important is not so much what you are, as to what extent you know why you are what you are, and how much you endeavour to improve yourselves in the right direction. Of course, do not be in a hurry. *Understand well* before you take a step. There cannot be a right attempt without a clear-cut ideal before it, and directing it. A race horse put to a plough or a plough horse put to race will not lead to any substantial result. We have to know our powers, our knowledge, and go only so far; not further.

If you are emotionally healthy, you will find that you will be comfortable with yourselves, and would not need the company of a crowd, or even of other persons related to you. No doubt, this is only one aspect of the question, because the most well adjusted person should be comfortable and perfectly at ease either way. Watch yourselves in a crisis, and detect what you are. You can know your weaknesses when you are thwarted, opposed, threatened or when you find yourselves in danger. You can also know your buried desires and urges, your cravings and fears, when you are put to such a test. The training of the emotions and the development of strength within, however, is not difficult for one who has a genuine conviction that he is backed up at all times by a mighty Power that works everywhere in the cosmos, and that he has nothing to fear. This faith should be born of conviction, enlightened understanding, and a real love for the Supreme Being. This is self-mystery, by which one can invoke incredible powers to function at any time in one's life.

Do not have inner conflicts. Such conflicts are mostly results of the inability to fulfil the basic instinctive urges, which, again, is due to ignorance of one's hidden capacities and of the way by which to utilise properly the facilities provided under the conditions in which one is placed. You have to know clearly (1) what ought to be done, (2) what is capable of being done, (3) what has been done already, (4) why something has not been done yet, and (5) how to overcome the obstacles in a reasonable manner. This means that you have to be master of your own psychology. A successful life includes physical, emotional, intellectual and moral fitness based on an integration of being in all its degrees, inwardly as well as outwardly. Know yourselves as higher than you now are. Summon the reserve forces which lie latent within, and use them for the constructive work of building the structure of life which is not merely yours, but of everyone, equally. When the diversity of beings is beheld as rooted in the One, and as having proceeded from the One, then does one attain to Perfection, says the Bhagavad-Gita. But the achievement of this end is hard, though possible for everyone. It demands inner toughness born of a perfect moral nature. A capacity to love and to serve all with the feeling of the presence of a common element behind everyone, to be truthful and honest and straightforward at any cost, to be able to feel for others as one does for oneself, not to do to others what would not be desirable for oneself, to have always a concern for the good of the whole world and not merely of a restricted group of persons, not to attempt at appropriating things which do not lawfully belong to one self, to be perfectly continent and restrained in thought, word and deed, to be able to look at the world with a cosmic vision, and to act at all times with this consciousness, is the requisite qualification demanded of a truly cultured person and a seeker of Truth. We are neither wise nor right when we lose sight of this meaning of the educational process and act in a way that is not warranted by this vision of perfection. But success is near at hand, if only we would have a rightly

directed will. And it is for our own good. Let us pray in the sublime words of the Upanishad:

Lead us from the unreal to the Real,
Lead us from darkness to Light,
Lead us from death to Immortality.

Appendix I

PATH TO PERFECTION

The attempt to achieve perfection begins with the consciousness and application of the immediate reality that is presented to the senses. That which is definitely known to be existent in the normal human state of consciousness is the body situated in a world of plurality. The maintenance of the body in harmony and of the proper relation of the body with the external world is the first empirical concern of man. It should be the duty of a seeker of perfection to be careful to see that the body is not out of its balance in any way, at any time. The health of the body is of great importance in one's endeavour to utilise one's power in the quest of truth. External purity and observance of the laws of hygiene are not to be neglected if the body is to be maintained as one's friend and helper. *Saucha* is the basic rule of sound health. This must include the system of partaking of diet of a suitable quality, in a suitable quantity, at a suitable place and suitable time. Mental health and physical health are, generally, interdependent.

