EASTERN PHILOSOPHY FOR WESTERN MINDS

HAMISH McLAURIN

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To
P. A. B.
WITH
ADMIRATION AND GRATITUDE

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Preface

By F. YEATS-BROWN

(Author of *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* and *Bloody Years*)

I HAVE never before written a preface, for my own or any other book, and probably never shall again, but when my friend, Mr. Hamish McLaurin, told me that he had prepared a volume on Eastern philosophy which made the smallest possible use of Sanskrit terms, and which outlined the particular system of Yoga in which both he and I are students, I could not but be deeply interested. The world needs such a book, and Mr. McLaurin is the man to write it. When, further, he told me that he thought a word from me might attract some readers who would otherwise be shy of tackling what appears to be a recondite Eastern subject, I could not but agree to do as he wished.

This is a world of appearances which are often illusory. The philosophy of India, for instance, which seems at first sight so fantastic, so far removed from our workaday world, is in reality one of the most practical ways of looking at life that has yet been devised, and is of importance to all of us who feel that our nerves are not always equal to the stresses of modern life.

The Indo-Aryans who evolved the system known as Yoga were men much like ourselves: their language is the mother of ours: their thoughts and needs are still

our basic thoughts and needs today. Yoga, in short, is a very modern philosophy.

I do not always entirely agree with Mr. McLaurin. There is no reason why I should. His book is not propaganda, but exegesis, research, restatement of old ideas in modern terms. He seems to me to unduly deprecate Christianity, but no doubt he intends to criticize the methods of Churches rather than the teachings of Christ.* Again, in his study of the law of cause and effect his enthusiasm may have led him beyond the letter of the Vedic texts: this is not to say, however, that his exposition is alien to the Vedic mind. Finally, I question whether Yoga is a religion at all. Personally I do not think it is. To me Yoga is a handmaid to religion: the most beautiful handmaid, indeed, which man has ever materialized from his ever-questing brain to assist him in his approach to the secret lair of the Self; but no more. Even Yoga is a prop, an illusion which must be discarded when we see Reality not as in a glass darkly, but face to face. However, this is by the way.

Our bodies are much the same as they were five thousand years ago. Human nature has not changed, although our inventions have made possible an almost incredible extension of human sight and power. In no age of history were the truths of the Vedanta so necessary as they now are, for in no age of history were men questioning the ultimates of science and religion as they are today. To understand the Vedanta is not easy. An intellectual acceptance of the doctrine of Becoming

*Author's Note: Major Yeats-Brown rightly assumes that the passages to which he refers should be construed as applying to what has so expressively been termed "Churchianity." No believer in the Vedic way of life ever quarrels with the ethical precepts advanced by any of the world's great Saviours.

(not "illusion" as is so commonly stated) may be possible to some minds of this day and age, especially to those trained in higher mathematics, but that is not enough: there must be a feeling-realization of unity with the worlds visible and invisible. No book can give the student that, but a book may put him on the right path.

Some readers, I suppose, will say that Mr. McLaurin has not told them enough, that they want more specific directions and plainer signposts on the road to happiness. These critics, if such there are to be, will have misunderstood the basic principles of Yoga: they will be expecting to get more out of the book than they bring to it, which is impossible according to the Vedic view of life. Books can only transmute qualities already existing in the reader: patience into insight, energy into wisdom, and so on.

I would particularly recommend readers to the introductory sections and to the author's views on "Brahmanical indifference" and "the alchemy of the digestive tract." Read with understanding, these sections will contribute to happiness in love and to physical health, two factors whose importance in a well-rounded life no one would be so foolish as to deny. Then, after finishing the book, let readers consider again with care the concluding discussion concerning life and death, dualism and monism: if they do so they will be ready (in Mr. McLaurin's apt phrase) to become "passionate lovers of Nature and respecters of her laws."

The Way is not easy, but he who seeks it patiently will always find it, wherever he lives, and whatever the apparent difficulties.

I would add a word in indorsement of Mr. McLaurin's admirable exposition of the Vedantic theory about reincarnation. No Vedantist makes any such preposterous assertion as that the souls of the departed are judged according to their life on earth, becoming saints or millionaires if they have behaved well, and dogs or mice if they have behaved badly. Such stories are sometimes told to the people (no country has a monopoly of ignorant priests and credulous congregations) but the Vedantist inculcates a simpler and sterner doctrine: a doctrine that is perhaps too difficult and lonely for the masses in both East and West. But I know that there are some spirits in both the United States and Great Britain who are in tune with these high thoughts of our Aryan ancestors, and it is to such people that this book will make its chief appeal.

F. YEATS-BROWN.

Foreword

EACH time that a period of economic stress upsets our usual standards of value, and abolishes all certainty as to the actual worth of our material possessions, it becomes increasingly evident that the West might benefit greatly by an understanding of certain teachings found in the ancient scriptures of the East. One of the salient features of the early Indo-Aryan cultural system called Yoga is the claim that those who practice it intelligently are enabled to maintain a mental serenity and a bodily well-being of a most enviable sort, no matter what adverse circumstances they may be called upon to withstand nor what unexpected adjustments to new environment they may be compelled to make.

It is the purpose of this book to clear up various popular misconceptions concerning those time-honored teachings, and to satisfy, in some measure, the growing desire for more information about the methods for schooling the mind and body which they set forth. No claim of originality is made, relative to the ideas and principles herein discussed. Those were old when civilization, as we know it, was just beginning. It is hoped, however, that the manner in which those ideas and principles are presented will be found better adapted to the western mind than that in which they usually have been presented heretofore.

As reference to the bibliography will show, the ground has already been covered quite thoroughly, in

one sense, by numerous scholars, both native and foreign. Indeed, the sheer mass of material they have turned out, and the strange-sounding verbiage they employ, have too often prevented the western reader from getting any proper understanding of what they were talking about. Nevertheless, the very fact that such a quantity of abstruse writing has been devoted to the matter leads the thinking person to the belief that, down beneath the surface of all this queer phraseology, there must be something worth writing about, if only he could get at it. In this volume an effort is made to explain, to the best of the writer's own comprehension, what that "something" is.

Among the difficulties encountered in trying to read anything based on the Indo-Aryan texts is the constant recurrence of words so peculiar that they are bound to distract the reader's mind and hinder his progress. Although philologists rightly declare Sanskrit to be the most perfect language ever devised, yet the fact remains that, to western eyes and ears, many words derived from the Sanskrit look and sound not only strange or fantastic, but often utterly absurd. It is difficult to get the average Briton or American to take them seriously, or to believe that they actually symbolize concepts of profound significance. That is why, in preparing this elementary treatise, the writer decided to use no Sanskrit, Hindustani, or other foreign terms when their meaning could be conveyed equally well in English.

Probably that decision robbed the book of much of the interest it might otherwise have held for certain potential readers who must have their eastern philos-

ophy strongly seasoned with what they conceive to be "occultism" or "mysticism." There is no doubt but what a great proportion of those who profess a keen interest in this or that oriental doctrine have been attracted to it chiefly because, in the first place, it came from the glamorous, enigmatic East; in the second place, because it was expounded to them in unfamiliar words, arranged in impressive phrases the meaning of which they could not quite grasp; and in the third place —or possibly in the first place—because the teacher who brought the message wore flowing robes, or long hair, or a turban, or all three, and had a brown skin and dark, lustrous eyes. The type of mind which is satisfied with superficialities such as that will find little to captivate it in the following pages. This is a matter-of-fact discussion of an essentially simple and natural mode of life, and if the principles which it puts forward in English fail to convince any reader of their soundness, they surely would carry no more conviction for being phrased in Sanskrit or Hindustani.

Scholars referring to the bibliography will find there the sources of much that appears in the body of the text, but, as this is merely an approach to a large subject rather than an exhaustive exposition of it, the writer has purposely avoided burdening his pages with footnotes and references. On innumerable points, moreover, no reference of value to the independent student could be given, for the reason that the writer got his information about them from an authority on Vedic scripture whose brilliant and forceful discourses relative to that subject have not yet appeared in print. Even the bibliography will be of scant assistance to

most students, because so many of the works listed therein are not readily obtainable.

The object of this book will have been accomplished if it enables the reader to peer through the mist of misunderstanding which now obscures most teachings that come from the Far East, and thereafter to decide for himself whether the rewards promised by the teachings in question are worth the effort required to attain them.

H. McL.

PART I

The Ancient Aryan Teachings

CHAPTER I

Their Value Today

PERHAPS not one person out of ten thousand in the western world ever has heard of yoga, or, having heard of it, has the faintest conception of what it is. A few know of it as being an ancient system of self-culture which tends to lengthen life, promote health, build strength, and insure peace of mind and happiness. Even of that few, not all are aware that this time-tested scheme for human betterment was devised by their own ancestors, the early Aryans, at least five thousand years ago.

The awakening interest in how those white progenitors of ours lived, and what they thought about, and what they contributed to the general betterment of mankind, is of relatively recent growth. The past quarter century, however, has seen considerable progress in that eastern field of research, and much information is now available which should be of the greatest interest to us in the West.

The very fact that there was anything written by those early Aryans which could have the remotest bearing upon life as lived in the twentieth century is, in itself, surprising. Nevertheless, it is true that the principles and practices elaborated by those wise men of old are of a nature so basic and so scientific that they apply to human beings now just as perfectly as they did in the remote past. The Aryan teachings, taken as

a whole, have a breadth of scope unequalled by any modern educational system. They are concerned not so much with the acquisition of formal knowledge as with the training of the individual to cope with all aspects of life—physical, intellectual, ethical, social, and economic. They recognize as highly essential much information which our schools and churches do not disseminate, and they deal with it according to its importance. They are applied principally to Man, himself—his structure, his function, his feelings, and his thoughts—and not so much to the infinite array of material forms which makes up his earthly environment.

One reason why the truths contained in the old Sanskrit writings are not more widely known and highly regarded in the West is that they have so long been identified with a people who differ from us in color. Because the Indo-Aryan texts were treasured and preserved in India, it has been taken for granted that they were the product of a dark-skinned race. This, of course, is not true. They are, and always have been—from a racial standpoint—the legitimate heritage of the peoples now in the ascendancy throughout Europe and the New World.

Somewhere in the course of history the Europeans of Aryan descent lost contact with those principles which ages of experience had shown to be most beneficial to human beings of their particular racial characteristics. At another and more definitely known time in history, they began governing their conduct according to a formula originally intended for the Semitic peoples of the Near East. There always have been

numerous individuals here and there who recognized the fact that this was all wrong; who realized that what was good "spiritual medicine" for one race might not be the proper dose for another. Nevertheless, the bulk of the people who settled in Europe and subsequently populated almost the whole of the New World, have gone right ahead taking the prescription handed out to them, for the reason that they knew of no other to take. Among these people nowadays, however, observers note quite a general feeling that our present cultural systems offer vast room for improvement, especially in the direction of character building. Thoughtful folk in all the Christian nations evince an inclination to look about more and more, in the hope of finding some new combination of ideas and principles that will take the place of certain scriptural beliefs long since discredited by the test of time.

During this process of looking about, many glances have been cast toward the oldest scriptural writings of all—the Sanskrit texts preserved in India. Having looked in that direction, however, most seekers after truth have quickly looked away again, because Hinduism in its present manifestations did not represent what they were looking for. This is readily understandable. The codes of conduct and the strange beliefs which typify India in the minds of most westerners are assuredly not of a sort which the West wishes to embrace.

It must be made clear, therefore, that there is a vast difference between modern Hinduism and the cultural system of the early Aryans; so vast, in point of fact, that the two bear little or no relation to one another. The former is a fantastic mingling of myth, superstí-

tion, and fanaticism that can interest and influence only a low-grade type of mind. The latter is a scientific method for developing self-understanding, self-reverence, and self-control. This distinction cannot be stressed too often.

In the opinion of those who have given serious thought to the matter, the people of the western world would find it well worth while to balance up their present highly complex, machine-age culture with some of the simple truths about the art of living which their remote ancestors discovered when the world was young. There is ample evidence that they are seeking eagerly for something wherewith to adjust the seeming conflict between the scriptures they have been brought up to revere and sundry revelations of science which they find themselves bound to believe; something that will provide an outlet for their devotional instincts without demanding that they set aside their common sense; something that will satisfy the rising generation that there are practical, profitable, and, moreover, enjoyable results to be obtained by practicing the cardinal virtues. What they seek, in short, is something which will bring back to our civilization that natural reverence for higher things which it seems, at times, to have lost. This the teachings of the eastern sages can do, if anything can.

It is interesting to learn that these early Indo-Aryan precepts stand up under the most critical analysis on the part of western thinkers. Although many of the texts are ritualistic in style, and all of them are obscured more or less by symbolism and oriental imagery, they contain an astonishing amount of practical mate-

rial—material of a definite, scientific, common-sense value which has lost nothing through having been neglected so long by the modern descendants of the people who discovered it.

The system by which a knowledge of that material can be adapted to modern use forms the subject matter for Part III of this volume, and doubtless many a reader will be inclined to skip at once to that part of the book, without devoting any time to the historical and theoretical foundation upon which the system itself is based. To such impatient ones it can only be said that there is much in Parts I and II which they will not find in other books on this subject, and that if they will but try to digest the earlier chapters they will arrive at the concluding ones much better equipped to comprehend the matters therein discussed. Furthermore, such readers should have reason to place greater credence than they otherwise might in the virtues of the cultural system as described. Knowing its theoretical basis, they will the better appreciate the logical way in which theory has been put into practice.

With this much by way of introduction, let us start at the beginning and see how this ancient lore came to be recorded, what it consists of, and the means by which it may be fitted into the pattern of modern life.

CHAPTER II

Their Source

AMONG scholars it generally is agreed that the ancient Aryans were responsible for all the basic ideas contained in the so-called sacred books of the East. Whether these texts be found in Japan, China, India, Tibet, or elsewhere—and regardless of the extent to which they have been distorted, embellished, or otherwise adapted to varying racial needs—the fundamental and time-tested truths which give them their value may be traced directly back to Aryan sources.

For our present purpose we are concerned only with the teachings put forward by those Aryans who split away from the parent stock, between five and ten thousand years ago, and found their way down from the northwest into India. Whenever reference to the Aryans appears in the following pages, the term is meant to indicate the Brahmanical branch of that original white race which also produced the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Teutons, the Celts, and the Slavs.

These Indo-Aryans, being a pastoral people, were at first occupied chiefly with tilling the soil and tending their flocks and herds. The Family was the tribal unit; the government was patriarchal. The man at the head of each household was priest, physician, teacher, and master, all in one. We deduce this from internal evidence supplied by the tribal literature which has come

down to us, just as we deduce practically everything else we know about the original Aryans. Not that those tribes possessed a literature at the time when they arrived in the valley of the Indus, but they did possess a store of information which they had accumulated during no one knows how many centuries of observation. Out of the daily experiences of the race had come a fund of knowledge that embraced scientific facts, ethical precepts, philosophical concepts, and religious beliefs.

Exercising a type of mental efficiency that is nothing short of astounding to one unfamiliar with their story, the Aryans sorted out this miscellaneous stock of learning, arranged it in orderly fashion, divided it into various departments, systematized it in a way to make it more easily memorized, and finally embodied it in a series of rhythmical chants. Contrary to general opinion, these chants are not merely hymns to the sun and to other aspects of Nature, composed by a primitive people for their primitive form of worship. Portions of them are of that description, it is true, and were used in religious ceremonials. All of them have a ritualistic quality which is most impressive, no doubt intentionally so. Nevertheless, whole sections of this lyric encyclopedia are devoted to such practical matters as the treatment of disease, the conduct of barter and trade, the training and development of the body, and the schooling of the mind, together with much additional material of a more speculative nature having to do with the general make-up of the universe and the manner in which it functions.

Judging by the heritage of wisdom which they be-

queathed to their successors, the Aryans must have had as one of their chief characteristics a curiosity concerning all phases of manifested nature that would do credit to the keenest scientific investigators of today. What they observed, they reflected upon. And when they arrived at what they believed to be a truth, they took steps to preserve it for the benefit of posterity. In acquiring their unsurpassed knowledge of the human body they had the high courage, when necessary, to experiment upon themselves, rather than upon some less highly developed specimen of the animal kingdom. And when they gave themselves over to philosophical speculation, they did so with an exhaustive thoroughness of which no other people has since been capable.

Naturally their investigations dealt with what most people today would consider very simple things; simple, that is, when compared with such highly complex modern phenomena as printing presses, aeroplanes, radio and television apparatus, ocean liners, and the like. Although that is true, it should be borne in mind that no device yet invented is in the same class with the human body as a smooth working, efficient machine, and that no scientific "miracle" thus far produced can inspire the reverential awe which one must feel when pondering upon the limitless potentialities of the human brain. By patient research into the nature and capabilities of their bodies and their minds, the Aryans arrived at truths which the modern world could still put into practice with great benefit. It is a matter for debate whether knowledge of that sort is not more valuable to an individual, in the long run, than most of

the information which he finds between the covers of our modern text books.

Leaving any decision on that point to the ultimate judgment of the reader, it will suffice for the moment to say that the Aryans gradually acquired a fund of wisdom which they considered to be a priceless possession. It became incumbent upon each family to produce and train some individual in whose brain could be stored the knowledge gathered by his forefathers, so that he, in his turn, might pass it on to some one of the generation that followed. To anyone familiar with the feats of memory that may be witnessed in the East at the present time, this will not seem an incredible arrangement. Remember that the truths considered worthy of perpetuation had been phrased in lyric form, the form most easily committed to memory. They had been given all the mnemonic aids of rhythm and rhyme. They were taught to their custodians at an early age, when the mind that was to receive them was still highly impressionable. And they were repeated aloud at frequent intervals and with religious diligence throughout the life of him to whose care they had been entrusted.

Dealing as they did with the more simple and natural elements of human life, the number of topics covered by these tribal chants was somewhat limited. They were concerned with elemental matters, rather than with complexities. The field of human knowledge, in a formal sense, was narrower than it is now. There were not so many material things to know about. To remember several hundred hymns of varying lengths, embodying what was perhaps the sum total of knowl-

edge existing in the world at that time, was no mean feat, to be sure, but it was not like trying to memorize the contents of the New York Public Library. It was something quite possible to do, and, in point of fact, we know it was done. Students of Greek history will find here a parallel between this method of preserving tribal lore and the method by which the Homeric epics were passed down from one generation to another long before they ever were committed to writing.

After an undetermined number of years, during which the system of transmitting the Aryan teachings by word of mouth was employed, they eventually attained to materiality, in a sense, by being preserved in manuscript form. The language in which they were written was an early form of Sanskrit, "the mother of tongues," and the texts thus created were those known to modern scholars as the Vedas.

CHAPTER III

Their Perpetuation

THE Vedas—pronounced Vaý-dahs, by the way—have provided a fascinating field of study for American and European scholars ever since the West found out that such extremely ancient scriptures were still in existence. A considerable number of them, although by no means all, have been translated into various occidental tongues, and in that shape, as well as in the original, have been subjected to prolonged and conscientious perusal.

Independent students engaged in this work have found the Vedic texts curiously baffling. They are impressed, always, by the lofty tone of them and by the beauty and perfection of the language in which they are couched, but they invariably find the meaning of them elusive. There is so much ritualistic phrasing to contend with, so much elaboration of imagery, so much characteristically oriental repetition, and so much intricate symbolism that the combined effect is undeniably bewildering. The Sanskrit scholar may feel reasonably sure that he has translated each word of the text correctly, and yet find his translation as a whole to be too abstruse for western comprehension.

It is now fairly well established that this complexity of form was adopted deliberately and for reasons readily explainable. The Aryans, when they arrived in India, were a highly developed race. They represented

the purest possible white stock. Biologically they were the equals of any white race existing today, and there is every reason for the assumption that, in some of their faculties and capacities, they were our superiors. Therefore the moment they crossed the Indian frontier and encountered a dark-skinned people infinitely beneath them on the evolutionary scale, they were confronted with a grave problem. If they were to invade India successfully and make it their future home, they must first conquer and afterward control a mass of inferior beings who outnumbered them many times over. Their all-around superiority to the Dravidian aborigines then peopling the Indian peninsula enabled them to do this with what, we surmise, was little or no difficulty, as such things go. In a relatively short time the Aryans were the ruling class in the land of their adoption and had taken steps to see that they remained so.