The practice of the moral law and ethical conduct will pave the way to the maintenance of a sound mind in a sound body. Passions and disturbing emotions disbalance the system and ruin the health of a person. A mental disturbance means the irrhythmic distribution of the vital energy and the disturbance of the nerves. This leads to the illness of the body. A good aspiration towards a non-selfish end is the prerequisite of a good programme of life. The early stages of one's life should be spent in the pursuit of knowledge, service of the teacher, self-control and austerity. At this stage one should not concern oneself with the duty and the business of the world, which are likely to draw one's attention away from the primary duties which one is expected to fulfil at this time. The moral law which includes the canons of truthfulness, love and continence should become the guiding

factors in the expression of one's thought, word and deed. Contentment, joy and devotion to the ideal of one's life bring about the health of the mind as well as of the body. One's ideal of life should be that which never perishes in time and is never contradicted by anything else. To know what this ideal is one requires the aid of an able teacher.

When one undergoes the process of education, no other factor in life should interrupt or interfere with this process. The process of education should be such that it includes in a balanced way all the sides and layers of the human nature,—physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. Physical health, intellectual understanding, moral integrity and spiritual wisdom are what lead to the ultimate perfection. The different intellectual sciences which are taught in the universities of today are a feeble apology for the integral education that is necessary for the attainment of perfection. No education which neglects certain important aspects of human life can be complete and worth its name. A well-adjusted and balanced study of the essential human nature should constitute real education. After one is well-educated, one must direct one's consciousness and intelligence to the analysis of experience and knowledge of truth. Understanding, willing and feeling are the three faculties in man which have to be taken as the means to the practice of the method of approach to the truth. Some make use of all these faculties in a certain proportion in their march to perfection. Others take to an exclusive method which transforms the other methods into itself, or keep them away as subservient elements.

The method of feeling is faith. Faith in God is the standard way, for some, of reaching perfection. Love of God and service of God through His manifestation as the universe is the principal path. Faith does not question and reason, but accepts the testimony of the teachers and the scriptures in believing that the omnipresent God is the one Reality of the universe. This acceptance of the cosmic presence of a

spiritual Being as the supreme Lord of the universe implies an attitude of reverence and love on the part of the devotee towards such a Being. The human emotions are not destroyed here but are turned towards God and thus sublimated. God is loved as a father, a mother, a son, a friend, a husband or a master. The world becomes a pointer to God, and worldly love an indication of the presence of God-love. The world is the body of God. Nothing is to be ultimately rejected. Everything is to be loved as a step to God-realisation.

The path of the will is the austere method of determination and decision in regard to the way and the goal. The will bases itself either on faith or on understanding. Will based on faith is different from will based on understanding, and the two wills constitute two different paths to perfection. The will that is based on faith concentrates itself on the Supreme Being which is accepted as an act of faith. As God is everywhere and the mind of man is characteristic of a behaviour which is contrary to the fullness of God, the mind should be checked and its modifications completely transformed in a higher Being. Contrary modifications are opposed with their contradictories or replaced by others of a more beneficial nature, or the modifications of the mind are fixed on God and given a transcendental touch of the philosopher's stone of the infinitude of experience. Matter is separated from Spirit through contemplation on the essential distinction between the two and on the independence and absoluteness of the Spirit. The power of the will is such that it either completely excludes from consciousness all forms pretending to exist outside the Infinite or absorbs them into the consciousness of the Infinite. Thus the will is a way to perfection.

The path of the understanding is the rational method of investigation of experience. Here the understanding and the will become one and the will becomes another name for the movement of the force of the understanding. The experience

of one's finitude implies the existence of the Infinite. The nature of the Infinite is opposed to that of the individual. God is accepted not merely because the scriptures have made mention of Him or because the teachers believe in Him, but because one's own experience and understanding become self-contradictory in their expressions when the Intelligent Infinite is not accepted, and also because the infinite consciousness comes to be the logical deduction of the inmost experience of the finite individual. The longing for the infinite and the perfect is ingrained in the deepest recesses of everyone. The sense of the presence of the Infinite becomes the indicator of and the guide to the achievement of perfection.

Contemplation on the idea of the Infinite is the way. The objects of the universe are the phases of Consciousness. The Existence of the individual is on the same level of reality as that of the other individuals. The subject and the object are related to each other as complements, and one is not superior or inferior to the other in the degree of the manifestation of Reality. Contemplation should therefore take the form of an assertion of the conscious Reality of the universe as a whole. Here the universe ceases to be a material presentation but discloses its true nature of consciousness. The knower and the known sink into a Reality larger than what they reveal at present. The individual becomes the specimen of what is systematically going on in the cosmos, and the one purpose of contemplation and meditation is to attune the individual's processes to the cosmic process.