One of the steps taken was to sew up the Indian people in the well-known caste system which endures to this day. Another was to establish themselves as the sole spiritual leaders of the people. In the latter capacity they retained for their own use the store of wisdom which their race had brought with it from the north, and were careful to guard it by all possible means, lest too much of it fall into the hands of the primitive beings who surrounded them.

This, no doubt, was fairly easy to do so long as the Vedic lore had its being only in the retentive brains of its hereditary custodians. When it eventually became advisable to commit the teachings to writing, extra precautions had to be taken. The Aryans were keenly

alive to the danger of placing certain kinds of knowledge in the possession of those not prepared to digest and utilize it. Therefore they set about the task of so phrasing many of their ancient chants that, when written down, they would constitute an unbroken flow of symbology, making sense, of a sort, and yet concealing their true import from everyone except those who knew the meaning of the symbols. Having gained control over their dusky brethren through a superior knowledge of physical and mental phenomena, it was no part of the Aryan scheme to let the people of the lower castes have access to that knowledge until such time as they had evolved to a point at which they became capable of handling it. A scalpel may safely be entrusted to the hands of an expert surgeon. In the hands of a child it becomes a menace.

This, then, is given as the reason why so many of the Vedic texts prove disheartening to the comparatively few savants who have sought to decipher them. It is reasonable to suppose, furthermore, that not all of the Aryan texts have been preserved through the ages, and that some of those which are missing might possibly have thrown a great deal of light upon those which survive. There is the further probability, amounting to a certainty, that there are still many Vedic texts in existence which independent western scholars have not been permitted to see, although their contents is well known and thoroughly understood by those in whose custody they remain at the present time. What is meant by "independent scholars," as distinguished from learnèd men of another type, will be discussed presently.

The sheer mass of Vedic literature still extant—amounting to hundreds of texts of various kinds—is enough to discourage even the most enthusiastic student of the subject. To locate, decipher, and endeavor to interpret all the manuscripts the existence of which is a matter of authentic record, would be a task beyond the capacity of any one person, even though he were granted a span of life many times that of the average human being. For it must not be inferred that Vedic scripture as now constituted consists solely of those hymns and chants which the original Aryans handed down for so long by word of mouth. That traditional lore formed but the nucleus around which was gathered an ever-increasing store of knowledge. The obvious differences in language which mark the several Vedas are proof that they were composed successively over a period of time running into many centuries. The arrival of the Aryans in India by no means marked the termination of their philosophical speculations, their researches into natural phenomena, their scientific experiments, and their development of unique methods for physical and mental culture.

On the contrary, they pursued their studies along all those lines in just the manner which would be expected of a people possessing their grade of intelligence. In consequence of their painstaking investigations in so many fields, the mass of recorded data which they set down grew presently to such proportions that it is probable that no one brain could have memorized it in its entirety. Coincident with the accumulation of this fund of knowledge, and also following its embodiment as scripture, there grew up a vast quantity of corollary

literature in the form of comment, interpretation, elaboration, and illustration, much of which took on an importance and an authority hardly second to that of the fundamental texts themselves.

Still deeply concerned with keeping this treasure of wisdom safe, intact, and accessible, these admirable people set about the task of systematizing it still further; of selecting the essential portions of the several texts; codifying them; reducing them to easily remembered verses; and, in the end, boiling them down and condensing them into something akin to those formulæ used by engineers and chemists, in which a few integral symbols represent a process that would require hours to demonstrate. This division of Vedic literature, from which the basic systems of yoga are derived, is known as The Tantras.

In this form the ancient teachings took on an added sanctity, and were no longer the common property of all Aryan families. Individuals in the tribe continued to memorize extensive portions of the Vedas, in accordance with the early custom, but the preservation of the texts in their condensed, or symbolic, form was another matter. This responsibility was considered so important that a special class of people was created to take care of it. The word "created" is used advisedly, for the training of the men and women of that class began before they were born. Their parents, that is to say, were especially selected for their superior qualifications, both physical and mental. The child, in each case, was conceived under prescribed conditions. The mother was watched over thereafter with the strictest attention to the possible effect of her environment upon

the new being she was destined to bring forth. The child was kept under special supervision from the time of its birth; its actions and, presently, its thoughts being carefully directed along the pathway it was ordained to follow through life.

At the age of seven, or thereabouts, the youngster's specific training was begun, and was continued until it was evident either that he was suited for the task ahead of him or that he was not. In the latter case he reverted to a place in the daily life of his community. In the former, he continued his study and practice until he not only was familiar with the ancient texts but could, himself, demonstrate their teachings and pass them on in his turn to a qualified pupil.

From then on it became his life's job to see that the ancient fund of wisdom was preserved intact. It was his duty to test the teachings at every opportunity offered to him in his contacts with the world at large. When the processes of evolution produced something really new, he must make certain that it was incorporated along with the other truths handed down to him. If any discovery were made, or theory advanced, which seemed to challenge the verity of those tenets in which he had been trained, he must investigate at once and determine where the truth lay. He must play his part in elevating mankind to a higher level by sharing his store of wisdom with those qualified to understand it, to use it constructively, and to protect it. And finally, it was part of his obligation to arrange for the birth and training of someone to whom he could impart the ancient lore in the manner laid down by those who had gone before him.

The assertion is made that, in spite of war and pestilence, invasion and conquest, the rise of this nation and the fall of that; in spite of natural catastrophes and climatic and geological changes; in spite of political upheavals and religious persecutions; in spite of racial amalgamations, migrations, and obliterations, *the line of teachers originating with the Aryans has come down through the ages unbroken.* Not in some remote monastery on the Himalayan heights, aloof from the world and its people, but as a shining thread woven in and out through the fabric of history; a succession of brilliant minds that has made its influence felt in every century and in many lands.

It is certain that custodians of the Aryan teachings found their way into all the lands of the Near and the Far East, from Persia and Palestine to China and Japan. There are indications that they played a part in the civilization of ancient Egypt. Unquestionably the Greek philosophers knew them. No doubt the Romans did, too. The Renaissance found them in Italy, and from that time on, now here, now there, they apparently have kept pace with the advance of mankind until they are to be found today wherever there are cultured human beings ready for further enlightenment.

Presuming that, not alone in the Far East but in other countries as well, there are men and women whose knowledge of the Vedas is theirs by hereditary training, it is obvious that such persons have an insurmountable advantage over any western scholar who approaches the study of the ancient texts with no preparation other than a knowledge of Sanskrit acquired in the West. No matter how profound may be his interest

in philosophy, ethnology, philology, or other departments of learning, the best the independent student can possibly get out of his research work will be a more or less literal translation of such texts as the latter-day guardians of Vedic lore permit him to examine. It is safe to assume that the whole of Aryan scripture never has been placed at the disposal of anyone other than a duly accredited teacher of it, and probably never will be. It may be assumed, further, that much which is essential to a comprehension of the Vedic teachings never has been committed to writing, even to this day. There is, undoubtedly, a quantity of abstruse material which remains locked in the minds of those who have received it by word of mouth and who will pass it on in the same fashion and no other.

The existence of these specially trained men and women—if we assume that they do exist in various parts of the world—is a fact so striking that, at first consideration, it would seem that it should have become more widely known by this time, and more generally accepted. Closer acquaintance with the subject shows why the contrary must necessarily be the case. At no time in history has it been safe to proclaim truths which people in general were not prepared to accept. The individual who advances ideas that are beyond the comprehension of his fellows always has laid himself open to misunderstanding, persecution, loss of liberty, and, not infrequently, the sacrifice of his life. The fate of Galileo might be cited as a familiar case in point, but examples innumerable will occur to any student of history. If the Aryan teachers were to carry out their mission successfully, perpetuating themselves and their

store of knowledge throughout the tumultuous and often chaotic progress of civilization, it must have been imperative for them to remain inconspicuous at all times, and, for the most part, wholly unknown. Unknown, that is, in their capacity as guardians of intellectual treasure. What outward semblance they elected to preserve, what means of livelihood they adopted, what place they occupied among the people with whom they were working was dictated, no doubt, by varying circumstances and conditions. Presumably their chief concern, to which all else was subordinate, lay in seeing to it that the lamp of wisdom lighted by their forefathers was kept burning.

Even though the West may be inclined to doubt whether any such superior beings as those described are to be found nowadays, it remains, nonetheless, a fascinating possibility to contemplate. Surely it is inspiring to picture a succession of courageous, highly cultured, unselfish individuals, doggedly safeguarding what they conceived to be the eternal verities, through all the storm and stress that have marked mankind's painful rise from barbarism.

What a tale it would make if their adventures could be known! How utterly absorbing to follow them as they took their lives in their hands and journeyed from one new land to another, identifying themselves with each successive race as it rose to power, marking the lessons to be learned when that race sank again into oblivion, and then adapting themselves to life among the next people to gain world ascendancy. How marvellous to watch them seeking out the great minds of each era; imparting the ancient truths to a chosen few when

the time was ripe; keeping in the background; noting the trend of events; influencing thought in all parts of the world—a little here, a little there—as opportunity offered; never interfering; always content to let time do most of the work . . . time and the working of cause and effect. How singularly comforting, if you like, to think that perhaps there always have been in this world, and always will be, a number of individuals so situated that they can take what amounts to a god-like view of humanity as a whole, guiding the various races as good parents do their children, with charity for the shortcomings of immaturity, and hope for future growth and development.

Now and again in the study of such matters one comes across references to certain men and women generally called Adepts, or Initiates; beings who frequently pass unnoticed by the world in general but who make an enduring impression upon the few to whom they disclose themselves. In some instances their sphere of action is broader in its scope, and their influence so widespread as to last through many generations. They are described as persons of extraordinary intelligence and profound kindliness. They are said to have a keen and tolerant understanding of human nature, and an intellectual far-sightedness that amounts to prophecy. Frequently, moreover, they are credited with a knowledge of obscure natural phenomena beyond that of ordinary mortals, and with the ability to control their bodily functions in a way that few people believe possible.

Making due allowance for legend, charlatanism, credulity, mysticism, and other sources of error, it

would appear that occasionally someone comes to light who manifestly has had a training of some kind that is denied to the rank and file of human beings. Where he got it he does not say, and, as a rule, there is some degree of uncertainty as to who he is and where he came from. Is it not just possible, as some believe, that such individuals may be the living representatives of that long line of wise men who have played such an unobtrusive and yet vital part in the upward progress of humanity? At all events, the possibility gives rise to enticing speculation.

It has even been hinted that there exists today an organization of superior beings who correspond in character to the Vedic teachers and who, in a remote and Olympian fashion, actually guide the upward progress of mankind. Not through avenues of commerce or through political maneuvering is this said to be accomplished, nor through the instigation of wars and the manipulation of armies, but solely through the judicious scattering of seed thoughts which eventually blossom into constructive action.

If there is in existence an organization of the sort suggested, and if it is conducted according to Vedic precepts, its members must necessarily comprise a benevolent council which directs the evolution of mankind for mankind's good. We may assume, in that case, that they understand the orderly, immutable processes of nature and that—being themselves one with those processes—they have no political ends to serve, recognize no national boundaries, and are concerned solely with the physical and mental improvement of human beings.

Neither races, nations, nor individuals ever would have cause to resent the secret guardianship exercised over them by a body such as that. Because, in the first place, they would benefit by it; and, in the second place, because they never would be aware that any such guardianship was being exercised. To them it would appear that matters were simply working out "in the natural course of events," as we say, and in accordance with the most effective ideas prevalent at the moment. That would be quite true, in a sense, and yet who shall say whether the rise of a certain tendency in the behaviour of mankind, the growth and application of certain previously unregarded ideas, is ever entirely a spontaneous development? There is the possibility that those peoples who pride themselves upon their rise from a crude past to a brilliant present may have had more outside help than they are aware of.

There are those who believe that some such council of wise men as the one referred to has existed since time immemorial, and that the world is indebted to it for the timely arrival of all those spiritual emissaries who have appeared to various races and classes of people at intervals throughout the history of civilization. Some of those emissaries, if such they were, got respectful hearings, as we know, and were permitted to spread their doctrines unhindered. Others, it seems, were publicly executed. All of them, the belief is, devoted their lives to the particular job of "field work" entrusted to them, and most of them succeeded in implanting in the minds of men certain helpful ideas which survive to this day.

CHAPTER IV

Why They Have Survived

THE discoveries made by the ancient Aryans in their study of the human body—in which was comprehended the study of that product of the human brain called "mind"—are valuable today for the reason that, in this special field of research, the passing centuries have brought little change. Bodies today contain the same chemical elements, the same cells, the same organs that they did before the dawn of history, and they function in the same manner. Brains work by the same process, emotions are the same, happiness and its opposite spring from the same causes now as they did when the human race was in its infancy.

It is true that man has dug into the earth and brought forth materials of which the ancients made little use, and has wrought them into an endless variety of forms. He has constructed mechanical devices to do his work for him, to get him swiftly from place to place, to put him quickly in communication with other men from whom he is geographically remote, and to disseminate information rapidly and cheaply. He has accumulated an appalling mass of facts concerning every ponderable, measurable, tangible, controllable thing on earth. Yet, when it comes to his feelings, his impulses, his emotions, his mental processes, and his inner potentialities he knows little or nothing—if we may believe the Vedic scriptures—compared to what

was known by men who lived anywhere from three to ten thousand years ago.

In this age of machinery, we practical-minded westerners are too much inclined to rate a people's intelligence by what they accomplish in the field of applied mechanics. We look back at the races of antiquity and say, "This people had a keen appreciation of art; that one made some interesting excursions into the realm of philosophy; the other one produced some high-class literature; but, of course, we really are far ahead of them. They had no aeroplanes, no radio, no submarines. Some of their temples were beautiful, it is true, but they built no skyscrapers and no suspension bridges."

Perhaps not, but if anyone thinks that the knowledge of mechanics displayed by some of the ancients was not worthy of profound respect let him go to Baalbek, in Syria, and take a look at the foundation wall beneath the ruined Temple of the Sun. There, thirty feet up from the base of the wall, he will see building-blocks of dressed stone sixty feet long by twelve feet thick. Lying in a quarry more than a mile distant he will find another block of the same stone seventy-two feet long by fourteen feet thick. Ask any engineer how these colossal monoliths were transported from that quarry and placed high up in that wall. He will tell you that he does not know. No device with which he is familiar could duplicate the feat today. Yet the Phœnicians are credited with having erected that wall some four thousand years ago. To do so required practical scientific knowledge. It shows that when it came to applying tremendous force to masses of crude material the

Phœnicians had methods which we have yet to rediscover.

It also is salutary for the cocky western mind to learn about the huge building stones which line the sarcophagal chamber in the Great Pyramid at Ghizeh. These are not so big as the ones at Baalbek but, as building blocks go nowadays, they are tremendous. They were laid without mortar or cement of any kind with which we are familiar, but were dressed with such mathematical accuracy that it is difficult to thrust the blade of a knife more than half an inch into the cracks between them. The Egyptians were capable of that calibre of masonry three thousand years before Christ. Try to get it done today.

The Egyptians also left behind them a number of surgical instruments the probable use of which is still a puzzle to modern medical science. It is common knowledge, too, that their methods of embalming far transcended anything of the sort with which the modern world is familiar. Nor is it likely that any pigments in use these days could go down the centuries undimmed as have those in the mural paintings on the walls of many Egyptian tombs.

The catacombs of Carthage have yielded up pieces of jewelry upon which are deposited tiny globules of gold hardly bigger than a poppy seed. Goldsmiths who view them today, in the museum at Tunis, are at a loss to know how this was done.

Many more pages could be filled with illustrative material of this sort, all pointing to the generally acknowledged fact that, in the fields of science, medicine, and the arts, there were many things known to the

ancients which are not known to us. The examples cited, be it remembered, are confined to those which supply us with tangible proof that certain methods and processes used by the ancients have not survived into this century. We see the things they accomplished but we do not know how they accomplished them. Beyond doubt there were other things created in olden times which have not outlasted the ages, and of which we have not the slightest knowledge, for the reason that we, as yet, have uncovered no concrete evidence of the fact.

The Aryans left no pyramids, no colossal walls, no paintings, no jewelry; therefore such visible samples of scientific skill as those mentioned do not date back beyond the time of the Egyptians. This does not invalidate the fact that the Aryan people possessed a profound understanding of natural laws and principles. Their texts, which fortunately have been preserved for us, contain ample internal evidence of such an understanding, even though we have no archæological remains with which to back it up. Further discussion of this matter has been reserved for Part II of this volume, where it more properly belongs.

The whole point of this digression is to emphasize the fact that the ideas and principles contained in the ancient texts under discussion here were not the idle musings of a people given solely to abstract speculation. It is only reasonable to suppose that brains which could function so brilliantly in the field of philosophical inquiry could function with equal brilliance in other directions. Whatever truths of a philosophical nature the ancients arrived at, they arrived at only through a

penetrating knowledge and understanding of the material universe in which they found themselves. The texts themselves furnish ample proof of this. So far as we know, they did not apply that scientific knowledge to the creating of dynamos, internal combustion engines, steam shovels, or any of the myriad other mechanical devices which typify the age in which we are now living. They applied it, rather, to the study of themselves. Their data on material objects and natural forces was considered in its relation to the human body, the human mind, and the human heart. A little more of that attitude and a little less devotion to extraneous fabrications of steel, brass, and copper might prove to be of value to the human race today.

There are those who feel that the West has gone too far in its worship of the marvels made possible by the manipulation of gasoline, electricity, and steam. It is at least an open question whether human beings brought up in the vast intricacy of mechanical devices which characterizes our age have a better chance for ultimate happiness, contentment, and long life than if they got along with somewhat less assistance from applied dynamics and devoted more attention to perfecting the machinery of their own bodies. Bodies, as here used, is meant to be taken in the Vedic sense, which includes mind and heart, as well, and the interplay of each upon the other.

In the realm of mind and heart, man progresses with disheartening slowness. The savage in most of us lies just beneath the skin. People as a whole do *not* love their neighbors as themselves, no matter how many messiahs tell them to. Cruelty, greed, intolerance, self-

ishness, and sloth characterize such a large portion of mankind today that, even though the destructive nature of such qualities was pointed out in the Vedas thousands of years ago, the world has still to learn its lesson. What the Aryan texts have to say about those evils in man's nature, and how they are to be overcome, is just as true now as it was then. The passing centuries have contributed nothing new to the Vedic discourses on that subject.

As for who he is, what he is, where he came from, and where he's going, Man probably knows less now than he did when the world was young. Then, at any rate, he was closer to his beginnings, and may have recalled something about them. The Aryans pondered those problems to such purpose that after they had reached their conclusions and put them down, little remained to be added. Savants are pretty generally agreed that no absolutely new philosophical concept has been advanced in the past thirty centuries. Now and again some earnest philosopher comes forward with what he believes to be a new theory as to Man's destiny, and new reasons why a certain path must be followed in order to attain salvation. In every case it has been shown that his path had been travelled and his theory tested by people long since dead. What was true in his concept had been recorded, and what was false in it had been discarded, ages before he was born.

Even the recently promulgated theory of relativity was anticipated in the Vedic writings, every page of which is marked with a symbol to remind the reader that all statements in the text are but relatively true and not literally so. The one unqualified truth which

those writings recognize is the existence of the universe as a whole. Its component parts, being subject to unceasing change, have no qualities or attributes of their own, the texts say, except in their relation to something else which differs from them. The differences are listed as those due to the elements of time, space, causation, name, and form, or combinations of any or all of those limitations. Modern thinkers have added nothing to that concept.

The mere fact that the Vedic texts have survived so long, and are still prized so highly by those familiar with them, ought to be enough to insure them a hearing in the West. The test of time is one of the most convincing that can be applied to anything on earth, be it a material object or an idea. If, in addition to mere survival, it can be shown that the truths contained in those old scriptures are fundamental, basic truths which modern thinking has not been able to contravert, then they become all the more worthy of attention.

CHAPTER V

How They Were Tested

IT so happened that the Aryan teachings, both those which were in existence prior to the migration and those developed afterward, were preserved principally in India. In many respects this was highly fortunate; in others it is to be regretted. Setting aside temporarily the regrettable phase of the matter, let us see why the impulse which caused the Aryans to leave their northern habitat and come down into the valley of the Indus was one of far-reaching importance.

To begin with, for anyone whose interest lies in the clinical study of human beings, as did that of the Aryans, no land on earth can provide such a variety of specimens as India does. Assuming that the invading white men arrived in their newly chosen home with certain principles of conduct already pretty well formulated, they found themselves in a perfect laboratory for testing the practical application of those principles under every imaginable condition.