This attainment does not consist in any action of the body, but in an attitude of the mind. It is the intense affirmation in consciousness of the supreme validity of the indivisibility of the truth of the universe. This conscious affirmation of absoluteness should be continued until its actual realisation. The practice should be continuous and should be attended with an intense devotion to the ideal,

based on clear perception and understanding. The deep and prolonged meditation on the Absolute, in this way, leads to perfection.

The necessary implications of the processes of meditation described above are absence of hatred, cultivation of universal love, freedom from attachment, peace of mind, self-control, turning away from desires, fortitude and a deep sense of service,—all based on correct understanding and introspection. The nature of the way is determined by the nature of the destination to be reached. The end very much influences the nature of the means. The end is the evolution of the means; the means is a relative representation of the end. The characteristics of the end are reflected in those of the means, and by this standard one can judge the genuineness and correctness of the means. The end is the consummation of the process or the means, and the means is an indication of the characteristics of the end. The Infinite is reflected in every individual, and hence no action on the part of the individual can afford to be completely isolated from the universal processes going on within the Infinite. The path to perfection is the recognition, by degrees, of the presence of the Infinite in every moment of the individualised processes of the universe.

Appendix II

THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN INDIA

Education is the process of the gradual and systematic summoning of the tendency in the human being to the realisation of perfection. As the concept of perfection is unclear in the initial stages, the approach to the mind of the public, in this direction, has to be initiated with immense patience and care. When we deal with persons, we are really concerned with minds, and hence all successful approach in life is *psychological*.

We have, first of all, to place ourselves in a position where we can appreciate sympathetic thoughts and feelings of people. For this purpose, we may classify society into three categories: (1) the student, who includes the child and the adolescent; (2) the man of the world or active society, including the youth and the middle-aged man; (3) the retired person, including all those who do not lead an active life but are in the evening of their age. Social regeneration has to keep in view all these stages of life and provide for their respective inner demands.

For the present we may confine ourselves to the minds of the budding generation, viz. the student population, for we have to begin the work of reformation and the regeneration of society at the stage of the student, when the mind is flexible and amenable to the educational process. Here we have to start from the standpoint of the *taught* and not merely of the *teacher*. Education is not a process of merely emptying out the mind of the teacher by pouring its knowledge into the minds of students, but feeling of their needs and supplying them with the proper thing, at the proper time, in the proper manner. A teacher, thus, has to be a good psychologist and should not regard teaching as a kind of business with the students. The teacher should have the capacity to make himself liked by the minds which need

teaching. This pleasant process of the imparting of knowledge is education.

In these days, neither the students nor the teachers are happy with the educational process, because it has been forgotten by the authorities concerned in the department that education has to be physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, active and spiritual, all at once, in a way beautifully fitted to the conditions in which one, is placed. The technique of education should take into consideration the average of the intelligence-quotient, health, social conditions, etc. of the students. It should also concentrate itself on methods for bringing about and effecting (1) the development of personality, (2) an adequate knowledge of the world, (3) an adjustment of self with society, and (4) a realisation of the permanent values of life.

By development of personality what is meant is the wholesome building up of the individual, not only with reference to the internal states of body, mind and intellect, but also in relation to the external world reaching upto the individual through the different levels of society. In this sense, true education is both a *diving inward* and a *spreading outward*. Knowledge of the world is not merely a collection of facts or gathering information regarding the contents of the physical world but forms a kind of insight into its inner workings as well, at least insofar as one's inner and outer life is inextricably wound up with them. With this knowledge it becomes easy for one to discover the art of adjusting oneself with society. This adjustment is not possible in any appreciable degree for one who has not acquired some amount of knowledge of the spiritual implications of the structure of human society. The aim of the education of the individual in society is the realisation of life's values,—personal, social, civic and even universal,—all mutually related and determined by a common goal to which these are directed.

Above all, we cannot start teaching students without our understanding the purpose of education. Many a Hindu, for example, has allowed himself or herself to be proselytised for different reasons. One such reason consists in the prospects of economic uplift and raising of social status which the converters promise to these poor souls who have been unfortunately relegated to the unwanted section of Hindu society, by somehow depriving them of the facilities to improve themselves economically. The second reason is the baneful practice of untouchability and pollution by touch, which certain orthodox groups cultivated for a long time and which has not completely died out even today. Now the question arises: Why should have these things happened? Why should there be suppression and untouchability etc. in human circles? The answer is: lack of *proper education*.