Then, as now, India was a land of violent extremes: the highest mountains, the hottest plains, the densest jungles, the most terrific rains. Taken from the heights of the Himalayas to the scented shores of Ceylon, the Indian peninsula offers every climatic condition under which mankind has been able to survive. This and other causes produced a great number of widely different tribes, the members of which spoke a profusion of different tongues and adhered to countless different faiths.

Knowing how slowly things change in the Far East, we judge that in many respects the same conditions prevailed then as prevail now. India today is a kaleidoscope of differentiated peoples who hold conflicting beliefs, follow peculiar modes of life, speak languages of their own, and vary so greatly in physical appearance that each might have been bred in a different country from the others. It is a land of dramatic contrasts. Wealth beyond calculation exists alongside poverty that is living death. Dazzling mental attainments contrast with an ignorance utterly abysmal. The loveliest architecture in the world is set against a background of nauseating squalor.

In a social fabric of that kind many strange patterns must have been woven in the past, just as they are being woven today. That is one of the reasons why India is such a fascinating country. If a student be curious as to how a certain ethical formula, or a certain mental or physical or sociological program would work out in actual practice, India has the answer ready for him. She has tried everything: all forms of religion, all forms of family life, all forms of sex manifestation, all forms of physical culture, all forms of mental training. In many places she keeps right on trying them, even after it has been fairly demonstrated that they have no value whatever. Not only has she tried these various codes of conduct, but she has carried them to the furthest conceivable extreme of fanaticism. That is the nature of her people. For weal or woe, right or wrong, she works each idea out to its logical conclu-

sion, and the student has the result before him for observation.

Is the observer interested in polygamy and polyandry as contrasting modes of life? There are tribes in India which practice both the one and the other. The student may judge for himself which tribe appears to be the more contented.

Is it disease the student wishes to know about? India has them all, both plain and fancy.

Does the investigator's interest run to crime? India is the country in which, at one time, cold-blooded murder was raised to the level of an æsthetic diversion.

Has the scholar wondered whether there really is any spiritual or other benefit to be gained from mortification of the flesh? Hundreds of living ascetics who have tortured themselves beyond belief are roaming about India for his inspection. He may observe, for example, a man who has crossed his legs back of his neck and let them grow there permanently, the while he goes through life on his buttocks. If the scholar thinks this has got the ascetic anything, he is at liberty to try it himself.

Is he a sociological worker who is interested in beggars as a regrettable offshoot of the modern social system? He doesn't know the meaning of the word "mendicancy" if he never has been to India.

Almost anything which has to do with human conduct is available for observation somewhere in India today, and probably was available at some time during the period when the Vedas were being written. The same dramatic contrasts among the people of that country must have existed in some measure at the time

of the Aryan invasion. Those extremes, taken with the intermediate stages lying between them, provided the invaders with an opportunity to study every environmental condition, climatic or social, which can affect a human being in one way or another.

This they proceeded to do, with a thoroughness that is astonishing. The stage upon which they watched the human drama unfold was equipped with every possible setting and peopled by an infinite variety of actors. The performance went on for centuries. It still goes on. The actors grow old in their parts and are replaced by young ones, but the situations, the moments of dramatic suspense, the "heart interest," the motivation —none of these are changed. It is still the same old show.

Watching this endless interplay of emotions, and taking part in it at the same time, the Aryans, as was their custom, took notes on what they saw. They meditated upon their observations. They reached certain conclusions. And they took pains to perpetuate such of their findings as seemed to bear the stamp of eternal truth.

There could have been no better land than India in which to preserve wisdom of that kind. In countries where changes took place with considerable rapidity as history unfolded, the ancient teachings might easily have been lost forever. But India changes scarcely at all. Invasions have swept her, and she has placidly absorbed the invaders. She may have yielded gold and jewels to conquering hordes from without, but those plunderers were not interested in treasures of the mind. There are many well-nigh inaccessible spots in India

where those who had the Vedic manuscripts in charge could secrete them with little or no difficulty.

For all these reasons it is perhaps just as well that the Aryan writings found a home in India and always have been kept there. The drawbacks to that arrangement, so far as they affect the white races of today, have chiefly to do with the prejudice existing in the West against almost everything Asiatic. This phase of the matter will be given detailed consideration in the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER VI

How They Should Be Judged

THE value of the Aryan scriptures cannot be judged by a study of conditions prevailing in India today. Only an infinitesimal fraction of the Indian populace either knows or cares anything about the simple truths which the Aryans recognized and sought to preserve. The great mass has not the mentality to grasp the teachings nor the inclination to follow them. The custodians of the ancient texts, always extremely cautious in the dissemination of sacred lore, have given out only what little they hoped might be understood, and that little has been so distorted by superstition, priestcraft, and a natural tendency toward fanaticism as to render it virtually unrecognizable.

A notable instance of this sort of distortion is to be found in the widespread belief in reincarnation now current throughout the Hindu world. Without going into the matter too deeply, it may be stated here that the ancient Vedic texts offer no support whatever to the theory of reincarnation. That doctrine is a later development, introduced by the Hindu priests into their commentaries on the Vedas, because of the hold it gave them upon their followers. The fear that their souls might return to earth in the body of some loathsome animal, if they did not do just as the priests told them to, has kept millions of Hindus under the control of the religious caste, just as fear of punishments

equally absurd has kept millions of presumably more enlightened individuals under the sway of other churches in other lands.

In this connection it should be made clear that Hinduism as it exists today must not be confused with the precepts laid down by the Aryans. The millions of futile, irrational, child-like beings observed by the modern traveller in India must resemble the people who compiled the Vedic texts about as much as a group of colored stevedores resembles the teaching staff of Carnegie Institute of Technology. The incredible fantasia of strange ideas by which most Hindus govern their lives, from birth to death, is a far, far cry from the logically evolved code of conduct set forth in the Vedas.

On the one hand we have gods and goddesses by the hundred, involving the constant necessity for bizarre rites and sacrifices, many of them repellent to western minds. We have endless purifications to be undertaken, in atonement for imaginary defilements. We have a stubborn, if illogical, belief in the sacredness of certain animals, together with many another peculiarity of belief and practice which a thinking mind must regard as absurd to the point of insanity.

On the other hand, in the pure Aryan teaching, we have a scientific concept of the universe, an accurate understanding of natural phenomena, and a recommended manner of living based upon logic, reason, and human experience. It is this latter brand of belief upon which it is hoped the ensuing chapters may throw a little light.

The Aryan code is distinctly not the one followed by

the teeming millions in modern India, and that is decidedly India's loss. Had the Aryans who migrated to India been able to keep their tribal stock free from admixture with the blood of the darker tribes round about them, they might have preserved their identity and developed into a race not unlike the Greeks, the Celts, the Teutons, and those other people of Aryan ancestry whose progenitors migrated west from a common starting point, instead of east. Undoubtedly they made the effort, and it is more than probable that they survived as a strictly white-skinned people during a period of many centuries. But the climate was against them. With the passing of time they became subjected to a slow but relentless infiltration of darker blood, accompanied inevitably by a gradual drifting away from the extremely high standards of their forebears.

Today all Hindus are referred to as being of Aryan ancestry, and, in one sense, so they are. Their complexions, however, range from quite light to very dark, according to how many of the limbs on their family tree were Aryan and how many were Dravidian. The Brahmins, as a whole, have kept closest to the ancestral path, and it is among them, if anywhere in India, that one must look for surviving specimens of the original Aryan type. Such specimens, it appears, are extremely rare, although not wholly unknown.

So, although we find in portions of the Brahmin caste an attempt to keep alive the Aryan methods of mental and physical culture, the Indian people *en masse* have not the remotest conception of them. If they had, and if they practiced even a small part of what the texts advise, they would not be the physically inferior,

mentally erratic, spiritually enslaved lot that they are.

Unhappily for those who have found so much of great value in the Vedic teachings, and who would like to share it with others whom it might benefit, it is the spectacular abnormalities of East Indian life that have attracted the most attention in the West. Western opinion of India and her people has been formed through too much stressing of that unfortunate country's decadent and indefensible aspects. What the casual tourist sees as he passes through India, or what the stay-at-home hears or reads about it, usually is not, it must be admitted, of a nature to make him receptive to teachings emanating from that direction. He is justified in saying that if East Indian philosophy has done no more for its people than it appears to have done, then he assuredly wants none of it.

This is an attitude which the present writer is fully able to appreciate, for the reason that it happens to be precisely the attitude he took toward the Indian people when he visited their country twenty-two years ago. In his notes, written at that time, India is characterized as

> "A land of sorrows, a land of sighs,
> Of shrunken limbs, and tragic eyes,
> A land of famine and dire distress,
> Of sickness, and fear, and hopelessness."

Much the same thing can be said of India today, and one cannot blame the people of our progressive western world for looking askance at any doctrines emanating from an environment of that description. It can only be repeated, therefore, that Vedic India and modern India represent two wholly different phases of human society. The principles which western scholars are just beginning to unearth from the Aryan literature have never, at any time, been practiced by the people of India as a whole. They simply have been preserved in that part of the world. Even in the days of purely Aryan supremacy the percentage of people living a Vedic life in India must have been comparatively small. Now that the Aryans, as a separate racial group, have entirely disappeared, the percentage is naturally smaller.

That fact cannot properly be construed as a reflection upon the value of the Vedic teachings. It is axiomatic that the constructive brains in any country, at any time in the world's history, have been restricted to a small number of heads. Genuine thinkers, whose mental processes have a lasting effect upon those of their fellow men, are few and far between. There are good brains in India today, plenty of them. They may not be functioning in a way to attract widespread attention in the western world, but in the long run they will play a commendable part in the evolutionary process that embraces the future of East and West alike.

Knowing this to be true, the Vedic student always regrets the publication of such books as, for example, Miss Mayo's "Mother India." Not that all the statements therein are untrue, by any means, but because the book is misleading in the net effect it produces upon the mind of the reader. Owing to the sensational nature of such conditions as Miss Mayo chose to describe, her book achieved a wide sale and undoubtedly was read by thousands of people who never had read anything about India before and probably have read nothing since. Such readers as that are apt to

form their opinion of all things Indian from the one-sided picture which Miss Mayo presents.

To realize the unfairness of such writing, one has only to study the deliberately incomplete picture of the United States drawn by Mr. Kanhaya Lal Ganba in his "Uncle Sham." No good American would care to have his country judged solely by its lynchings, its gangsters, its political corruption, its benighted backwoods mountaineers, its tabloid newspapers, its unpunished murders, and its traffic in narcotics, or by any of the other blots upon its social structure which so flagrantly and notoriously exist at the time this is being written. People outside the United States of America—and inside, as well—read of such things with justifiable horror, but the thoughtful ones among them do not, on that account, condemn the U. S. A. as a country out of which no good could possibly come.

Neither does it follow that, because a regrettable portion of India's three hundred and fifty million people conduct themselves in ways which seem to us abhorrent, there are not a great many high-minded and admirable people living there, whose lives, in some respects, we might do well to emulate. Not all that exists in India is of the unpleasing nature typified by child marriage, temple slaves, lack of sanitary facilities, and the like. Many foreigners who visit India get a glimmering of this fact, even as casual tourists. The land enchants them in spite of themselves. They rage at the filth, and curse the whining incompetency of the natives, and fume at the beggars. They regard a goodly proportion of the populace as religious maniacs. They are irritated in a thousand ways, by everything from

the heat to the primitive plumbing, and yet, in spite of all that, they are conscious of something else about India, something that piques their curiosity and their wonder. They see such exquisite bits of beauty, in architecture and in handicraft; they are conscious of so much that has in it the quality of glamour; they find so much to admire in the passionate devotion of the people to their several beliefs, no matter how seemingly mad the belief may be; and they are so deeply impressed by the sheer antiquity of the country, that, of all the lands they may see on their travels, India is the one they would choose for a second visit and for further study.

It is hard to understand why so few British residents of India appear to have any conception of the truths that lie concealed behind the phantasmagoria of native life that goes on around them. There are brilliant exceptions like Sir John Woodroffe, Mr. Ernest Wood, Major Francis Yeats-Brown, and a few others, but, as a rule, the most wholehearted students of Sanskrit lore have come from outside. The names of these latter scholars that come first to mind are those of Max Müller, Arthur Schopenhauer, Rene Guenon, Paul Deussen, and Mrs. L. Adams Beck, although there have been any number of others who have sensed the hidden treasure in the Vedic texts and have striven to dig it out. All of them have got something out of their studies, though, needless to say, none of them has got more than a fraction of what he might have learned had his preliminary training been of the sort given to a qualified Vedic teacher.

There probably are but few Englishmen living in India who have not had occasion, at one time or an-

other, to observe evidence of a superior knowledge of natural phenomena possessed by some of the natives with whom they come in contact. They have met Brahmins whose grasp of the potentialities hidden within the human brain far transcended their own, or they have seen individuals who could alter the normal bodily functions in a way that bordered on the miraculous. Unfortunately they have been in an equally good position to observe so much jugglery, hypocrisy, fanaticism, and mania among the natives that few of them ever bother to separate the wheat from the chaff. Anything which deviates from the usual and the accepted—according to what their English schooling has laid down as accepted and usual—they are prone to dismiss as being unworthy of notice. It never would occur to them that British scientists, British theologists, or British doctors could learn anything from a native teacher who had been born and trained in India. Faced with demonstrations of mental or physical control which he cannot explain, your average Englishman living in India will admit that some of the natives are "a jolly queer lot," but he is inclined to let it go at that and to continue complacently growing his jute, or running his railroads, or drilling his troops.

One would think that the British, who have had a hand in Indian affairs ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth, would, by this time, have found out all that the Vedic texts had to teach, and would have made it common property. The fact that they have not done so is apt to discourage the average student whose interest lies along those lines. "If they can't get a clear and intelligible interpretation of the Aryan scriptures,"

says he, "or, at any rate, *don't* get it, even though they have been right there on the ground for hundreds of years, how is anyone else to get it?"

As for that, it is axiomatic among teachers of Vedic truths that those who are ready for the teaching will somehow find their way to it. This implies, further, that the truths contained in the Aryan texts can be imparted by anyone in possession of them, in any country, and in any tongue. In other words, it is not necessary to go to India to get at the essentials of the ancient wisdom. Those essentials have no more to do with India than they have with any place else. They are universal truths, and, as such, are slowly being made known to those who are qualified to make constructive use of them. Many Englishmen who were ready for the Vedic doctrines have already been entrusted with them. The same is true of the French, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the Americans, and of all other races whose Aryan origin made the Vedic teachings their natural legacy.

If the findings recorded in the Aryan scriptures are not at present the common property of everyone belonging to a specific people or group of peoples, it is simply because of the high standard adhered to, by the interpreters of those findings, in their selection of pupils to whom the interpretation is to be given. The scriptures themselves state quite definitely what the qualifications of prospective students must be, and the teacher never deviates from the restrictions thus laid down for him. He must be convinced that the one to whom he imparts the principles set forth in the Vedas is able to grasp them intellectually, practice them bene-

ficially, and pass them on only to someone else who will use them in the same manner.

The number of people who meet these requirements is relatively small, in any country. The only way to estimate the value of the teachings is to observe the results obtained by those who have access to them. If, by this time, the reader is curious to know a little more definitely what the teachings in question consist of, he will find something more specific about them in the pages that follow.

End of Part I

PART II

Fundamentals of Vedic Belief

CHAPTER I

Aryan Concept of the Universe

PRACTICALLY all revealed religions try to devise, first off, a cosmology that will account for the earth's existence and the existence of all its creatures, including Man. The revelators, in each case, evidently felt the necessity for basing the new faith upon law of some description . . . God's law . . . Nature's law . . . something which they could cite as an exalted authority for their teachings.

Without stopping to analyze and compare the Hebraic, Persian, and other stories of creation, it may be stated without qualification that the Aryan concept of the universe is the only one which is absolutely in line with the best modern scientific thought. In essence it is a perfect statement of the theory of evolution, elaborated to the finest detail and set down in writing centuries before Darwin galvanized the world with his re-discovery of the same principles.

The Aryans based all their speculations upon the assumption that everything in the universe is composed of one primordial substance, infinite in its extent, continuous, indivisible, without beginning and without end. The modern physicist, subdividing matter into solids, liquids, gases, and so on up the scale, arrives at much the same conclusion, except that he usually is content to stop with something he calls the ether.

The Aryan hypothesis carried the process a step or

two farther, rarefying the ether into something which we, perhaps, can best comprehend as "mind," and then rarefying that, again, into the ultimate, unknowable, original source of all being which the Vedas call "Brahm." Perhaps we cannot follow the Aryan thinkers quite that far in their speculations, and perhaps, from a practical, workaday standpoint, we do not need to. The point is that what they preached is monism, and that monism is the hypothesis accepted by most scientific men of today in their attempts to account for the how and the what and the why of the universe in which we find ourselves.

It is a most satisfactory theory, when properly understood, and it accounts quite logically for all the phenomena which our five somewhat inadequate senses are able to present for consideration. Besides that, it is a theory which has stood the test of time, the lapse of a great many centuries. None of the scientific revelations which have passed for discoveries, as one age succeeded another, has made it necessary to alter or revise any of the principles laid down by the Vedic thinkers.

With such a sound thesis upon which to base their thinking, it is not surprising to learn that the Indo-Aryans, as disclosed by their writings, were aware of many things which we in the West are accustomed to regard as having been found out in comparatively recent times. When William Harvey wrote his "Essay on the Motion of the Heart and the Blood," in 1628, he was describing nothing that had not already been described in the Brahman Medical Code, written many years B.C. When Dr. Coué popularized his system of autosuggestion through repetition of a word formula,

he was re-stating nothing more than a well-recognized form of mental and physical therapeutics which has been practiced in India for countless generations. Mary Baker G. Eddy's contribution to modern thought consisted largely in her hitching up parts of the Christian doctrine with certain time-tested principles contained in those later commentaries on the Vedas called the Upanishads. In the First Edition of her "Science and Health"—later recalled but still to be found in certain quarters—Mrs. Eddy acknowledged her indebtedness to her friend Dr. Quimby, who was a student of Vedic texts, and who supplied her with much of her material. This well-known fact in no way reflects upon the merits of Christian Science. It is cited here, along with the other illustrations, simply to show the singular modernity of the world's oldest scriptures.

A separate chapter might be written concerning those schools of western thought which are more obviously derived from Vedic sources. The writings of Kant, Schopenhauer, Emerson, and others equally well known, were inspired by a study of Indo-Aryan teachings. Those writers, however, were interested mainly in the philosophical elaborations to be found in some of the commentaries on the original scriptures. We, for the moment, are concerned only with their more elementary aspects.

According to the monistic philosophy, everything which we register as existing in the universe about us is but a fragment of the original, universal substance. These fragments differ from one another because the particles which go to make them up are grouped differently, or vary in their aggregate number, or move at

different rates of speed, or—moving at the same rate of speed—describe different paths. They are aggregations of infinitely small particles, circling about each other at high velocity and held in a certain relationship to each other by a balance of forces that in each case endures long enough to give the mass an appearance of permanency.

Another way of putting it is to say that all the objects which go to make up our visible world are essentially nothing but "whorls in the ether"; a series of vortex rings, as it were—some tenuous, some compact; some revolving upon themselves quite leisurely, others at a high rate of speed, and all of them continually interlacing with each other, interpenetrating each other, revolving around one another, and thus creating a semblance of form so long as the forces which set them in motion continue to control them.

Mathematicians approach the matter from an analogous angle when they say, "A point, in motion, becomes a line. A line, in motion, becomes a plane. A plane, in motion, becomes a solid."

Watch a group of children some evening as they play with the flexible bamboo punk-sticks they have lighted to drive away mosquitoes. On the end of each stick is a glowing spark. Held still, it is a pin point of light and nothing more. But waved rapidly to and fro, or given a circular motion, the spark becomes a fiery, unbroken line. Now it appears as a circle, now as an oval, now as a figure eight. If the child were capable of whirling the stick at the same rate of speed for a measurable period of time, and describing always the same path in the air with it, the pin point of light would take

on, during that period, much the appearance of a red-hot wire bent to similar shape. It would have the transient semblance of tangibility.