But what is proper education? Bearing in mind the essentials of the process enumerated above, it should be added that though education should be an immensely practicable affair, we should not think that the practicability of a thing consists in what is called 'succeeding' in life in any political sense of the term, because one may manoeuvre to succeed for some time, as one does in business, for instance, but be extremely unhappy within, in spite of the so-called 'practical' success. This happens because here we have only a soulless practicality of affairs, bereft of the sap of life which sustains it. Though, when we occupy a house, we are not always conscious of its foundation, nor is the foundation visible to the eyes, it goes without saying that the whole edifice stands on the foundation. Likewise human success in life may look beautiful like a decorated and furnished building, but it cannot stand if it is not firmly fixed on a strong base. Our purpose here would be to have some idea as to what could this foundation of life's education be.

Education is for living life and not to suffer it. It is a wrong concept of the basis of life that has led to the defective structure of the present educational system. It is not

necessary that religion in the orthodox sense or *Dharma* as the conservatives understand it should be proclaimed in the schools. The right type of education should have a very broad outlook and exceed the limits of parochial religions or the cult of any class of society and should be free from the prejudices of caste, creed and colour. The present-day system of education is thoroughly unsatisfactory, for, while it rejects all religion in the name of secularism, it rejects also the essentials of human aspiration and makes education a dead mechanism which has to be operated by a living being from outside. Education is not a machine to be driven by an external impulse but constitutes a vital process which has life in it and grows of its own accord when the soul is poured into it. The bread-earning education has to become a life earning education, for the latter, in addition to supplying bread, shall also supply man with a soul to live by.

The erroneous construction of the educational basis is, then, grounded on a mistaken concept of life's values. The world we live in is believed to be a solid mass of matter. Even our own bodies are seen to be parts of the physical Nature governed by mechanistic laws, which alone appears to be all that is real. It has become a commonplace today, especially in the universe of science, that life is strictly determined by the law of causality which rules over the entire scheme of the world. We are told that distinctions that are supposed to obtain between such realms of being as matter, life and mind are superficial and are accounted for by the grades of subtlety in the manifestation and spreading of particles of matter. Even the organism of the human body which appears to defy the laws of the machine of the universe as envisaged by science is explained away as only one of the many forms of the workings of the forces of matter which is the ultimate stuff of all things. It is said that even mind is only a subtle, ethereal exudation of forces of matter. The human being is reduced to a speck in the gigantic structure of the cosmos. Behaviourist psychology with its materialistic implications

gives a finishing touch to this doctrine of the mechanistic view of life.

The fact that man is not merely a humble cog in the deterministic machine of a relentless world and that the essence of man is a spiritual principle, co-extensive with the Universal Spirit, was easily discovered in the course of human evolution. Those in India, educated under the scheme of Macaulay, however, continued to move along the ruts of a so-called modernism of thinking, a rationality of approach and a scientific attitude of life, so much spoken of in these days. People began gradually to shed their spiritual legacy and started to strut proudly under the unseen yoke of a culture wedded to a secret achievement of suzerainty over them. It is this fatal tendency of thought that has to be counteracted by right means of education today.

A correct appreciation of human values is essential before introducing any suitable method of education. It is impossible to solve the problem of the educational method so long as the authorities feel satisfied that the body of man is the final word about him. The mistake seems to be not so much with the students as with those concerned with act of teaching, for the students, under the current which flows before them, move with it from an early age. We have to observe with regret that one of the reasons why, for example, some Hindus are willing to change their religion is because they are dissatisfied with the promises of their own religion and the way in which their religion treats them. Apart from the pernicious practice of physical segregation in the form of untouchability and the intellectual assumption of superiority on the part of a few of the classes of society, a sort of false and inadequate values in religion have been responsible to a great extent in causing a schism between man and man in the country. There is the natural instinct to visualise the better in an unknown promise of the future and, like the calf which moves from one place to another in search of the distant greens which it sees with unclear eyes, one is tempted to