If, instead of being confined to a spark at the end of the punk-stick, the ember extended several inches toward the handle, an entirely different effect would be produced when the stick was vibrated rapidly from side to side. The lighted portion, now a line of fire to begin with, would then take on the appearance of a glowing piece of sheet metal; a two-dimensional plane of light, instead of a simple line.

Were it possible, in concluding the demonstration, to vibrate that flat plane swiftly up and down, as well as back and forth, the result would be something that appeared to have the three dimensions of a solid, just as when a dollar is spun on a table it takes on the appearance of a sphere.

This illustration, of course, is based upon the familiar optical illusion created by the persistency of images on the retina, the same principle which makes the inanimate figures on a motion picture film take on the semblance of motion when the film is run rapidly through a projector. Nevertheless, the fundamental concept of a point in space being converted, by certain complex modes of motion, into something which seems to have length, breadth, and thickness, is the concept upon which the monist bases his theory of matter.

A professor of higher mathematics probably could pick the reader up at this juncture—or the writer, for that matter—and render him quite dizzy with a dissertation on the possible existence of a fourth dimension which ought to be taken into consideration if the riddle

of the universe ever is to be correctly solved. As this is generally considered as being a three-dimensional world, however, and as most of us will do well if we ever comprehend it, even on that basis, there will be no attempt to discuss the fourth dimension in this purely elementary treatise.

According to the Vedic idea—and the modern scientific idea, as well—the phenomena of heat, light, and electricity are caused by varying modes of motion in that same universal substance which constitutes the whole of the universe. They are impulses arising in primordial matter and conveyed to us in varying wave lengths, heat having one set of wave lengths, light another, and so on. The practically universal familiarity with radio sets which prevails today should make an understanding of that concept much easier than it might have been a few years ago.

It will be seen from this simple outline of Vedic cosmology that it is in complete agreement with the best modern thought along similar lines. In fact, the more revolutionary and far-reaching the revelations of latter-day science have been, the more they tend to confirm the beliefs arrived at by those profound intellectualists of antiquity—those thinkers who had no workshop save the world at large, no laboratory but the human body, no instruments except their highly developed senses.

Having stated the belief of the Aryans as to how the universe is constituted, it is now in order to give their ideas of the way in which it functions.

CHAPTER II

Involution and Evolution

IN pondering upon the structure of the universe and the manner in which it operates, the Aryan thinkers arrived at the paradoxical conclusion that the only permanent thing about the world of matter is its impermanence. They decided that the one principle which holds good at all times and in all cases is the principle of change. Everything on earth, in the waters under the earth, and the skies above it they found to be characterized by unremitting alteration. "Viewed from the cosmic standpoint," they said, "nothing in the material world is stationary, nothing endures, nothing remains eternally the same."

According to Vedic scripture, the whole cosmic cycle is based upon unceasing motion; the gradual change of all matter from one form into another. Impulses arise in the ether—to go back no farther than that—which set certain portions of it in motion and cause them to become differentiated from the limitless reservoir of similar matter around them. The difference is in the direction of a slightly diminished rarefaction, a slightly increased density. The change then becomes progressive. Acted upon by the same forces which created them, those portions of the ether which have achieved distinction from the parent mass next undergo a further process of condensation, emerg-

ing eventually as gases, then as liquids, and finally as solids.

In due course of time they start upon the return trip, passing successively through all the several stages of their creation, until they merge once again with the ether from which they came. They are made of the same essential stuff at all times in their sojourn through the world of matter, but the units which constitute them are not always moving at the same rate of speed, nor describing the same orbits. Their form, which is to say the form of any of those things which our senses identify as being different from something else, depends upon the nature and intensity of the forces which are acting upon them at the moment we observe them. The mode of motion imparted to their constituent parts by a given set of forces will make them present a certain appearance. Alter the character of the forces, and the appearance is altered as well.

This process, by which the most rarefied matter conceivable passes slowly through all degrees of density until it reaches the most solid form we know of, and follows this with a slow reversal of the process, was recognized by the Aryans and given a name. The name corresponds to what we understand by the terms Involution and Evolution. Its symbol was a snake with its tail in its mouth.

The classic illustration employed in explaining the process is that which starts with a cake of ice. Matter in the form of ice is so hard that one may crack his skull on it if he fall on it with sufficient force. It is visible, tangible, and, in a crude, inert way, possesses a certain power. Apply heat to the ice—or, in other

words, alter the mode of motion of its constituent elements—and the ice turns into water. What formerly was dense, unyielding, seemingly motionless material has now taken on an entirely new set of qualities. It is not so solid as it was; other objects penetrate it more easily; it changes its shape with perfect freedom, adapting itself readily to the contour of its container or to any other surface with which it may come in contact. It is still visible, still tangible, just as it was in its previous form, but it is a far livelier, far more adaptable material than it was before. Properly handled, it is capable of developing great power.

Apply still more heat, speeding up to an even greater degree the motion of the particles which compose the water, and another dramatic change takes place. The substance with which we started has now become invisible. Experience tells us, however, that it is still in existence, in a form we know as steam. Confined, it displays a brand of power ten thousand times greater than it possessed in its previous forms. Released, it mingles with the surrounding atmosphere, thus finally passing beyond our control and beyond our cognizance.

This experiment duplicates before our eyes and within the space of a few moments the same process that takes place with all material things in the course of time. No matter the form in which objects appear, they change that form when acted upon by one or another of the forces existing in nature. If the change be such as to give them greater mobility or greater lightness; to diffuse the particles which compose them, and to set those particles going at a livelier clip, then the objects are on their way back to their parent element

and we call the process Evolution. If the change be such as to slow down the constituent particles, to draw them closer together, and to render the object as a whole more compact, less adaptable to the shape of objects around it, then it is on its way to the other extreme, and that we call Involution.

It would be quite possible to reverse the experiment just described, by condensing a quantity of steam, collecting the water thus created, and then freezing the water. In that way the cycle would be completed, after a fashion, except that steam is not one of the rarer gases and has a long way to go before it becomes refined to the point where it blends indistinguishably with that from which all things come. In converting ice into steam and back into ice again, we would be examining a section of the whole process, and not the complete process from Beginning back to Beginning.

Even in its segmentary form the illustration should serve to give one an idea of what we might call the mechanics of creation. It is interesting to note that increased rarefaction always is accompanied by an increase in power. If, as the Aryans contended, the ether as we conceive it has for its source a still finer grade of material which we may best understand as being "mind," we are led thereby to the conclusion that mind is the greatest power in the manifested universe. To elaborate upon that thesis, however, would carry us beyond the scope of the present volume.

In a preceding paragraph it was stated that the process by which ice becomes steam is, in essence, the same process which takes place in the history of all material things *in the course of time*. The time element is, of

course, vital to the concept. We consider a rock to be something fairly solid and enduring; we refer to "the everlasting hills"; and, compared with the relatively short span of existence allotted to these soft bodies of ours, a rock is, indeed, everlasting. But a bolt of lightning can split a rock; heat, cold, and moisture can disintegrate it; wind and wave can reduce it to a powder; acid can dissolve it, and heat, in turn, can volatilize the acid. In her vast chemical-physical-electrical laboratory, Nature, with Infinite Time at her disposal, can produce any changes she sees fit.

Man, in the comparatively short time he has been on earth, has seen mountains spring up in certain spots on the earth's surface, and disappear from other spots. The Himalayas appear the same to us today as they did to the first human eyes that rested upon them. Yet even they are changing, slowly, imperceptibly, inexorably. They have not always existed where they are, and the Power that created them can likewise wipe them from existence.

The Vedic philosophers divided time symbolically into Brahmic Night (the period of Involution) and Brahmic Day (the period of Evolution) each night and day lasting for millions of years. According to that chronology we are now, in 1933, just past the mid portion of a Brahmic Day. The earth, therefore, if we accept that concept, is on its way back to its source. Emerging from Infinite Mind as a mighty vortex in the ether, it became transformed into a swirling, rushing expanse of incandescent gas. In time this gas cooled off, condensed. The furious activity of its particles subsided. Its elements drew closer together. The vast

vortex of rarefied material resolved itself into a whirling sphere, superficially cool and partially solid.

Forces inherent within itself, together with forces coming to it from without, combined to inaugurate a limitless series of changes in the matter composing its solid crust. That matter began to assume countless forms. Life, as we know it, began to animate some of the forms thus created, until, as the process slowly worked itself out through æons of time, the grand total of results accomplished was the world as Man knows it today.

It is the Vedic notion that the human body is a miniature universe, containing, in greater or less proportion, all the elements that go to make up the universe at large. That being the case, the laws which apply to the entire universe also apply, so the Aryan texts assert, to the human body. A changed mode of motion in the particles that compose the body, or, in other words, an altered rate of internal vibration, liberates new manifestations that were potentially present all the time, just as similar changes in modes of motion produce like results in any form of matter whatever. It is on this theory that the Indo-Aryan system of self culture bases its methods for hastening the process of evolution in the individual.

Whether he be in the middle of a Brahmic Day or of a Brahmic Night is of little actual concern to the Vedic believer. He realizes that Evolution and Involution are but arbitrary divisions of the same cosmic cycle; that everything moves in circles; and that he, himself, has his little perch somewhere on the rim of the Great Wheel. He perceives that the Wheel continues to turn

without ceasing, and he surmises that he will get back, eventually, to the point from which he started. He does not care whether he gets there a little sooner or a little later. The mode of life he follows was designed by his Aryan ancestors for the primary purpose of getting him all the happiness it is possible for him to have while passing through his present phase of existence. As such, it appears to have worked extremely well in the past; better, at any rate, than any other mode of life he has been able to discover. Therefore he continues to practice contentedly the precepts outlined in the Vedic scriptures, and to derive an enviable satisfaction from so doing.

CHAPTER III

Name, Form, Space, Time and Causation

IN picking his way through the world revealed to him by his five senses, the student of the Vedas is impressed by the validity of their contention that the truth concerning all things and all events is a conditional truth only. He learns that the dependable facts relative to objects and their behaviour—meaning everything that exists and everything that happens to it—are subject to the operation of five factors: Name, Form, Space, Time, and Causation.

He finds that the thing he calls a tree, for example, would be just the same if he called it something else. The name of an object, it appears, has nothing intrinsically to do with the object itself. It is merely a label, arbitrarily selected at some time or other, which everyone agrees to use when referring to an object of that sort. Its meaning depends upon the language in which it appears. It may mean the same thing in several languages, or it may mean something quite different in each, or, in some, it may have no meaning whatever. Moreover, a name can mean one thing in one country and, in another country, something that is not the same at all, although the tongue spoken in both countries is in most respects identical. Even in different sections of the same country a name may have different meanings; and, in the same locality, it may mean one thing to one group of people and something else to another.

In short, a name is simply a word used in an effort to identify an object, a happening, or a condition. Its meaning, to each individual who uses it, depends entirely upon where he is, what he is, and what his experience has been.

Names serve simply to catalogue things; to place them in separate pigeonholes, where they will not get mixed up with other things from which they differ in one way or another. But they do not describe the qualities and attributes of things, nor supply any information to a person not already familiar with the thing named.

To put it another way, a person might come across some animal or plant which was utterly strange to him, and, by observation and experiment, find out all there was to know about it, without having the remotest idea what its name was, or whether a name ever had been given to it. Later on, he might discover that someone else had observed the same thing before he did, and had given it a name, but this discovery would not add in the slightest degree to the knowledge of the thing which he already had gained for himself. He might, in the meantime, have given the thing a name of his own, and, so far as concerned him, his name for it would be just as good as the other fellow's.

Obviously it would not do for every individual to invent a name of his own for each object, each event, each state of mind, or other phenomenon that came under his observation. No one would know what anyone else was talking about and all interchange of ideas would necessarily cease. Therefore we have to have names for things, but, in the last analysis, these names

are little more than envelopes in our mental filing systems. To get at the truth about anything, we must remove it from its envelope and consider the several qualities and attributes which give it distinction.

Perhaps the first thing we note about it is its form. This refers primarily to its outline; its external contour; the visible or tactual configuration of it; the position of its surface with reference to its center; the relation of its length to its breadth, and the relation of both of these to its thickness. It is the infinite variation of those relationships which constitutes differences in form.

The quality of form, however, goes much deeper than the external shape of a thing. The variation in form of its constituent particles is what locates a thing in the animal, the vegetable, or the mineral kingdom; besides determining its consistency, its color, its odor, its taste, and the sound it is capable of producing. Upon the nature of form, external and internal, depends the nature of function. This is important, because, aside from function, structure has little meaning.

The next distinction we make between things has to do with their size. They may have the same outward form and be composed of the same kind of matter, but if they do not displace the same amount of their enveloping element—be it air, earth, or water—we consider them to be different from one another. In other words, things differ according to the amount of space they occupy. The size of anything is purely relative and depends upon the size of the thing with which it is compared. *Everything else being equal,* size is the measure of power, but that qualifying phrase must not

be lost sight of. The amount of space a thing takes up in this world is far from being an accurate gauge of the power it is capable of exerting.

Things differ from one another, in still another sense, according to the precise moment in their existence at which we chance to observe them. Everything of which we are aware, in the manifested universe, is subject to constant changes of form and of size, and, consequently, of name. Anything we choose to examine is different now from what it was a year ago, or even a second ago, and will be still different, to some degree, a second or a year hence. Having emerged by due process of evolution from the original source of all material things, it exists for the moment under the guise in which we see it. Its change from that guise to another and different one may be either gradual or rapid, but it is only a matter of time until such a change inevitably takes place. The element of time, therefore, is a factor of considerable importance which must be taken into account in arriving at the truth about anything in what we call the material world.

In only one other respect do things differ from one another, and that is in the causes which produced them, the forces which are operating upon them at the present moment, and the forces which they themselves are capable of putting into effect. Any specific object or any specific occurrence is but one link in the endless chain of cause and effect by which the process of evolution and involution is carried on.

Applying what has been said in the foregoing paragraphs to any object whatsoever, we see that it is a thing which certain CAUSES have produced out of

matter that previously existed under a different guise; that it is here for a limited TIME only; that during that time it will occupy a limited and varying amount of SPACE; that it differs from many other things in its FORM, *i.e.*, in its outward shape and inward composition; and that, therefore, in order to keep it separate in our minds from other things which it does not resemble, and also to group it in our minds with certain things which it *does* resemble, we have decided to fasten upon it a label, or NAME.

Thus there are five angles from which we should view a thing in trying to arrive at the essential truth about it. In order that we may know how to act toward it, how to make use of it, how to foresee what its behaviour will be, how to determine where it came from and what will become of it, and where to place it in the general scheme of things, we should:

1. Find out what forces are being exerted upon it and what forces it is capable of exerting.
2. Determine at what point in the process of evolution it has arrived, *i.e.*, what effect the passing of the years has had upon it up to the present moment, and what effect it will have upon it in the future.
3. Observe the relative amount of room it occupies in the world, in order that we may have a clue as to its potentialities for power.
4. Take note of its shape and structure, because upon this depends its function.
5. Ascertain its label, or give it one of our own, in order to identify it for purposes of reference.

By way of rendering all this a trifle less academic, let

us apply the above principles to some specific object. And to make it more interesting, let that object be a human being. Our five conditioning factors operate with impartial certainty upon minerals, vegetables, and animals, and, if we liked, we could choose for our illustration a specimen from any of the three kingdoms. Man, however, is generally accepted as evolution's crowning achievement thus far, and on that account is proportionally more interesting as a subject for analysis. Furthermore, all that any of us is going to get out of life depends wholly upon what sort of relationships we set up with our fellow beings. For that reason it behooves us to know as much about them as we can. If they are conditioned by Name, Form, Space, Time, and Causation, let us see in what way.

Assume that a stranger has appeared on your personal horizon and has begun taking part in that ceaseless interplay of persons, objects, events, and mental reactions which constitutes your daily life. His presence obliges you to make a decision of some sort concerning him. He wants to interest you in an investment, for example, or he wants to marry your daughter, or have you go to work for his firm, or get a job as your cashier, or pilot you to salvation, or join your expedition to Central Asia, or involve you somehow in one or more of the human relationships which none of us can escape.

Before you can decide how to conduct yourself toward him, and what sort of answer to give him, you must do the best you can to "size him up." Is he the kind of man whose judgment as to the soundness of an investment would be worth considering? Would he look after your daughter in a way to insure her happiness?

If you went to work for him, how would he affect your chances of getting ahead? Does he appear to be the competent and trustworthy person you want to have handling your funds? Does he look as if he'd found salvation himself, and do you think you'd care for his brand of salvation if you could get it? If he went into the wilds with you, would he endure hardships cheerfully and be dependable in the pinches? That is the sort of things it would be well to know, if possible, before you take any steps that would link you any closer to the man than you are at present.

His name, to use that as a starting point, may be of value as an index to his nature, and again it may not. If it be his real name, it may be a clue to his nationality, from which you deduce the presence in his make-up of certain racial characteristics—doggedness, shrewdness, excitability, stoicism, or other cardinal traits—varying in accordance with the purity of his blood and the nature of his breeding. When, however, a man whose ancestors have handed down to him through many generations the name of Hokolovitch decides to call himself Hawks, or, by the same process, a name like Kraussmeyer becomes transmuted into Cross, then its value as an indication of personal qualities and attributes becomes negligible.

Again, the name may be that of an old, distinguished, and worthy family, yet the individual who bears it, though it be his by right, may be a decadent and thoroughly worthless specimen of humanity, in no way representative of his ancestral line nor to be considered as possessing any of the qualities which won his forebears the respect of their fellow men.

Best not to depend too much on Name, but to consider in turn the remaining factors which set the man apart from others of his kind.

Form, as applied to a human being in the sense we are using it, covers a great many points from which and by which an estimate of the person's true quality may be obtained. It deals not only with outer appearance but with inward structure, both of which have their share in determining how a person will function. The manner in which he functions—mechanically, chemically, and even, in a certain sense, electrically—determines his physical conduct and governs his ideas. It accounts, in short, for his behaviour.

Is he fat, is he thin, or is he somewhere between? Is his skin dark or light? What is the color of his hair? Is it fine or coarse, straight or kinky? Is his body well proportioned for the work it has to do? Is his head broad or narrow, well rounded or flat? Are his features crude or refined? What is the quality of his voice? Is he healthy or ailing?

To one versed in reading such symptoms as these—and there are any number of others equally significant—each has its meaning, and each is an aid in obtaining a picture of the man as he is in actuality, regardless of what anyone may say about him or what he has to say about himself. By summing up the physical and mental characteristics of which these various symptoms are the outward indication, balancing one against the other, and getting the probable resultant, a trained observer knows whether the man under examination is likely to be indolent or energetic, steady or volatile, bellicose or conciliatory. He knows whether the person can be

interested in and influenced by ideas and principles, or whether his life will be governed for the most part by what are generally known as "things of the flesh." He knows whether the man is apt to display strong will power, or whether he will prove to be infirm of purpose. Be the man narrow-minded or tolerant, egotistical or self-effacing, capable of resisting disease or likely to die at an early age, the observer who knows how to interpret Form is able to arrive at the truth about him with a fair degree of accuracy.

Having judged a man's actual and potential capabilities from the standpoint of Form, the next point to be considered is his size. It is an axiom of the prize ring that a good big man can always whip a good little man, which is about all that can be said on the subject. Whenever a big man is pitted against a smaller man in any sort of contest, and neither is the superior of the other in skill, mental equipment, and muscular tone, the big man will win, in the end, through sheer preponderance of bulk, just as a big army will defeat a small army sooner or later, provided the two forces are equally well armed, equally determined to win, equally well off as to strategic position, and directed with equal intelligence.

The time element, so far as concerns the hypothetical individual we are examining, has chiefly to do with his age. Has he still some distance to go before he reaches what will be, in his case, the peak of his efficiency? Has he arrived at the age which is enabling him to do the best work of his career? Or is he definitely past the high point and not likely to accomplish in the future

anything so important as other things he has accomplished in the past?

It will readily be seen that the answer in any given case will depend entirely upon what type of person he is and what is expected of him. An aviator might reach the end of his career as a "stunt flyer" at a comparatively early age, yet he would still be valuable as a commercial pilot for many years longer, and, through the experience gained during those active years, might ultimately reach his greatest usefulness in an advisory and executive capacity, long after he had permanently relinquished the joy-stick to the youngsters of a succeeding generation.

Age, moreover, is a matter of physical condition. The familiar saying that a man is as old as his arteries has much truth in it. He is also as old as his kidneys, his lungs, his heart, his joints, his muscles, and his brain cortex. Any or all of these may be failing to function properly in one person, while in another person who has lived twice as long they are still working first rate. Therefore the answer as to the age at which he reaches his greatest efficiency must differ with each individual, according to his hereditary physical endowment, his training, and his experience, and also according to what sort of efficiency is required of him.

So many causes have gone into the making of any individual, at any given point in his existence, that it is, of course, quite hopeless to identify or catalogue them all, or even to discover them, except in the most general way. Since man is said to be the sum of his environment, the best we can do is to ascertain if possible what that environment has been, and, with that as a basis,

try to surmise what effect such an environment must have had upon the human being in question. In order to hazard a guess as to what goes on in his mind, and, in consequence, what his probable course of action will be under certain circumstances, we have to know what racial stock he sprang from; what sort of people his parents were; where he spent his formative years; under whose tutelage he got his ideas about life; what religion he was exposed to; what schooling he got, if any; what sex experience he's had; what his occupation has been; who his associates are; and what phase of life seems to interest him most. Knowing these things in a general way, we can prophesy with some confidence what our individual's reaction will be to a situation in which he finds himself or to an idea which is presented to him. Each person on earth is the product of a different set of forces, and his behaviour will differ accordingly, but we can, at least, group certain of those forces together under broad headings, and classify in similar fashion the results which ordinarily ensue when such forces are exercised. In this way we can get a fairly dependable idea as to how the person in whom we are interested will conduct himself in any situation which has a bearing on our own lives. Knowing that much, we can govern our acts accordingly.

According to Vedic belief, it is our failure to recognize the nature of Name, Form, Space, Time, and Causation, and to appreciate the manner in which they operate, that causes all our sorrows and our misunderstandings.

CHAPTER IV

The Doctrine of Illusion
(MAYA)

THE five concepts discussed in the preceding chapter constitute, when considered collectively, the much-discussed Veil of Illusion so often referred to in books on East Indian philosophy. Unless we tear aside this veil, they say, the ultimate reality of the universe never can be revealed to us. The things we see, hear, taste, smell, and feel, it is pointed out, are not actualities but disguises. They are forms which conceal from us the universal truth that All is One.

This doctrine of illusion is based upon the theory of monism, and was believed by the Aryan writers to be strictly true. Unfortunately it is a doctrine which often completely demoralizes the Hindu when he strives to grasp it and does not quite succeed. In that case he says to himself, "All is One. The people and things around me do not actually exist as separate entities. They are but figments of my imagination. Why, then, should I bother about them? We are phantoms, all of us, in a phantom world. Why should I strive any longer to alter my own condition or that of my fellow men? What's theirs is mine, and what's mine is theirs, because it is all the same thing. Therefore I'll just go sit in the shade, accept whatever my fellow phantoms choose to give me, and await my turn to merge with the Infinite."

Considered on a basis of infinite time, what the poor fellow says is true, and the conclusion he reaches is not wholly illogical. The trouble is, he fails to consider the fact that he himself, in his present form, as well as the people and things around him, are not operating on an infinite time basis. His own existence is relatively a short one. So is that of his fellow beings—the people whose behaviour conditions his earthly estate. A thousand years hence, to be sure, his dust may mingle with theirs and be indistinguishable from it, but for the present there are great differences between them. These differences affect him and affect them, mutually and vitally. What seems to be true concerning such differences is all the truth that he, in his present form, is going to know. For the time being it *is* the truth.

That is the practical attitude taken by teachers of Vedic lore. They accept monism as an abstract principle, and they take a monistic attitude toward life. They let it govern their manner of thinking, so that they are looking always for similarities rather than for differences, and are paying attention to fundamentals rather than to modifications and diversities. But, at the same time, they recognize the fact that they, themselves, are a part of the phenomenal world—the laws of which they must live up to, so long as they are subject to them.

"Life on this earth, as viewed from the standpoint of an Infinite Mind far out in the universe, may be, in truth, a shadow show," says the Vedic teacher. "All we creatures may be puppets, and what we do or leave undone may seem of but little importance to that remote observer. Be that as it may, it happens that we

are not away out there in the universe; we are right here on earth. This is the only stage upon which we are going to perform, so far as anyone has been able to prove. Whatever we do must be done here, in our present material environment, and within a limited space of time. If we are puppets, then it is up to us to give a good performance. Certain things that human beings do, here on this plane, have been found to be conducive to health, long life, and peace of mind. Certain others are not. It is my job to point out to mankind which things are which, and to show why it is better to do one kind and not the other, if one expects to get his share of fun out of the part he plays in the big show."

In practice, therefore, the Vedic teacher has to be a qualified monist. While he may admit that the black man and the white man sprang from the same primordial matter, and will in time return to it, yet he knows that in their present form the black man and the white man are differently constituted. He knows that intermating of the two races never has been conducive to the welfare or happiness of either. Therefore he advises the two to pursue separate paths on their way to their common destiny.

So with other matters of similar nature, the Vedic believer makes compromises with the strict letter of his faith as it is conceived in its abstract form. People do not have to belong to separate races for him to recognize vast differences existing between them. He knows that some members of any given race are much farther up the biological scale than others of the same race. He knows that one race, as a whole, may be farther along the pathway of evolution than another,

and yet may contain specimens which have not progressed as far along that path as have many individuals in the race which, generally speaking, is lagging behind. To put it concretely, a healthy, cultured, cosmopolitan, self-reliant Mongolian is, in his opinion, a closer approach to the perfect type of human being than is an inbred, ignorant, insular, diseased, and helpless Caucasian. The latter would be the first to rise and deny that this is so, but the broad Vedic viewpoint cannot admit the validity of his denial.

Even as between two members of the same race, the same social stratum, the same mental attainments, and the same traditions, Vedic insight perceives differences of physical and chemical constitution—with resultant variations in function of both body and brain—that place each of the pair in a category entirely separate from the other.

No one is more apt than the Vedic at applying his powers of analysis, comparison, and discrimination when the practical, mundane concern of the moment demands it. His basic habit of mind, however, tends to make him think along broader lines. He has a healthy fear of mental pin-pointedness. His endeavor always is to make his thoughts envelop their object from all sides at once, rather than to concentrate them upon one aspect of it only. His is the organizing type of mind; the mind that takes a great number of diverse elements and, by proper management, makes them function smoothly as a whole. He gives more time to the long look ahead than to consideration of the immediate future. Problems which confront him are solved with reference to the fundamental principles they involve,

regardless of their varying surface manifestations. For this reason he makes a very real distinction between wisdom and knowledge. Too often that which passes for knowledge is, in his opinion, little more than a catalogue of facts garnered in the fields of name and form. True knowledge, of the sort which constitutes wisdom, is, to him, an understanding of the way in which to systematize accumulated facts and make use of them to best advantage. A man might know all about each separate part of an automobile, but unless he could assemble them and could operate the machine thus created, his acquaintance with the several parts would be of little use to him. By the same token, a man who understood the principles governing internal-combustion engines, multiple-gear adjustments, electric generators, transmission devices, and the like, could take an assortment of parts with which he was unfamiliar, and, by successively placing each where it would function best, construct a motor car that would work perfectly.

For that reason the Vedas stress the importance of acquainting ourselves with natural laws and principles and using them as a basis for our judgments, instead of trying to familiarize ourselves with the infinitude of forms behind which the truth lies concealed.

The Vedic teacher takes the same attitude toward the animal kingdom, and toward that realm of nature which commonly is referred to as inanimate, that he takes toward his fellow beings—the attitude of qualified monism. He is aware that the beasts, the birds, and the fish, the plants, the trees, and the rocks, are all little "whorls in the ether." He knows that there is no higher

or lower among them, no superior or inferior; that they simply happen to be at different points on the rim of the Great Wheel as it makes its endless revolutions. He knows that they will remain in their present form for a comparatively short time, and that, to that extent, their existence, like his own, is transient and illusory. Nevertheless, he bears in mind that they are, for the moment, subject to the laws which govern all of manifested nature, just as he himself is subject to them, and that he had best conduct himself toward them in accordance with those laws. The cobra on his path may be but "a projection of the Infinite Mind," an illusion, an ephemeral picture thrown on the cosmic screen; yet he knows that when the illusion of a poisonous snake bites the illusion of a man, the illusion of a man generally moves right on into the illusion of something else. The rock that poises on the edge of the cliff may be, as a matter of Ultimate Truth, no more than a shadow. Still, if it falls off the cliff, and our wise man fails to step out from under it, he will move to another plane just as surely as though the rock had been every bit as solid as it seemed. Knowing these things, the Vedic believer watches his step just as carefully as the man who never heard of the Doctrine of Illusion, and perhaps more so.

CHAPTER V

The Law of Cause and Effect
(KARMA)

THE actual interplay of cause and effect, or their relation one to the other, is what the dictionaries call "causality." The principle involved in this play of forces is defined as "causation." So fine spun is the distinction between the two terms that there is small likelihood of confusing anybody if they are used interchangeably. The process indicated, no matter which term be employed, is one of such importance that the ancient Aryan texts dignified it by calling it a law.

The manner in which this law operates was touched upon in a previous chapter, but the concept has had such a widespread effect upon the mental processes of various peoples, and is so variously interpreted, that it seems worth while to give it a chapter all its own.

The Sanskrit word for the play of cause and effect is customarily translated as "Fate." To many minds, the word "fate" conveys a fairly definite idea. A man's fate is simply a composite of the things that happen to him. They may be pleasant things, from his point of view, or they may not. He may be played upon by constructive forces or by destructive ones, but whatever they have done to him, up to any given time, that is his fate as far as he has gone.

To other minds, the picture is not nearly so clear as all that. It is so badly blurred by conceptions of Luck,

and Chance, and Fortune, and Nemesis, and Fatalism that its validity as a dependable law is thrown open to doubt. Ideas as to what is deserved and what is undeserved complicate the problem still further. Fate all too frequently seems cruelly unjust. We see educators, philanthropists, statesmen, and other public benefactors stricken by death when they still should have many years of usefulness ahead of them. Children who show great promise fail to reach maturity. Innocent people get sent to prison for crimes they did not commit. And at the same time that these regrettable happenings are taking place, idiots are living at public expense, thieves and grafters are flourishing, and all manner of other public nuisances in human form survive inexplicably, with no joy to themselves nor any benefit to mankind. Small wonder that so many people develop what is termed "the fatalistic attitude."

A soldier, let us say, goes out to fight for his country. He faces death and disease at every turn, escapes injury by the scantest of margins, and finally returns home to the peace and safety he has earned. The morning after his arrival he slips in the bath-tub and breaks his neck. In the face of such incidents as these, and countless others that everyone has heard of, it is perhaps only natural for many of us to regard Fate as something which knows no law but caprice; which is guided neither by rule nor by rhyme; and in the face of which we are helpless to act in our own defence, for the good reason that we never know what it is against which we have to defend ourselves.

Thoughts like those have paralyzed the will power and destroyed the initiative of human beings in num-

bers impossible to estimate. "What will be, will be," they have said, resignedly. "My destiny was charted for me when Time began. It is part of a great scheme that has been worked out in advance, and nothing I can do will prevent its being carried through. I have been foreordained to endure this life of mine. Who am I to seek escape from the dispensations of an all-wise Providence?"

Thinking thus, the Hindu says, "This is my *karma*. I bow to the inevitable law." The Mohammedan says, "It is the decree of Allah." The Christian says, "God's will be done." The pantheist says, "My fortune rests in the lap of the gods." The atheist says, "Some folks are lucky; others are not. Nature has no plan. What happens to me and what happens to my fellow beings is all a matter of chance."

The question is, are they right? Is that a proper and reasonable attitude to take, in view of what we know about Nature and her myriad manifestations? The Aryans of old gave much thought to this matter, as they did to all other philosophical problems, and from their writings we gather that they arrived at certain conclusions. If they were here today, and were addressing the humbly acquiescent or mildly resentful gentry quoted in the preceding paragraph, we can imagine them saying something like this:

"No doubt you have reason for thinking as you do, but aren't you taking rather too personal a view of the matter? As individuals, are you of sufficient importance in the general ongoing of the universe so that what happens to you need be considered in determining whether the law of cause and effect is a desirable and

equable one to have in operation? What you complain of is Nature's seeming indifference to what *you* would like to have happen to *you,* and the calm, unswerving way in which, notwithstanding your desires, she proceeds to do just as she pleases. Not knowing what to do about that, you simply become resigned.

"In that connection you must remember that the cosmic show is not being run for your special benefit. It is conducted upon lines as broad in scope as the universe itself. At any stated moment, an infinity of causes is in operation, producing an infinity of effects. Conflict of causes, combining of causes, and neutralizing of causes, all must take place in this process, followed by results that vary accordingly. In many specific instances the result seems not to justify its cause, or seems to be out of proportion to it, or even to be wholly unconnected with it. In cases like that, the law which is supposed to govern such things appears to be functioning erratically, or even to have been suspended altogether. If you chance to be the victim of one of these seeming vagaries, or a series of them, you are inclined to believe that Man is the helpless plaything of capricious forces, and you lapse into apathy because of that belief.

"The only way to tell whether this law of cause and effect is 'the good law' which we assert it to be, is to watch its operation over a long period of time and in a vast number of cases. If we find that, *on the whole,* it is logical and dependable and impartial, then we are inclined to accept it cheerfully and with good grace. If we note that, *in general,* the strong survive the weak, honesty and virtue are rewarded, wrongdoing is punished, unselfishness leads to contentment—and so on

through the whole category of what we like to feel are desirable principles to see firmly established—then we are justified in saying that, in the last analysis, people get what is coming to them.

"That phrase 'get what is coming to them' is a risky one to use in a discussion of this subject. It is apt to stick in the crops of many people, because they can think of so many instances wherein someone they knew met a fate or underwent an experience that seemed entirely uncalled for, unjustified, unfair, and generally deplorable.

" 'A friend of mine,' they will say, perhaps, 'was walking past a building that was under construction. He was young, healthy, upright in his dealings with everybody, capable, energetic, and altogether an admirable member of society. A careless workman dropped a tile from the roof of the building, crushed my friend's skull, and killed him instantly. He never had seen the man who dropped the tile; had nothing to do with the building, nor with anyone connected with it. Did he get what was coming to him?'

"Or they will say, 'A conscientious and worthy young married couple had done everything in their power to give their baby a good start in life. They had seen to it that their own health was good, that the baby was properly brought into the world, that he had the proper surroundings, food, and care. One night while the nurse was bathing him, the baby splashed some water on the bathroom floor. In rising, to reach for a towel, the nurse slipped in the puddle, dropped the baby on his head, and rendered him mentally defective

for life. Did the baby get what was coming to him? Did the parents?'

"Or, again, 'Millions of the most valuable young men to be found in the leading nations of the earth were engaged in the Great War. There was little or nothing to choose between them. Nearly all of them thought they were doing the right thing. Some of them survived the encounter; some did not. What about those who are under the sea or under the sod? Did they get what was coming to them?'

"The answer, of course, is, 'Yes. In one sense, they did; the young man, the baby, and the soldiers.' The thing that makes it hard for us to accept this answer is our tendency to confuse 'fate' with 'fault'; to introduce the question of personal responsibility into the problem; and to resent the exception that proves the rule.

"True, it was not the young man's *fault* that he got hit by the tile, in the sense that he intentionally stepped underneath it as it fell. He was not *knowingly* responsible for what happened to him. He was not being punished for anything he had done. The element of volition, in other words, was absent from the entire incident.

"Nevertheless, he did bring about his own death by arriving at a certain point at a certain instant. Had he decided to walk down the other side of the street, he would not have been hit. Whether he knew it or not, a certain train of causes and effects had been set in motion. The workman on the roof had imbibed some bad liquor the night before, let us suppose. In consequence, his hands were shaky. He couldn't get through a morn-

ing's work without dropping a tile. The tile, in its descent, gathered a deadly impetus.

"Meanwhile our young man was playing his part in a cause-and-effect sequence of his own. On the previous evening a friend had recommended a new book to him. The next morning he decided to walk to a bookstore a few blocks from his office and buy the volume in question. He chose the side of the street on which the new building was being erected, because at that time of day it was the shady side. And he strolled along the pavement in front of the building because the sidewalk beneath the safety shelter provided by the builders happened to be crowded.

"These were the two trains of events which had been set in motion, and, at a certain moment of time and a certain point in space, the two trains crossed paths. The young man, obviously, never was aware of the sequence of events which culminated in the falling of the tile. He could not know that any such play of cause and effect was in progress, or he might have avoided becoming involved in it. Unfortunately for him, ignorance of the causes which are in operation at any given time does not absolve anyone from his share in the inevitable effects that follow. Certain causes bring about certain results, and will continue to do so whether we like it or not. Let anyone get mixed up in them, wittingly or unwittingly, and he has to abide by the consequences. Sins of omission and sins of commission are punished with equal severity. The process is inexorable and impartial. It often seems to us unjust, in specific instances that end disastrously; but it works just the same in the inexplicable and fortuitous happenings

which lead to good fortune. When a shiftless loafer neglects his family to go fishing, and catches a fish that has swallowed a diamond ring, it is no more his fault that he is suddenly rich than it is our young man's fault that he is suddenly dead.

"Certainly we cannot hold the baby responsible for falling from the nurse's grasp. It was not his fault that his parents hired that particular nurse. Neither could he be expected to know anything about the workings of cause and effect. His sole contribution to the incident consisted in the simple fact of his existence there at that moment. He was a tiny cog in the wheel of circumstance, playing his tiny part, with no say as to how the wheel should revolve or to what end. When we say he got what was coming to him, we do not mean that he *deserved* it, but simply that a combination of preceding causes produced a result that could have been no different. The hapless parents got what was coming to them only to the extent that they supplied the actors and the stage setting. They produced the baby, they employed the nurse, they bought the soap and towels, and arranged to provide a bathroom. Naturally they didn't do all this with the idea of having the baby dropped on its head, but if they hadn't done those things there would have been no tragedy. They played their part in setting certain causes in motion, and in consequence they became involved in the results. Neither right nor wrong has anything to do with the case. The question of justice or injustice does not enter into it, either. Events having come about in a certain way, their combined force was bound to create a certain consequence, through no premeditation on the part of the victims,

nor through any degree of ignorance or carelessness which could be attributed to them.

"So in the case of the soldiers: When a platoon of them were advancing across a terrain raked by machine-gun bullets, some fell and others did not. *Both* got what was coming to them; but in the one case it was death, and, in the other, continued life. What caused the difference? Very simple things. One man stepped aside to avoid a shell hole, and thus removed himself from the path of an oncoming bullet. The next man stepped around the same shell hole, and placed himself right in position to stop another bullet that had been discharged at a slightly different angle. Neither man was any cleverer than the other, nor gifted with greater foresight. They played no purposive part in what happened to them. Once they had obeyed the order to advance, they had no conscious control over the outcome of their actions. Unconsciously, however, they either took a course that intersected the trajectory of a bullet, or they did not; and so it was with their thousands of comrades up and down the battlefront. The missile either 'had their number on it,' or it didn't, and having penetrated an area where missiles were flying about, one man's chances were as good as another's.

"The preceding illustrations may impress many minds as being arguments in favor of fatalism rather than against it. There may, perhaps, be nothing in the three cases cited to convince anyone that Man is not, at all times, the helpless plaything of chance. One can imagine their giving rise to questions of the following sort: 'If the young man, and the baby, and the soldiers

had no way of foreseeing what the play of cause and effect had in store for them, how can any of us know but what something similar may happen to us? What can we do to protect ourselves? Our lives are constituted, are they not, of an unbroken series of happenings of one sort or another? Regardless of any specific happening which we wish to avoid, suppose that the sum of the whole series is a general condition which is not to our liking, what can we do about it? Since cause and effect work inexorably and there is no way of telling in advance how their interplay will affect the fortunes of any one of us, what is the use of trying to alter our present situation? Why not just take things as they come and make the best of them? What else is there to do?'

"By way of overcoming this attitude, and trying to show that there *is* something else to do, suppose we view the problem in some such fashion as the insurance companies view the problem of making up accurate premium tables. In other words, consider it in the light of the law of averages. Then broaden the scope of that view by considering it, moreover, from the standpoint of infinity.