undergo a conversion of faith. Essentially, what is needed in religion is its understanding by its followers. Often the cry 'save us from our friends', seems to have a meaning. The foolish friend is worse than a knowledgeable enemy. The *Pundits* of the Hindu religion and the scholars who do research in its fields have been both moving in blind alleys, the one clinging to rigid tradition and blind faith and the other to an arid rationality, though untenable. It is not true that we have nothing to learn from the West, as some conservative Hindus may hold, for we have to respect the change of times and the need for a reevaluation of values. Indian culture has survived due to its flexibility, when other ancient cultures have died out due to their rigidity. It is also not true that Indian religion is mere superstition, myth and fable, as some modern scientific thinkers in oriental learning seem to think. The good is to be taken from wherever it is found, for knowledge is the aim of education, and not dogmatic clinging to unsound conservatism.

It is necessary to write a small textbook on the constitution of man in the Universe in such a simple way that it could be understood even by children of a primary school. It may begin with simple questions and answers, stories and even small plays which can be enacted on the stage. The book should contain information on the structure of the human personality in relation to outer Creation in a readable and intelligible manner. It should also deal with the fundamentals of human conduct on the basis of this relation of man to Creation. Not only this; some knowledge should be provided of the aim of such conduct on the part of human beings. These things should be said without saying things like philosophy, ethics, teleology and such phrases which are the jargons of the schools of thought. No stereotyped phrases or technical terms should ever be used in such a book. In fact, these should be avoided, because now one is concerned with the primary standard of education where technicality of any kind is to be carefully set aside. The lessons may abound in apt stories and simple plays intelligible to beginners. This

may form the background of a preliminary booklet on the fundamentals of life.

There should be three or four textbooks in a graded series of this nature, suitable to the primary, elementary, high school and college standards of education. The books should be written in such a way that students should be able to take interest in the subjects and cherish a faith that they are going to be benefited by the study. The high school and college levels should gradually introduce advanced learning.

In the textbooks for higher classes, which will outgrow the elementary teachings, stories, etc. of the early stages, the student may be introduced to the great heritage of India in the form of its deep culture. The spiritual-cum-temporal import of the hymns of the Vedas, such as the Purusha-Sukta, the Mandukya-Upanishad, the conversation between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi in the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad, the suggestiveness of the Creation theories of revelation like the Aitareya-Upanishad, the epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and the basic gospel of the Bhagavadgita should find a proper place in the higher stages of education. An acquaintance of the student with the immortal heroes of India, like Rama and Krishna; sages like Nara-Narayana, Vasishtha, Vya, Suka, Dattatreya, Jadabharata, Vamadeva, Uddalaka, Yajnavalkya, Parasara, etc; India's great rulers like Prithu, Marutta, Ambarisha, Mandhata, Sibi, Harischandra, Dilipa, Bhagiratha, Raghu, Aja, Dasaratha, Janaka, Rama, Yayati, Bharata, Yudhishtira, Vikramaditya, Asoka and the like, is essential at a particular stage. Short life sketches of teachers like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, and saints like Gauranga, Nanak, Tukaram, Jnanesvar, Mirabai, Surdas, Tulasidas, Kabirdas, Purandaradas, etc., should be provided in suitable places. The contributions to India's cultural revival by Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramatirtha, Swami Dayananda, Swami Sivananda, Annie Besant, Rabindranath Tagore, Aurobindo and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan should be brought home to the minds of students, particularly in the

college level. To give a broader vision of culture in general and to point out the unity underlying human aspirations, a separate section may be devoted to the lives and teachings of Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Mohammed, the Sufi saints and the Sikh Gurus.