"Reflecting upon the matter, with those concepts in mind, we see that as the world rolls on, year after year, century after century, age after age, there will continue to be, from time to time, young men who are killed by falling tiles, through no fault of their own. Helpless and blameless little babies have been dropped on their heads in the past, times without number, and the same thing is going to happen at irregular intervals during the ages to come. There will be wars in the future as

there have been in the past, and in those wars some of the contestants will be killed, while others survive.

"But, *in the generality of cases,* people who pass buildings where work is in progress will do so in safety if they are reasonably cautious; babies will be bathed without accident if their parents and nurses try to be careful; and a majority of the soldiers engaged in any one contest will live to engage in something better than the shooting down of their fellow men. Thus we can predict with a fair degree of certainty what the average trend of events will be, provided we know the events that have preceded them. We study history—any kind of history: the history of the earth's crust, which we call geology; the history of man's development, which we call anthropology; the history of individual lives, which we call biography—and on what we find there we base our prophecies as to the future. Not detailed predictions as to the specific incidents that will involve ourselves or others, but the general nature of what will happen to us and to them.

"Herein lies the clue to what we can do about that inexorable march of events which gives rise to the law of cause and effect. Having a general idea of how it works, why not be wise enough to make it work *for* us instead of against us? So far as lies within our power, why not set up only such causes as will bring about desirable results?

"We may be sure in advance that our efforts to do this will not be crowned with success in every instance, but *in general* they will produce better results than if we had made no effort at all. A large number of good causes established will produce more good results than

a small number will. Moreover, a large number of good causes set in motion will tend to offset the effects of such bad causes as we may be responsible for, either accidentally or by deliberate intent.

"The unforeseen, the fortuitous, the unpredictable will always be happening to us so long as we live. They should be accepted as part of the game, with a consoling knowledge that their unwelcome interference will never be so consistently effective as to upset altogether the broad policy of originating good causes in order to bring about good results."

The process indicated in this imaginary dissertation is so childishly simple, so logical, and so obvious that everyone with a particle of reasoning power knows the theory of it. Where nearly everyone falls short is in the practical application of the theory. People in general know perfectly well that if they avoid exercise their muscles will become flabby; that if they overeat they will become fat; that if they are unclean they are likely to contract disease. They know that if they themselves are selfish, they need not expect generosity from others; that if they are found to be dishonest, they will lose the confidence of their associates; that if they are lazy they will get little accomplished; and that if they indulge themselves to excess in anything, they will have to pay the penalty for it.

Nevertheless, nearly everyone goes right ahead making one or other of those mistakes. They know better, if they would stop to think about it, but they have no fixed policy in the matter. They have not the slightest conception of the far-reaching, cumulative effects inherent in what they do. They do not observe closely

enough what happens to other people who do the same things, nor profit by such observation.

The Vedic practitioner, on the other hand, endeavors to bear in mind at all times the working of cause and effect. He tries to ascertain the true value of the things life proffers him, so that he may know whether they are worth the price demanded. Because he gives thought to these matters, and because he sees people all around him driving such wretchedly poor bargains, he is less likely to be cheated than they are. He is more likely to bring into his own life the elements that make for happiness and contentment.

His habit of mind induces the Vedic student to look for causes of a sort the casual observer would disregard, and to seek them in quarters where others would not think of looking. Having seen certain causes at work in a quiet, unobtrusive way, unnoted by less acute observers, he can foretell to his own satisfaction what the results are likely to be. When those results come about, therefore, he is not so greatly astonished as other people are. The accuracy of these private forecasts of his is limited, naturally, by his opportunities for observation, but, given the same opportunities as everyone else, the probabilities are that he will be better prepared for eventualities than are those whose thinking is not along the same lines as his own. He has an advantage in his *way* of thinking, his manner of looking at things, his knowledge of what to look for and what to expect from what he finds. On that account he is less likely to be surprised than most people are when some individual behaves in a manner which, to everyone else, appears most unexpected and incompre-

hensible; someone, say, who leaves his family to elope with a chorus girl, or betrays a public trust by overlooking the dishonesty of his subordinates, or attains to success in spite of a general belief that he was of no account.

To illustrate more clearly the meaning of the preceding paragraph, we might begin with the case of the individual—a young man, let us suppose—who surprises everyone by reaching unforseen eminence. His family, his friends, his associates—all who had occasion to notice him, in fact—might have been united in the opinion that he was "queer," "stupid," "unsociable," "moony," or "useless," and never would amount to anything. Yet the thinker along Vedic lines might have looked beneath the surface a little and said, "He may seem that way to you, but fundamentally he's all right. His health is good, his brain works clearly when he turns his attention to something that interests him, he comes of sound stock, and he's still young. The trouble is, he is mentally lonesome. His thoughts flow in different channels from those of the people around him. Not better nor worse thoughts, necessarily, but different. He has discovered this and it makes him feel that maybe something's the matter with him. This renders him shy, and keeps him from joining the activities of others. Presently, if he be fortunate, he will discover that there are any number of people in the world whose thoughts are much like his own; people with whom he can meet on common ground and exchange ideas; people who are interested in the same things he is. Under their stimulating influence he may come to full bloom, mentally; may develop unwonted

energy along lines of abstract science, say, or philosophy, or the arts, and awake one fair day to find himself famous. He has the stuff in him, potentially. Everything depends upon whether future events bring it to fruition."

Feeling thus, it would be like the Vedic scholar to give the lad a little shove in the direction of his greatest possibilities. His other associates, were it left to them, would thoughtlessly scoff him into oblivion. In one case the action would be purposive, and based upon an understanding of cause and effect. In the other it would be quite aimless, and based upon nothing more than a recognition of the fact that the youth was different from his immediate fellows—plus an egotistical assumption that, on that account, he must be inferior to them.

Seeking for light on the case of the public official whose underlings dipped so freely into the public funds, our student of cause and effect might make these observations: "From the moment that man was put in a high office, corruption was bound to follow. One look at his face should have made that clear. He was imposing in his manner, and many would call him handsome. He had the knack of ingratiating himself with the unthinking—that indiscriminately genial and flattering attitude toward all and sundry, regardless of the opinion he held of them in private, which makes for the dubious possession called 'popularity.' His brow was fairly statesman-like, enough so to make him an excellent figurehead. But around his mouth there were signs which should have been a warning. The lower half of his face betrayed the fact that he was essentially of

weak character—innately vain, fond of applause, greedy for public recognition. That being his nature, it was no wonder that he proved to be easily influenced by flattery, and blindly loyal to those pretended friends who had gratified his love of approbation. Not being shrewd enough to perceive any ulterior motive in his nomination, he doubtless took office with every intention of discharging his duties honestly and to the best of his ability. When he found that his associates had other plans, he had not the moral courage to thwart them. They had read him aright from the start; that was why they put him in office. Superficially, he looked the part he was called upon to play; his appearance and manner would pass muster with the voters; but the evidence of something lacking, from a character standpoint, was there to be read quite plainly by anyone who had given thought to such matters."

So also with the prominent citizen of previously conventional life, who astounds the public at large by bidding farewell to the helpmate of his earlier years, leaving his home, his children, and his job, and sailing away with some enterprising young siren who has neither brains, background, nor, from a conventional standpoint, any of the domestic virtues. "How could he do it?" the staid housewives of the vicinity ask each other. "What does he see in that frivolous trollop that gives her such a hold on him?" To them, the affair is totally incomprehensible.

Some of the erring citizen's men friends usually can appreciate the causes lying back of his scandalous behaviour; others are just as much surprised as are the housewives. Frequently certain of his women friends

could throw a little light on the matter, also, if they so elected. But, for the most part, his conduct is regarded as irrational and reprehensible. A majority of those who hear about the case, and who see that the man has sacrificed home, friends, and business by his actions, are unable to imagine what he got in return that made the sacrifice seem to him worth while.

Vedic scholars, always profound students of human nature, are seldom puzzled by a case of that kind. They recognize in it merely one of the myriad manifestations of the sex impulse, and to them it demonstrates once again the latent power which that impulse always contains. Their guess in the above instance would be that the gentleman in question had suddenly, and for the first time in his life, been introduced to the re-creational aspect of the sex relationship. This, they would surmise, was something about which his wife knew even less than he did. They would set it down as a practical certainty that the young woman for whom the sacrifice was made had a lively appreciation of that side of sex life, and that her physical equipment was of a sort well adapted to its demonstration. Without asking how she acquired her knowledge of such matters, or, indeed, considering the moral aspects of the situation at all, it would be enough for them, from a cause and effect standpoint, to know that she possessed such knowledge and had been given an opportunity to exercise the power which it so often confers.

The emotions engendered in such instances, as all history shows, are frequently of such compelling force that nothing the man in the case did by way of fulfilling his desire would surprise anyone trained in the

Vedic school of observation. Emotions of that intensity are not, it is true, the common experience of everyone. On the contrary, comparatively few are capable of registering them. It is quite possible for a man and a woman to meet, mate, raise children, and pass to their graves without ever having experienced anything in their conjugal relationship that would give them a sympathetic understanding of those historical characters who considered the world well lost for love. Yet the same overwhelming passions which have toppled emperors from their thrones in times gone by are at work in the human breast today, and when certain sets of emotional causes are put in motion, they will have certain effects, no matter how those effects may be viewed by church or state or press or private individuals.

Incidents of the sort just cited are, of course, invariably to be regretted. It always is hard on the wife to be set aside by the prominent citizen after she has mothered his children and helped him on his way to prominence. It always is too bad that the citizen felt impelled to lower himself in the estimation of so many people. It always is a pity that the girl could not have exercised her allurements on somebody who had no domestic obligations, and thus have avoided the ostracism which, in some degree, usually follows such escapades.

Yet the Vedic observer would say that all parties to the affair got what was coming to them. Not that it was the wife's fault that her attractions could not outweigh those of her rival; it may have been merely her misfortune. The fact remained that the defenses which she had built to protect the integrity of her home—

defenses made up of service, fidelity, devotion, and the like—were not strong enough to withstand the attack of an overpowering and unforseen infatuation. It was not the fault of the other woman, perhaps, that her ethical training had been neglected. It may not even have been the man's fault that he did not learn more about sex matters while he still was young and unencumbered. He may never have had the chance, or he may have been taught that it was wrong even to think about such things. However, given the three individuals as they were—the wife ignorant of certain phases of the conjugal relationship, the other woman caring nothing for the unhappiness she caused others so long as what looked like her own happiness was assured, and the man finding all at once that he had been missing a great emotional experience—and the outcome was well nigh inevitable.

The man who goes through life paying great attention to the working of cause and effect comes, in time, to have an exceptional capability for judging the relative importance and power of the causes which he sees being set up around him. He develops an appreciation of the inherent force for good or for evil that so often lurks in trifles. By the same token he is able to recognize the basic unimportance of events or tendencies which, at the moment, appear to have great significance. His sense of timeliness becomes acute; he knows intuitively the most favorable moment at which to set a given train of events in motion, or to drop a word of counsel, or to administer a rebuke.

Given a child to train, such a man would strive to implant in the youngster at the earliest age possible

those habits of mind and body most likely to produce the best results in later years. He would recognize the deep and lasting power of early impressions, and endeavor to make those impressions such as to guide the child's subsequent steps along constructive lines. Above all, he would see to it that no one faculty was permitted to develop at the expense of others equally valuable. His aim would be to direct both the mental and the physical activities of his pupil in such a manner that the sum of their effects would be that balanced temperament which best fortifies its possessor to withstand the inevitable vicissitudes from which no life is exempt.

A knowledge of how cause and effect operate is valuable not only for the help it gives the individual in shaping his own life, but for the protection it affords him against others. Naturally, it is not always possible to avoid getting entangled in a web of circumstances spun by somebody else. There are times when we are caught up in a current of events the source of which is quite beyond our sphere of control. None the less, there are countless instances wherein we are given the option of linking our fates to a greater or less degree with the fates of certain other people, or of refusing to do so. The student of cause and effect will weigh such situations with extreme care before making a decision.

In cases which involve so important a step as casting one's lot with someone else, making his life a part of one's own, and sharing his fortune, good or bad, almost anyone will pause beforehand to consider whether such an arrangement gives promise of success. It is in the more casual contacts that the danger lies. No one in his senses would make a companion of an avowed outlaw,

of either sex, unless he were willing to risk the unpleasant destiny to which outlaws in general are subject. But when the other person in question is not so obviously headed toward ultimate disaster, the problem becomes more complicated. He need not be a criminal to be dangerous. He need only be weak, or undisciplined, or thoughtless, or ignorant, and the impulses he sets going each day of his life will carry with them enough potential trouble to have a bad effect upon the lives of everybody around him. There are individuals the result of whose existence is positively poisonous, although they may be technically honest, unquestionably sincere, and as well intentioned as it is possible for them to be. In other instances they may be excellent companions—amusing, intelligent, enthusiastic, generous, and likeable—yet at the same time be cursed with one character weakness or another in which lurks so much possible catastrophe that to let them have more than a fleeting claim upon one's time or consideration is to invite a visitation of that catastrophe upon one's self.

By way of avoiding misfortunes of that nature, the Aryan sages recommend so close a study of the law of cause and effect that the knowledge thus gained renders one immune to the vicious influence of the disordered lives with which, do what one may, one is bound to come in contact from time to time. Therein lies one of the chief values of a training pursued along Vedic lines. Such a training leads to a keen discrimination between true values and false ones; to an understanding of what elements must necessarily be present in a given situation if, when the situation resolves itself, the outcome

is to be desirable. It leads to a habitual analysis of motives; to a deep study of human nature; to a constant awareness of the close relationship existing between mind and body; and to the ability to exist in any environment whatever, without permitting such environment to affect adversely a previously adopted course of conduct.

Operating as it does at all times and throughout all of Nature, the law of cause and effect is so comprehensive in its scope as to be virtually the law of life itself. Once conscious of its existence, the student observes its workings every moment of the day, in his own life, in the lives of those around him, and in everything that happens from one end of the world to the other. Discussion of it, from various angles, might be prolonged indefinitely, yet perhaps what has been said in this chapter will suffice to give the reader an idea as to why the ancient texts lay such stress upon it. Other aspects of it will crop up in later chapters and assist, let us hope, in rounding out the picture.

CHAPTER VI

The Law of Correspondences

THE law of cause and effect has an interesting and important corollary in what the Aryan writers understood as the Law of Correspondences. By this they meant the principle underlying the observed facts that the part always bears a definite relationship to the whole, and that where structure differs, function will differ.

It is this principle which enables the paleontologist to determine the appearance and habits of a prehistoric animal by examining a few of its bones. If he discovers a fossilized femur four feet long and four inches thick, he knows it did not come from the leg of a gazelle, but must have belonged to a creature of enormous height and bulk. An animal so massive must have been comparatively slow in its movements, he reasons, and therefore probably was herbivorous, since it would have had difficulty in capturing enough living prey to nourish the quantity of tissue indicated by the need of a leg bone that size.

Similarly the police surgeon, when handed a human foot which provides the only clue in a murder mystery, is enabled to state with confidence that the remainder of the body, when discovered, will be found to be that of a short, stocky, swarthy individual, probably a laboring man whose life had been passed in comparative poverty. All this he would deduce from the fact that

the foot itself is stubby, well muscled, and dark skinned; and from further evidence supplied by the nature of its callosities, the shape of the toes, and the condition of the nails. He would not need to be much of a Sherlock Holmes to know that dark-skinned people are dark-skinned all over; that tall, lanky people do not have short, chunky feet; and that stout muscles, whether in the foot or elsewhere, bear a definite relationship to the muscling in other parts of the body. These are elemental facts, familiar to everybody, but they, and others like them which might be cited, serve to illustrate in part what is meant by the law of correspondences.

Incidentally, this law works both ways, for, just as the nature of the whole may be inferred from a study of the part, so the quality and properties of a part may be surmised after contemplation of the whole.

What distinguishes the Aryan observations in this field, and gives them their peculiar value, is the extent to which they trace the operation of this principle in the human body, beginning with anatomy and going on up, through physiology and chemistry, clear into the realm of consciousness. True to their habit of mind, they considered this natural law chiefly in its relation to the human species, just as they did the operation of all other laws and principles in nature concerning which they were able to gather any information. They judged their findings to be of sufficient value to make them worth recording, and that value has not lessened with the passing of the centuries. What they observed is of the utmost importance today in the domain of character analysis, autosuggestion, suggestive therapeutics, the

treatment of disease, the correction of nervous disorders, and in all studies and practices which involve the relationship existing between the mental and the physical aspects of human beings.

To be convinced of the validity of the law of correspondences, one need only place two contrasting human types side by side and consider them from the standpoint of structure as related to function. Let one be a hulking peasant, the other an eminent surgeon. The difference in the grade of material composing them is apparent at once. The very tissue of which the peasant is composed is of cruder fibre than that of the surgeon. His skin is thick and tough; his hair is coarse; his limbs are rough hewn; his fingers are blunted; his features are obtuse. Every line that shapes him gives the impression of heaviness, bulk, and bovinity.

That being his structure, what is his function? Inevitably it must correspond in nature to his physical make-up. He is slow of movement; ponderous in all his actions; clumsy in handling small objects. He is powerful when he can bring his bulk to bear in a given direction, but he does not readjust himself readily to a sudden demand from another quarter. He is moved almost wholly by the simpler physical stimuli, and occupies himself largely in satisfying those elementary needs which he shares in common with the animals.

Functioning in that manner, what are his thoughts likely to be? They will correspond to his actions in exactly the way that his actions correspond to his structure. He is bound to think slowly and with difficulty. It will take him a long time to get an idea into his head, and an equally long time ever to get it out

again. In common with the rest of his body, the cells of his brain will be relatively coarse, crude, and lacking in flexibility. Consequently his brain will function at a low rate of speed, and he will not be able to stock it up with many mental pictures during his lifetime. For that reason his potential mental capacity is decidedly limited. He will either be docile, because he knows he cannot think for himself, or he will be stubborn, because he cannot adjust his thoughts to another's point of view. The problem of providing himself with food and shelter will take up so much of his time that he will have but little left for reflection. His mental horizon will be narrowly circumscribed, on that account, and his emotional experiences will not be much more varied than those of the oxen which haul his cart.

With the famous surgeon, or almost any man of like calibre, everything is quite different. His skin will be found to be thinner and smoother than the peasant's; his hair of finer quality. His limbs will be less massive, and will be fashioned on lines making for swifter action. The strength of his fingers will be that of tone and quality, rather than of size, and, in most cases, their tips will be tapered somewhat to permit of greater dexterity. His features will be more sharply outlined than those of the peasant, and his whole figure will convey an impression of more flexibility, greater ease of movement, and a greater capacity for speed. All of these outward indications point to the fact that the tissue of which the surgeon's body is composed is of finer texture than that of the more primitive type with which we are comparing him. He is, in short, a more complex and more highly developed organism.

It follows, naturally, that his actions will be more rapid and graceful than those of the crudely constructed tiller of the soil. He will be deft with his hands; quick to respond to the necessity for making unpremeditated movements. His speed and adaptability will compensate for his lack of bulk. He will be sensitive to his surroundings and will react to a great variety of stimuli.

Obviously, that sort of functioning is accompanied by a brand of thinking that corresponds to it. If the body be flexible, adaptable, and rapid in its movements, the brain will be proportionately alert, receptive, and quick to act. The more complex the bodily structure, from a tissue standpoint, the more complex the brain structure. The more brain cells there are to be put in operation, the greater will be the variety of thoughts made possible. The wider the field of thought, the larger the individual's world. Therefore the surgeon has potentialities far greater than those of the peasant. He will be able to do more for himself in the way of self culture than the peasant can, and he will be a more effective instrument in the evolutionary advancement of others.

The two specimens just discussed are, of course, extreme types of the human species, and were selected purposely because of the sharp contrast they present. Almost anyone, needless to say, can tell the difference between an ignorant clodhopper and a cultured man of science, just as he is able to distinguish a crocodile from an antelope. Such ability calls for nothing but formal observation of the most rudimentary sort. The really important thing is to recognize and understand the

factors which brought about the difference. That is where the law of correspondences comes in—a law based, as already stated, upon the principle that function varies according to structure, and that the nature of the whole bears a definite relation to the nature of the part.

It is easy to see that principle at work in the peasant and the surgeon, when we consider them with relation to one another and note their contrasting appearance and behaviour. The fine art in the handling of the principle consists in the ability to apply it to one's consideration of an individual as such, without reference to anyone else. That was the way in which the Aryans made use of it, and in that way it will be discussed as we now consider briefly some of the many fields throughout which it operates.