Teachers should, at the background of their minds, keep behind education the fourfold aim of human existence,—Righteousness in all its stages and forms (*Dharma*), economic independence (*Artha*), emotional satisfaction (*Kama*) and spiritual realisation (*Moksha*), as the principal incentive to all human activity. This view-point should be constantly maintained at the teaching level, so that the purpose of education may not be missed on the way to the achievement of tangible results. It is also necessary to remember that without some standard of self-control (*Yama-Niyama*), which has to be properly defined at any given situation, the curriculum of studies is not going to be flawless. This is a rule to be observed both by the teacher and the taught. The educational career is a holy pursuit. Its sacredness should never be profaned by indulgences of the subhuman urges. The intellectual, volitional, emotional and active sides of human nature should all receive adequate attention. No one side should be stressed at the expense of the others. Else, there is likely to be a revolt of the neglected aspects at some later stage. The relation between the inner and the outer realities, the psychical nature of man and the physical and social nature of the world, should be harmoniously maintained at every stage of teaching. Let not the teacher think that the student is an instrument that can be operated merely by external pressure. This would be a gross blunder. For the student is a living being, a human individual, with outer desires and inner aspirations not yet properly articulated. Ignorance of this fact has led to the grievous condition of the present-day educational institutions. The individual (*Vyashṭi*) and the universal (*Samashṭi*) are organically related and not mechanically dovetailed.

The mechanistic view of education held by Western educationists and imitated almost everywhere nowadays forgets the life element present in the bodily structure of man and his environment. Education has concern with life, mind and intellect and the theory that these are exudations from the bodily mechanism is the erroneous knowledge imported from Western psychologists. The individual, family, community, nation and the world at large are quantitative extensions of the set-up of the individual's bodily existence, but it is to be remembered that these outer forms have their inner being hidden from the physical eye but asserting themselves perennially as a universal spirit which speaks out in various languages of mind and intellect the same message of the integral value of the entire existence. The law of action and reaction, called Karma, the laws of physics, chemistry, biology, psychology and sociology, of the moral urge and of political history, are all different affirmations of this eternal truth. Holding this in view the ancient teachers in India instituted the order of the four classes of society (*Varnas*), to harness wisdom, power, material and labour into a single force of progressive human society. This institution had also the advantage of preventing class rivalry and competition, and substituting it with cooperation and mutual respect of values. The institution of the stages (*Ashramas*) of life revealed the ultimate purpose of all existence pressing itself forward in every stage of life,—of the student, the man of the world, the mature philosopher and the one who has attained insight into universal life. The last stage is the culmination of human endeavour and its needs have to be reflected in everyone of the preceding steps. This is India's grand vision of perfection.

The Western yoke on India has left an impact which always insists that whatever modern science says alone is right. Unfortunately, this is not true, for the field of science is sensory, on which are founded experiment and logic, and today the boasts of science are slowly getting exploded as false and vainglorious. One is told that man comes from the

ape, that one's ancestors were untutored tribes, that the past history of one's land is the story of animal-men roaming wildly in jungles, that life began with fungi which grew on earth millions of years ago, and that hunger and sex exhaust the psychic urges of humanity. Contrast with this the sublime wisdom of the masters who proclaimed that the world was originally involved in the universal being of God, that life, mind and reason are evolutes which spring back to God in a gradual self-realisation, that history also records the lives of mighty sovereigns and great sages whose personalities manifested the cosmic order of justice, truth and knowledge, that our life is a faint pointer to the latent potentialities for a vaster life in eternity and infinity and that our aspirations are indicators of what we are in ourselves essentially. There is no reason why spiritual intuitions should be mere fancies and only scientific findings be correct. We are already in an age where the very foundations on which science is based are being doubted and are regarded as questionable hypotheses. Sense, reason and intuition are three stages of knowledge, the succeeding one being more inclusive and nearer to reality than the preceding.

Care has, however, to be taken in ensuring that in our enthusiasm, the relative merits of the Eastern and Western cultures are not missed but duly recognised. Neither should a total abrogation of the foreign nor a lowering of the dignity of the indigenous culture be resorted to even by mistake. Cultures stand or fall in accordance with their ability to meet the needs of human nature in the changes of time. Physical education and instruction in the science is a necessity, especially in this century, and this knowledge should be imparted in the regular modern manner of educational discipline in the Institution, coupled with a touch of the personal element in teaching. This latter aspect is more important in the educational process than the way in which it is likely to be appreciated by many.

Teaching is a more difficult task than learning, for the student has mostly to imitate the teacher and do what he says, while the teacher has to take the original initiative and the trouble of understanding the mind of the student. But we should not imagine that the role of the student is one of mere submission, for the faculty of judgment is present in everyone, though it is incipient in the student. Teaching is a process in psychology and calls forth not only superhuman patience but also infinite understanding on the part of the teacher.