One of the more obvious of those fields is that of character analysis; the process by which we endeavor to judge the nature and the possibilities of those with whom we come in contact. All of us do this to some extent, the accuracy of our judgments depending upon the breadth of our experience and the amount of attention we have given to the subject. Most people form such judgments, whether correct or faulty, without being able to say precisely how or why they arrived at them. The vocational expert goes about it more scientifically. It is his job to pass upon applicants for positions involving certain responsibilities, and to advise people in general as to what work is best suited to them. Accordingly he takes many definite factors into consideration before he renders his decision. He notes the applicant's state of health; his features; the

shape of his head and face; the quality of his voice; the way he walks, sits, and stands; his manner of dress; his habits of speech, and other traits that serve to place him in this or that category and to determine his probable behaviour under various circumstances. In so doing he is taking cognizance of the fact that each separate factor on his list is in some degree indicative of the applicant's whole make-up. Certain indices point to desirable traits, others to their opposite. The expert must balance these character qualities against each other and obtain a resultant that gives an accurate picture of the applicant's true nature. The more the average man is able to emulate the expert's methods, the less likely is he to be deceived in his estimates of his fellow men and women. Even a slight acquaintance with the law of correspondences helps one's judgment of human nature.

The same law is clearly the foundation upon which the physician bases his ability to diagnose the ailments of his patients. Either he starts with the patient's general condition and tries to get at the specific part which is causing the trouble, or he examines a part that is out of order and endeavors to determine the nature of the general condition which brought the disorder about. In the subsequent treatment there is a regrettable tendency on the part of modern specialists not to give the general systemic background the amount of attention which it warrants. Often too much attention is paid to the treating of what is, after all, only a symptom, without enough effort being devoted to treatment of the basic underlying cause.

The principles of practice established by Charak,

the father of Indian medicine, make it clear that, no matter what the treatment for a local difficulty may be, the systemic background must never be neglected. Charak and his followers were well acquainted with the law of correspondences, as well as with many other Vedic principles on which their practice was based.

By going a little deeper into the Vedic teachings on this general subject, we come to the consideration of a tremendously significant natural process. Briefly stated, it is the process by which thought alters the material structure of the human body, and bodily structure alters thought.

As outlined by the Aryan writers, this phenomenon is due to the following observed facts: Thought action is related directly to nerve action; nerve action governs muscular action; muscular action governs structure. The sustained recurrence of a given thought, or, more properly, a group of thoughts, produces what we know as a mood, or mental state. That mental state has a definite effect upon the several nerve centers, placing them under varying degrees of tension, or relaxing them in various degrees, as the case may be. The state of tension or of relaxation in the various nerve centers determines the manner in which the respective organs under their control are going to function. The way in which the organs function will affect their structure, and that, in turn, will affect the material make-up of the body as a whole. Some groups of thoughts are conducive to disease, and some others to health. Their powers in both directions are beyond what most people have any idea of.

To show how the process works out, suppose a man

is subjected to a disappointment of some sort which gives him what we call a fit of the blues. Further disappointments of a similar, or equally disheartening, nature may fix that attack of the blues so firmly in his consciousness that it becomes the more serious mental state called chronic melancholia. In that mood of deep depression he is disinclined to action; his breathing becomes shallow; his heart action suffers accordingly; his blood stream is slowed down. Travelling slowly, and not being properly purified in the lungs, his blood begins to fail in its task of removing waste material from the tissues. At some point of weakness, congestion takes place. Fermentation sets in. A chemical change produces that form of heat which is known as fever. The tissues at that point become inflamed. The victim is laid low on the sick bed, loses pound after pound of solid flesh, and is lucky if he does not lose his life. What caused all this? A little group of the wrong kind of thoughts, occupying the mind too long.

Happily for us all, the right thoughts have just the opposite effect; stimulating us to action, deepening our breathing, whipping up our circulation, and turning the blood stream into a source of increased strength and bettered health.

Herein lies the basic principle responsible for whatever results are obtained through prayer, mental healing, hypnotism, and autosuggestion. There is nothing mysterious nor occult about it; nothing necessarily divine, except in the sense that all Nature is divine. The process is a perfectly natural one; a logical working out of the law of correspondences in the realm of living, organized animal tissue. To the dualist it may appear

as a strange interplay between the worlds of matter and of spirit. To the monist the whole process takes place in the one great medium, the infinite mass of substance which, in this form or that, goes to make up the universe.

Because he knows how closely thought is linked up with feeling, feeling with action, and action with structure, the advanced practitioner of Vedic principles continually strives to harmonize all three aspects of his being. He does not think one way, feel another way, and act in a way that is contrary to both his feelings and his thoughts. His feelings have always the sanction of his intellect and the co-operation of his body. He supervises the nature of his thoughts as carefully as would a mother who was determined to guard the predisposition of her unborn child. For he knows that upon his thinking will depend his feeling, that his feeling will govern his behaviour, and that his behaviour, broadly considered, will determine not alone his destiny in the affairs of life but the condition and duration of his actual physical and material self.

Knowing to what extent this same principle is being featured in various modern religions and schools of thought, it is interesting to find that it was known and taught in India, thousands of years ago.

CHAPTER VII

The Pairs of Opposites

PRECEDING chapters have pictured the cosmic process as a sort of grand tour, in which everything—including ourselves—starts from the infinite source of all being and, like a tourist with a round trip ticket, goes on an excursion through the manifested universe. Although indefinite stop-overs are permitted, no one is left behind forever and nothing goes permanently astray. The trip is continuous and circular, and its duration may be anywhere from an instant to an æon. At different points along the line some things merge with the local environment and appear to drop out of the passing parade. In the end, however, all of them cast off their ephemeral disguises and join the procession that is circling homeward.

By "local environment" is meant the various stages of evolution and involution. The distinction between those two states of being is purely arbitrary. Involution is but one section of the same unbroken chain of events that constitutes evolution. The whole process might be called evolution, from start to finish. For convenience in drawing the picture, however, we designate as involution that portion of the cycle of changes during which we observe matter becoming increasingly dense. During evolution it becomes increasingly tenuous. When the two processes are considered separately,

the one is the opposite of the other. When they are considered together, the distinction becomes lost.

Man's imagination happens to function in such a manner that he must make use of these distinctions, or he could not think at all. His thoughts are a series of pictures. Those pictures are the constantly shifting images created in his brain by the inflow of stimuli supplied by his senses. If his senses reported no distinction between the component parts of his environment, his mind would be a blank, even though, from an abstract monistic viewpoint, the report would be a perfectly true one. He would not get far in this world of material forms, if his senses failed to keep him posted as to the proximity, appearance, and behaviour of such forms as were apt to affect him in one way or another.

The Aryans analyzed this necessity for recognizing distinctions, and one of the things they evolved from their analysis was that principle which deals with the pairs of opposites that we find existing throughout the physical and mental world. Just as we have to separate the great circular tour of the evolutionary process into two stages in order to understand it, so do we have to consider two sides to many other things in life if either side is to mean anything to us.

Black, for example, would mean little to anyone unfamiliar with white. How would anyone know anything was hard if he never had encountered anything that was soft? If all men were courageous, no one would recognize the fact; for the quality of courage is revealed only by the existence of the coward. The poor wouldn't know they were poor if they never had

heard about the rich. Even the qualities attributed by the devout Christian to his God would not seem so extraordinary or so commendable were it not for the contrasting attributes said to characterize the Christian Devil.

To phrase it otherwise, good cannot exist, as a concept, unless we have, also, the concept of evil. One man is called good because, and only because, there are other men who are called bad. Otherwise neither good nor bad means anything. There is nothing to compare them with except each other. One cannot compare good with heavy, nor hard with white. Each must be compared with its opposite. In fact, without its opposite it does not exist. The human mind cannot recognize it. No large without its small; no now without its then; no rough without its smooth.

Thinking along these lines, the Aryans decided that nobody ever thoroughly understands anything unless, in addition, he possesses a knowledge of its opposite. The average man would say that nothing could heighten his appreciation of the privilege he enjoyed in being able to get a drink of pure, fresh, cold water whenever he wanted one. But let that man spend a few days adrift on a raft in the South Pacific, with no fresh water to drink. Let him go mad with thirst, and then let him be rescued just before he leaps off the raft to his death. Will he have a deeper appreciation, after that, of what a few swallows of fresh, cold water mean? Will he understand the nature of water better than he did? Most emphatically, yes. And the knowledge never will grow dim in his memory.

What person estimates most accurately the value of

health? Is it the one who always has been blessed with it, or the one who always has been sickly? Obviously it is neither the one nor the other. The person who knows what health means is the one who, having had it, loses it; or who, never having enjoyed it, eventually becomes endowed with it.

The point conveyed by these illustrations, trite though it may seem, finds a place here because it is a phase of life which thinkers along Vedic lines invariably take into consideration when forming their judgments of their fellow beings. Has a certain man a reputation for honesty? Well and good; let us hope he maintains it. But what does he know about dishonesty? Has his honesty ever been put to a severe test? Has he ever been placed in a position where a little dishonesty would have enhanced greatly his material welfare? No? Then why shouldn't he be honest? What credit is it to him? Would he sacrifice his possessions, perform menial labor, and reduce his family to the humblest circumstances rather than turn crooked? He would? Ah, then he would prove himself to be an honest man. But until conditions force him to choose between honesty and its opposite, how is anyone to know his true nature? Maybe he is innately upright and conscientious, as a matter of principle, and maybe he is just lucky. He may be honest because he sincerely wishes to be, or he may be honest because his lot in life has been so fortunate that there never was anything for him to gain by being otherwise. Until he is tried out in the crucible of circumstance, that part of his nature must remain an unknown quantity. There is a world of meaning in the phrase "tried and true."

Does a certain woman still protect what is popularly considered as constituting her chastity? Excellent. But, in her case, how badly has it needed protection? Not very badly, you say? Well, of course, that alters matters a bit. Has no one ever tried to persuade her to part with it; or forced her to, by any mischance? Not a soul? Then chastity doesn't mean much in her case, does it? It is just possible that she is chaste, not so much because she prefers to be so, as because opportunities to be anything else have been lacking.

Here again, the individual may be living up to a principle through sincere conviction as to its value, or, on the other hand, through sheer ignorance of its opposite. Being protected from the predatory male by an omnipresent chaperon, or by convent walls, or by a total absence of personal allure is quite different from being protected by an armor of knowledge, will power, and self respect. She who never has met with temptation should not plume herself overmuch upon her virtue. Neither should she condemn too hastily the woman who steps beyond the bounds of convention when economic pressure or undisciplined desire prove to be too much for her. Were their positions reversed, who knows but what she might do just as the other woman did? It must be borne in mind that what constitutes temptation to one may be no temptation at all to another. Not until that temptation which is aureoled with enchantment presents itself to a woman, and she resists it in spite of her desire to succumb, can she be credited with a virtue worthy of true respect.

For now, as always in the past, virtue is too often

confused with ignorance. The brittle and anæmic nun, secluded in her cloister, may possess what passes for virtue. But if the lusty and pleasure-loving wench down among the boys in the vineyard can manage to protect herself against them, have a good time, and still keep square with her conscience, your Vedic student would grant her a far higher grade of virtue than that of her sequestered sister.

The Aryan thinkers never could have framed, for their own use, a prayer asking that they be not led into temptation. They would have regarded that as a plea which could be voiced only by those so unenlightened and so lacking in will power that they wouldn't recognize temptation when it came to them, or, if they recognized it, would be unable to resist it. Not that they would have counselled going out of one's way to seek temptation, but, knowing that it comes to all of us at one time or another, they would have prayed, rather, to be armed against its onslaught with weapons of understanding and self control.

Vedic policy prescribes the acquiring of an all-around knowledge of life as it actually exists; not a specialized, limited, one-sided knowledge of people and things and conditions, but a rounded out, impartial, tolerant understanding of all sides of them. Only from some such viewpoint as that, say the Aryan texts—a viewpoint that always takes the pairs of opposites into consideration—can one ever arrive at a proper understanding of his fellow creatures and of the world in which he and they exist.

This is not to say, by any manner of means, that all

honest men should turn dishonest for awhile, so that they may be detected and punished, and thus learn the value of honesty. Nor, still less, does it mean that all maidens should at once rush off in search of temptation, so that they may the better sympathize with their frailer sisters. It means, if the texts are interpreted correctly, that through study, observation, and reflection; through maintaining an open mind on all subjects; through hearing about, and profiting by, the experiences of others one should endeavor to gain a knowledge of things "in the round," as the sculptors have it. It is a process which calls for dissection, analysis, and discrimination; for logical deductions and well considered conclusions. It scorns the glossing over of unpalatable facts, and upholds the aphorism that "All truth is sacred."

A student who strove to educate himself along those lines, after the manner initiated by the Aryans, would be willing to accept a truth no matter where he found it. Banishing bias and prejudice from his mind, he would learn something from the staunch Roman Catholic and something from the pagan—the power of unquestioning faith from the one, let us say, and from the other a feeling appreciation of Nature. He would consult a prize fighter as readily as he would a college professor, getting certain knowledge from each which the other did not possess. From a confiding pickpocket he might get hints of great value to him in protecting his own wallet, and from the judge on the bench he might learn much concerning those complex human motives which land people before the bar of justice.

He soon would learn that one story is good until another is told; that there are at least two sides to every question; that the facts which newspapers do not print are more illuminating, ofttimes, than those they do; and that the real reasons why married people separate are seldom disclosed in the divorce proceedings. Learning these things, and a thousand others like them, he would pay less and less attention to superficial appearances, to publicized assertions, to special pleading of any sort, and would habitually seek the actual fact, the true motive that lay behind and beneath them all. As often as not he would find the real facts and motives to be quite the antithesis of those accepted by the unthinking public.

In extracting the truth from whatever he observes, the Vedically schooled thinker bears always in mind that there is no bad without its corresponding good; no loss without its corresponding gain. Some must lose, he notices, if others are to win; some must work, if others are to rest; some must die, if others are to live. He remembers, too, that the pendulum never swings so far in one direction but what it eventually swings just as far in the other. And he comes at length to the conclusion that life, as a whole, has a tendency to balance itself up in most unexpected fashion. He observes that the pairs of opposites have a way of switching their identities and changing places with each other; that what seemed at first to be a catastrophe often proves to be a blessing; and that what was taken to be a stroke of good fortune turns out to be a curse. Seeing rich men landing in the poorhouse, and outcasts growing rich; seeing friends turn into enemies, and enemies joining hands, he perceives the constant necessity for taking these multifarious pairs of opposites into consideration and striving to adjust himself to the law which governs them. In so doing, he comes to appreciate the value of that principle which forms the subject matter of the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

The Principle of Balance

PHILOSOPHERS in all ages have pointed out the advisability of practicing moderation. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the Vedas counselling the same thing and extolling perfect balance as an ideal worth striving for. During their researches into the workings of the human mind and body, the Aryans soon came to the conclusion that extremes in any direction are fraught with danger. Modern thinkers are generally of the same opinion, but in this age of specialization it becomes increasingly difficult to steer that mid-course through life which the scriptures so strongly recommend.

In the western world, and more so in the United States than anywhere else, the thing that is the biggest, or the fastest, or the loudest, or the most conspicuous in any respect whatever, is the thing that arouses the most interest. Observing this, and noting, also, that the ability to attract general attention usually has a cash value of some kind, innumerable people focus their energies on being or doing the something-est something-or-other that anyone ever has been or done.

Accomplishment is, in itself, an excellent thing, and the ambition to excel in any given endeavor is wholly commendable. When, however, the attainment of ambition in one direction involves too great a sacrifice

in another direction, the Aryan thinkers would maintain that the prize was not worth striving for. They realized, even better than we do, that concentration on any specific enterprise or talent or interest spells success insofar as that one thing is concerned. Whether such success also spells happiness, peace of mind, and long life they held to be quite another matter. The ancient Vedic scriptures took it for granted that everyone wants to be as happy as possible and as healthy as possible, and wants to live as long as he can in order that he may enjoy his happiness and his health. Anything which interfered with the attaining of those elemental objects was considered by them to be undesirable.

Instances of the modern tendency to neglect this simple rule of life are so frequently encountered that almost anyone can think of one or more that have fallen within his personal observation. For purposes of illustration, the American business man, in his exaggeratedly typical aspects, will do here as well as any other.

The picture of that aggressive, yet somehow wistful figure has been drawn for us so frequently by novelists, playwrights, and cartoonists that we are quite familiar with the elements that go to make him up. He starts out young with the idea of attaining to what he thinks is success. He works hard, takes few vacations, and devotes his whole mind to his business. He pays scant attention to the cultural phase of life, and never dreams of carrying on to a higher point any of the studies he was obliged to take up in school or college. He regards women as amusing and inexplicable creatures whose biological importance makes it necessary to have them

around, but who constitute, on the whole, a slightly inferior species that he need not take very seriously. He adores his children, spoils them accordingly, and bends his energies toward making it certain that they will not have to work as hard as he has had to. His opinions on public matters are formed by the editorial writers of his favorite paper; his spiritual welfare is entrusted to the preachers; in matters of health he is dependent entirely upon his physician. He would rather watch professional athletes stage a lively contest than to engage in any strenuous exercise himself. Anything, in short, which might take a little time or thought or energy away from his business he delegates to someone else to perform for him, so that he may be left free to concentrate on his self-imposed task of accumulating a fortune.

And when he has made his pile, what then? In a pathetically large number of cases we find that he has let himself get into such wretched physical condition that he cannot enjoy the fruits of his labor. Or, if he has been wise enough to guard his health, he discovers that he has no notion what to do with his hard earned leisure. He gets no pleasure from travel, because he knows nothing about the æsthetic side of life, and because foreign people and foreign ways of doing things merely exasperate him. He has worked so hard that he has forgotten how to play. Now that he has time to cultivate the companionship of his wife, he finds that she prefers the companionship of others. His children, thanks to him, have been educated to a point where they appreciate, and are interested in, a multitude of things which do not interest him in the least and which

he cannot appreciate. He has no engrossing hobbies, no mental resources of a literary or other nature to fall back upon. All he has learned from life is how to make money for others to spend.

In spite of all these shortcomings he usually is a kindly, genial, generous, conscientious, and—within his limitations—highly likeable man. But he is not a well balanced man.

If, during the years when he was winning his way to affluence, he had given more consideration to the arts, had tried a little harder to understand the other sex, had spent more time on the playing field and less in the grandstand, it might have paid him handsomely in the long run. If he had not looked upon education as something that ended when he laid aside his schoolbooks, he might have kept step with his children, instead of finding out, after they grew up, that they were living in a mental world to which he had no access. Had he given more thought to the interests which occupy leisurely people, he might have had more in common with such people after he had achieved his ambition to become a man of leisure himself. It is not enough for a man to know all about the woolen glove and mitten industry, nor to be able to discuss it with intelligence and authority. People soon find out from him all they care to know about woolen gloves and mittens. Unless he can discuss something else as well, they turn for companionship to somebody who can.

He will learn, then, how foolish it is always to watch the cosmic show from the same seat in the same row in the same part of the house, without even getting up to stroll around between the acts. The people who best

understand and enjoy the show, he will discover, are those who have seen it from the gallery, the balcony, the parquet, and the boxes; who have watched it from backstage and from the orchestra pit; who have seen the painters creating the scenery, and the electricians devising the light effects. Such people know the functions of the costumer, the make-up expert, and the wig maker. They have an acquaintance with the actors, the producer, the press agent, and the author. They also know the driver who eventually loads onto his truck all the trappings of each successive spectacle and carts them off to the storehouse. One who looks at the *comédie humaine* from all those different angles finds it a most engrossing performance. He labors under no illusions concerning it, and is able, in consequence, to play his own part in it with far greater understanding and skill.

The American business man, of the type we are considering, is bound to suffer by comparison with men of similar station in the older countries. Though he be exasperated by what he regards as their antiquated methods, their relatively brief office hours, and their tendency to chat about matters other than the immediate business on hand, he should bear in mind that they are equally exasperated by his high pressure tactics, his insistence that business is the paramount concern of life, and his total lack of interest in anything the discussion of which might delay him in rushing his deal to an early conclusion. They regard business as being a vital part of life, to be sure, but not as constituting the whole of it. It has its place in their scheme of things, and an important place, but they have de-

cided that many other things have a place there also. They mean to enjoy those things as they go along; not wait until they have passed the age at which full enjoyment is possible.