Apart from the curriculum of teaching in the arts and sciences, there should be provision for recreation, excursion, pleasant exercise and open-air living. Contact with Nature is as important as lessons in the classroom. A student should not, if possible, be allowed to mingle with persons who are likely to disturb the educational career. A screening away of the student from communal or political movements is essential. Hostel arrangements in the schools would help much in isolating students from undesirable contacts. A distinction may be drawn, if necessary, between residential scholars and day scholars, as it is done even now in certain Christian colleges. Residential education would come near the system of *Gurukulavasa*, where students are not allowed to contact even their parents and relatives during the period of education. All these things may be a little difficult where poverty is rampant and facilities for living are scanty, particularly in our country. It is here that the well-to-do should come forward and help the implementation of true education. The premises and the atmosphere of the school should be clean and attractive so that the mind receives a subtle impact of an elevated mood while one is in it. The dignity of the behaviour of the teachers, the restriction of their conduct purely to educational work, and their unselfishness of motive, add much to the perfection of the course of education. As far as possible, the school should be away from cities and not in the thick of the crowd, which may have an undesirable effect on the minds of students. They

must have to breathe pure air, both physically and psychologically.

It is difficult to control the emotions of the younger generation. Regimen and discipline should be mollified by adequate entertainment. Educational and cultural film shows may form a part of occasional programmes. Music and dance of an elevated nature, as also familiarity with the arts of sculpture and painting exert a good influence on the emotion and give it a mild satisfaction. It is to be seen that the emotions are not allowed to grow wild either by too much restriction or by too much enjoyment. Emotions have to be canalised towards the culture of the spirit which seeks its manifestation in the form of life in the world. A satisfactory training in noble living cannot be given in a few years alone. The basement has to be laid at the first standard of education and the work of construction should continue at least upto the Higher Secondary School level, which would ensure training for about twelve years, the minimum period fixed in the tradition of *Gurukulavasa*. Charging the high fees from students may deter large sections of people from availing themselves of such benefit. Poverty is a great hindrance to progress everywhere. The richer classes should come forward and help the working of this system, for the country is not going to be freed from mental slavery and ignorance of culture by educating merely the sons and daughters of a few aristocrats in its different corners. To enable this method of education reach at least the majority, funds are obviously necessary, for the teachers have to be paid well to prevent them from falling into indifference and corruption. More important still is to find proper teachers. Much spadework has to be done in the beginning, and adequate funds invested for the purpose. It is a question of the blending of the intellectual, economic, moral and spiritual powers. All these have to be combined into a single force, as it was done in ancient India by a loving co-operation between the sages and rulers.

Summing up, certain features may be reiterated, which go to make for success in the educational process. Firstly, the building of the school or the college should be architecturally attractive and stately, catching one's spirits and elevating them spontaneously. Unclean, slovenly and ill-maintained sheds have a depressing effect on the mind, even without one's knowing it consciously. Secondly, the premises of the institution should be perfectly clean and one should be able to breathe an air of health when one steps into it. Thirdly, the institution should be away from the atmosphere of the city and be in natural surroundings, untouched by the busy, community life and also the communal and political atmosphere of urban areas. Fourthly, the authorities should manage to enshrine an atmosphere of seriousness, solemnity and sublimity in the premises of the institution. Fifthly, there should be a neatness of conduct between teachers or professors and students and a mutual sense of affection and trust between them has to be established, so that the whole institution becomes a fraternity dedicated to a common purpose. Sixthly, there should be a comprehensive and methodical layout of the curriculum of studies in the different classes. Seventhly, suitable textbooks have to be prepared embodying the subject of the curriculum. Eighthly, as obedience to the principals of the institution is compulsory in every case, it should be seen that he sets a practical example to others by his ideal personal demeanour, impartiality of treatment and devotion to the ideal of the institution. Ninthly, it should be a rule that trainees cannot go out of the premises of the institution during the 'spread-out' of the school or college hours, without permission of the concerned authority. Tenthly, attempt should be made to run as many residential schools as possible, so that the ancient system of *Gurukulavasa* may once again be revived, and students are not allowed to contact outsiders during the whole period of their educational career. Finally, the authorities of the institution should succeed in infusing

confidence in the students as to the genuineness of the interest which they have in the welfare of the latter.

All this work is a difficult aim, but it can be achieved with effort.