If to spend more time in social intercourse than they do at their desks means to make a little less money than they might make otherwise, then they are content to end up with a more modest competence than would satisfy their American confrere. They feel that in taking time to keep abreast with current developments in science, politics, literature, and the arts; in being able to discuss such things and to appreciate their significance, they are getting more out of life than is the man whose range of vision is confined largely to woolen gloves and mittens, even though he could buy and sell them ten times over. To that extent they are better balanced men than he is; more fully rounded-out characters. They know more ways of enjoying themselves than he does. He may find the end of the rainbow and dig into the pot of gold before they do; but, while he is grubbing around at the hidden end of it, they will be enjoying a soul-satisfying look at the rainbow itself. They are likely to live longer than he does, and more contentedly. Their children may have to work just as hard as they themselves worked, but, in so doing, the children will receive a discipline, and a training, and an appreciation of values which a child brought up to idleness never has a chance to acquire.

Turning the picture over, we see that British and Continental business men, though they may live more rounded-out lives than many of their American competitors, are still far from being the well balanced in-

dividuals that they might be. They have a tendency to cling to obsolete office equipment, to disregard many principles of efficiency, to waste much time in the needless discussion of trifles, and to look with suspicion on new ideas in salesmanship, advertising, and distribution. In that sense they are unprogressive, provincial, and out of step with modern ways of getting things accomplished. Therefore a great part of what time they do devote to business is wasted. They would come closer to getting what they want out of life if they would borrow some of the American's alertness and inventiveness, and his willingness to experiment with something that has not heretofore been tried.

The ideally balanced business man, in any country, considered from the Vedic standpoint, would be the one who looked upon his business as a means to a larger end, and not as the all-important concern of his existence; who would use it to make enough money so that he would have command of his time, and would then employ that time in cultural activities directed toward his own improvement and that of his fellow men. Such a man would use in his office or his factory every possible device or system for saving time and labor. While at his desk he would concentrate on his business to the exclusion of all else, but outside of the office he would rest his brain by exercising it in other directions. By carefully organizing his business, deputizing to others the conduct of its several departments, and supervising its general ongoing himself, he would get more accomplished in fewer hours than if his affairs were less systematically managed. He and his employees could then use the time thus saved to their own advantage

and that of their families. He could widen his social contacts, do more reading, give more personal attention to the educating of his children, take more exercise, interest himself more constructively in public affairs, and do a great many other things which so many modern business men would like to do if they "could only find the time."

There are such men, plenty of them, but the world could use many more. They represent the constructive, worth while element in any community. Without them, progress would be impossible. It is they who endow educational institutions, subsidize research workers, patronize the arts, organize social welfare groups, encourage outdoor sports, and widen, in every way they know how, the paths along which humanity is moving toward a state of general betterment. Without, in most cases, having had the matter called specifically to their attention, they have grasped instinctively the ancient Vedic principle of balance. They recognize the desirability of developing all sides of their natures; of cultivating breadth of vision, tolerance, and a respect for the opinions of others. They are the enviable few who possess a natural sense of proportion; who assign to things their proper values; who curb the extremists, and who counsel keeping to the middle of the road. They make money, not for purposes of self-glorification after they get it, but for the fun they can have with it in developing themselves and others along a variety of cultural lines.

Such men as these are actuated by somewhat the same feeling that moves certain men in India to terminate their business or professional careers at a com-

paratively early age and devote the remainder of their lives to what we might call, for lack of a better term, the spiritual side of their natures. That is an age-old custom over there. It is based upon a hereditary understanding of the principle of balance, and upon the consequent desire to make of life a many-sided, fully rounded experience. No one is surprised, therefore, when some eminent native scholar gives up his chair at the university where he has been teaching, and announces that he means to "retire to the forest." Or when a highly able judge resigns from the bench with a similar announcement. Or when a wealthy merchant places his affairs in the hands of others and joins the professor and the judge.

These are successful men in their respective spheres. They have worked hard and to good purpose. Their families are amply provided for, and their affairs are in good order. They have served their institution, or their commonwealth, or their country's trade in creditable fashion. By reason of these facts, it is generally conceded that they have earned the right to do as they please with what years may remain to them. This they proceed to do by leaving family and friends behind them and going off to spend an indefinite length of time deep in the forest or high in the mountains.

And what do they do there? They seek out some teacher who is a living exponent of the principles contained in the Vedas. They place themselves under his instruction and endeavor to learn some of those truths concerning their bodies, their minds, and their hearts to the study of which they hitherto have been unable to devote sufficient time. They delve into the why and

wherefore of things until they have attained to an understanding which satisfies them. What they do after that depends upon their individual inclinations. Some of them remain on to the end, living a life of the utmost simplicity and contentment. Some return to their families. Some roam about the country, gypsy like, observing the moving scroll of life as it unwinds before them, and sharing with those who are ready to listen to them the knowledge they gained in the forest.

That is one of the many things which make India so surprising and incomprehensible to a westerner. He may, for example, find seated upon the banks of the Ganges an ash-smeared fakir who hasn't an anna's worth of brains, and who is manifestly playing hookey from a padded cell. On the adjoining mat he will find a breech-clouted individual who, if he chose, might still be teaching philosophy in the University of Calcutta. An American would be likely to consider the one as crazy as the other. Could he know the history of the itinerant teacher, however, and grasp the motives which actuate him, he might be willing to credit the man with considerable wisdom.

If the truth were known, there probably have been a great many successful men in the West who have longed with all their hearts to follow the example of the professor, the judge, and the merchant; who would have asked nothing better than to terminate their business responsibilities, leave their friends and relatives behind, and take a little time, amidst simple and natural surroundings, for reflecting upon certain puzzling aspects of life which they would like to have straightened out for them.

But, of course, any man of prominence in the West who seeks to try that sort of thing lays himself open to grave misunderstanding. His heirs and associates are inclined to get after him with an alienist, and the first thing he knows he's confined to one of these "rest cures" for the permanently "tired."

It is true that the only enjoyment some men get out of life is in making money, and that when they have made all that they possibly can use, the only way they can have any further enjoyment is to go on and make some more. If that renders them happy, well and good; but what a lot of other kinds of happiness they miss! What a pity never to eat any other fruit but oranges, when there is such a variety of other fruits to be enjoyed, even though one must cultivate a taste for them.

The mistake that so many men make, in this hustling age, is in setting themselves a financial goal so far away that it will take a lifetime of concentrated toil to get them there. If a man wants to make a million dollars, and is brainy enough to do it within a reasonable length of time, let him try for it, by all means. But if making that million means sacrificing everything else in life that is worth while, up to the time that he becomes old and feeble, then the sooner he finds it out the better. If he be wise, according to the Vedic notion of wisdom, he will scale down his ambitions to the measure of his capabilities, and begin to cultivate a variety of pleasures that lie within his means. He will begin to treat himself to such things as he is able to earn, while he is still young enough to enjoy them. In this way he will balance up the various factors that go to make up his existence, and will extract from them more happiness

than he would have time to do if he kept his nose to the grindstone all his life. To reach the end of the trail with your pack full of satisfying recollections is better than reaching it burdened with a million dollar fortune that is of no use to you.

In the building of human character, which was the ultimate object of all their teachings, the Aryans had the principle of balance constantly in mind. If a person were over talkative, they let him talk himself into trouble, and then pointed out to him the virtues of silence. Reckless persons were exposed to the consequences of their rashness until they learned to exercise caution. Timid and self-effacing persons were forced into situations requiring them to hold up their chins and stick out their chests. In the western world, nowadays, nobody cares enough about anybody else, as a general thing, to take that much trouble for him. Lacking anyone who will purposively see to it that certain experiences come to us, and who will thereafter call our attention to the lesson involved therein, we are obliged to take our bumps as the indifferent world gives them to us, and try to figure out the lesson for ourselves.

When applying the principle of balance to a growing child, the compilers of the Vedic texts sought constantly to strengthen the youngster's weakest link. It would be an excellent thing if this rule were better understood in the West and more consistently applied than it is today. The teacher in India who is entrusted with the educating of a child after the Vedic fashion undertakes a task far more comprehensive than that of merely seeing to it that the pupil acquaints himself

with the contents of certain textbooks. He is held responsible for the child's ethical training, as well; and for his physical development, his diet, and his modes of recreation. It is up to him to discipline the child's imagination; to teach him the relationship existing between the sexes; to endow him with a working philosophy of life. It is his job, in brief, to supply his pupil with all that invaluable information which the textbooks never contain, but which is, nevertheless, so vital to the creation of a strong, well balanced character.

Here in the West, that sort of education is virtually impossible. In the first place, the West does not produce teachers qualified to undertake such a task. All our instructors are specialists. None of them is so well balanced in his own make-up as to be able to give a child the all-around training which the Vedic texts held to be so valuable. In the second place, few parents would surrender the guidance of their offspring so completely to somebody else. This attitude is quite natural and would be wholly justifiable were the parents themselves capable of giving their children the sort of training now under discussion. But how many parents possess that capability? Granted that they ought to possess it, and that it should be their duty, their privilege, and their pleasure to supply their children with the many kinds of information which schoolbooks fail to cover, how many of them can do it, as a matter of actual fact? Not many.

Proud parents, finding that their children have special aptitudes in certain directions, are prone to encourage those aptitudes far too enthusiastically, to the

neglect of other qualities of which the youngster will stand in need when he grows up. Does little Oswald like to fool with a fiddle? His fond mother immediately pictures Carnegie Hall packed with applauding throngs gathered to pay homage to her child. (And, besides, wouldn't it be nice to have all that money coming in?) So poor Oswald is sentenced to take violin lessons. He fiddles away in the front parlor during endless hours that, for his health's sake, might much better be spent playing prisoner's base with the boys down the block. He is pampered and deferred to, because his mother knows that all great musical geniuses are "temperamental." His elementary schooling is permitted to consist of the minimum he can take, and still keep clear of the truant officer. At a time when it would do him a world of good to take a course in a business college, he is sent off to a musical conservatory, foreign preferred. When he comes back from there he is only too likely to be pale, neurasthenic, and petulant; incompetent to take care of himself in the ordinary affairs of life; and unable to enjoy any sort of an existence that is not what he considers "bohemian." Unless he is a brilliant exception to the rule—and how often do such exceptions develop?—it serves little Oswald's parents jolly well right when he turns out to be a fiddler in a jazz orchestra.

It is, to be sure, a great thing for the rest of us that there always are a few individuals who are willing to make the sacrifices which superlative accomplishment in any line inexorably demands. If the master pianist were not willing to sit on a piano stool the better part of his life, thus permanently impairing several of his

bodily functions, we could not be lifted to glowing heights of enjoyment by the skill resulting from his prolonged periods of practice. If our greatest inventor had not been willing to coop himself up in his laboratory for weeks on end, eating little or nothing, taking hardly any sleep, and scarcely being aware whether it was night or day, the world might still be reading by gas light. If the famed biologist refused to let himself get hollow chested and astigmatic from humping his shoulders over a microscope, we might still be at the mercy of many lethal germs against which, thanks to him, we have learned to protect ourselves.

There always will be such martyrs to art and to science; and to business, and to welfare work, and to other phases of human activity as well. We should be grateful to them, one and all, and render them proper honor. But, unless we know what it cost them to reach the heights, and unless we are willing to pay the same price, we should not try to emulate them. That, at least, is the Vedic viewpoint. If the reward is worth the sacrifice, very well; that is something for each individual to decide. But, generally speaking, the average person will get more fun out of life, for himself, by developing several sides of his nature in more or less equal proportion, and by attaining a fair degree of accomplishment in several fields, rather than striving for supremacy in one field alone.

A life of that sort may not attract much attention from the world at large. It may not measure up to western standards of "success." But the Aryan observers noticed that people who lead lives like that are, in the aggregate, considerably happier, notably healthier, and much longer lived than are those who concentrate upon one phase of existence to the exclusion of all else. In their opinion, no man could be called truly successful whose life had failed to bring him contentment, or whose body constantly subjected him to discomfort, or whose days came to an end far short of the allotted span. Think what a man misses who dies at fifty instead of at seventy-five. A full third of the lifetime he should enjoy! What man of fifty would not give up some of the fruits of his material success for the privilege of living half as long again as he had lived already? Yet men constantly shorten their lives so materially in the struggle to attain to some eminence or other—usually financial—that, when they do attain to it, they do not live to enjoy it. In their case the price of "success" is death. In other cases the price is physical pain. In yet others the price is a mind and a heart that are ill at ease.

Vedic thinkers are inclined to pin the label of success upon the man who is cheerful, contented, and in good working order after he has reached a ripe old age. Those, at any rate, are the fundamental requirements. Whatever else he may have won for himself in the way of fame, fortune, love, and admiration he can count as just so much velvet, for none of them will be worth anything to him unless it brings him peace of mind and happiness, and permits him a long life in which to enjoy those enviable possessions.

A person may, it is true, be old and healthy and happy and still be nothing but a human parsnip who never has been anywhere, done anything, had any profound feelings, or affected anybody else one way or the

other. He may simply be contented in the same way that a cow is contented, and for about the same reasons. The life he has lived may have been so very simple and so very natural and so utterly uneventful that it has differed only slightly from that of the domestic animals around him. He may never have possessed anything more than the minimum equipment necessary to raise him out of the category of the sick, the unhappy, and the short-lived. Observing a specimen like this, most people would say, "Thank you, but I prefer the short life and the gay one. I'll take a little more variety in mine, please, even if it makes me unhappy and brings me to an earlier grave."

The Aryans understood that attitude, but their writings show that they believe it to be due to an incomplete understanding of life's possibilities. "Why not learn to insure for yourself the priceless possessions of this simple, bovine person," they ask, in effect, "and yet treat yourself to a life vastly more variegated than his has been?" Their prescription for achieving that end contained two ingredients: an understanding of the human body and an understanding of the human imagination. Armed with that antidote against "life's fitful fever," they felt that one should be able to touch life at many points, should be able to enjoy each contact with an intensity proportionate to its importance, and yet sacrifice neither health nor tranquillity by so doing.

In comparing two people of advanced years who seemed to be on a par in point of bodily well being and mental calm, they would rate as the more successful of the two the person who possessed the larger number and greater variety of gratifying memories. Naturally

a self-centered, narrow, monotonous manner of living never produces memories of that sort. Food for comforting reflection in old age is provided only by a life that has been broad in its scope, helpful to others, and lived with enthusiasm in as many of its aspects as possible.

When evaluating the principle of balance, as opposed to the modern tendency toward extreme specialization, one must not get the idea that to be well balanced means to descend to a level of all-around mediocrity; to do a number of things but do none of them well. The ideal is just the opposite; to do a number of things and do them better than most. The more things a man does exceptionally well, the more of a man is he, even though there be those who can surpass him in any single one of his accomplishments.

Not many people measure up to that standard. The Leonardo da Vincis in history are few and far between. But the fact that such men as Leonardo have existed proves that such a thing is possible and gives posterity a mark to shoot at.

Dispositional balance, of the sort just discussed, implies, and to some extent is dependent upon, physiological balance. The teachings of yoga make a great point of this. A person must not let himself get too fat and sluggish, lest his thoughts tend to slow down proportionately. He must try to maintain a chemical balance in his body, so that no preponderance of acid shall nibble at his nerves and embitter his thinking. All of his eliminative organs must share in the job of keeping the body free from poisons, for should one of

them be overworked and cease to function properly it means discomfort, if not disease, and a consequent change in the nature of his thoughts.

A knowledge of the relationship between structure and function leads to a proper conception of balance, and is one of the many valuable lessons to be learned from the study of yoga.

CHAPTER IX

Irrelevancy of Circumstance

A PROPER understanding of the principles outlined in the preceding chapters provides a groundwork for the practice of what the Vedic scriptures call Irrelevancy of Circumstance. By this they mean the cultivation of a mental attitude which permits its possessor to endure with equanimity such unpleasant environments, unwelcome associates, and untoward occurrences as fate may force upon him. Working in the opposite direction, it enables him to resist the harmful effects so often attendant upon too much prosperity, luxury, and ease.

Life in Vedic times, it would seem, was not arranged to the general satisfaction of everybody, any more than it is today. Then, as now, each individual had a notion that he could remould the "sorry scheme of things" much closer to his heart's desire than it was being moulded by the powers that had the job in charge. Because each heart's desire differed in many respects from all the others, it was obvious that such a thing as changing the course of cosmic events, even if it were possible, could never be done in a way to win universal approval. It was equally obvious that in the future, as in the past, the world was bound to wag along forever with its customary indifference to the fate of the individual. Nothing was going to change the law of cause and effect. Good fortune and bad fortune would con-

tinue to play their parts in the lives of one and all. Reversals of social, financial, and moral status would still take place. Enjoyment was certain to be followed by deprivation; abundance by dearth.

Seeing that this was a hazardous world at best, and that there was no hope of an early change in it, the Aryans turned with characteristic logic to the other alternative—the possibility of changing the individual. This method of approach proved to be most successful. They developed a method of training, both physical and mental, which, when persisted in, renders the practitioner immune to those "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" about which Hamlet complained so feelingly.

The principle can be illustrated by some such tale as this: An eccentric monarch becomes incensed at the broiling sun, the pelting rain, the falls of snow, and the storms of hail which, at various times and seasons, interfere with his pleasure when he goes out of doors. He calls in his engineers and commands them to place a lofty canopy over his entire realm, so that he may disport himself in the open without discomfort. His engineers are aghast at the impossible feat demanded of them, to say nothing of the fatal effect it would have upon crops, livestock, and human beings if it could be carried out. They save the situation, at last, by providing their ruler with a stout portable canopy which can be held over his head wherever he goes, protecting him from the elements and yet permitting him perfect freedom of action.

Another form of illustration is found in the proverb which points out that "for him who wears sandals,

the earth is carpeted with leather." Which is to say that he carries his own protection with him at all times, and thus becomes independent of conditions underfoot.

Once the idea is grasped, the power of the individual to put it into practice depends upon his ability to control his reactions to environment. There is nothing elective about many things that happen to us, or about many of the situations in which we find ourselves. But we do have, or should have, a certain amount of choice as to how we react to them, if, indeed, we react to them at all. To exercise such choice in what are generally considered to be purely physical matters—to bar from our consciousness all distracting sounds, for example; to encounter a nauseating odor without permitting it to upset us; or to neutralize the sensation of pain—requires special information and training which are not accessible to everyone. But everyone should be able to profit by a consideration of the principle from its mental aspect. Results from this method of approach are obtained through having a knowledge of comparative values, and thus being able to determine which things are worth getting worked up about and which are not.

Assume that two stock brokers have amassed equal fortunes, support families of equal size, and live on estates equally pretentious. The bottom drops out of the stock market one day, leaving both men desperately hard hit. One thinks of the country place he will have to give up, the yacht he will have to sell, the imported car that will have to be disposed of. He dives out of a tenth story window.

The other, having a keener sense of basic values,

thinks of the sunshine, the fresh air, and the blue sky that no one can take away from him. He thinks of his children and decides that maybe, with their father still alive and able to guide them, it will do the youngsters considerable good to get out and hustle for themselves. He remembers that in the old days, when he didn't have the fortune he has just lost, he experienced many and many a happy moment. He points out to himself what a fine time he had with his money while it was his, which is something, he reflects, that millions of people never attain to. And he figures that what he has done once he probably can do again—not on such a grand scale, perhaps, but well enough to make it worth while trying.

So he does *not* jump out of the window. He moves his family into a small apartment, until he can catch his financial breath, and, the first thing his associates know, he is back on Wall Street again and doing fairly well. His is the Vedic attitude. He has taken the punch on the chin but, in the language of the prize ring, he has "taken it going away." He has yielded to the blow; assimilated it, in a sense. It has knocked him off his feet, but it has not put him down for the count. He is practicing irrelevancy of circumstance.

The psychological trick involved in that practice consists of a cultivated ability to select from any given environment such portions as have their constructive aspects, and to disregard all the rest. It is the faculty of being in certain surroundings but not of them. Equipped with a proper sense of values, said the Aryan writers, a person should be able to go anywhere, mingle with any class of people, follow any sort of

occupation, or enjoy any form of entertainment, without its altering his essential nature or lowering any of his standards. For example, if chance threw him in with a bunch of tramps, he should be able to travel with them as long as necessary, studying their methods of looking after themselves in the open, learning something of human nature from their angle, and getting all the other information from them that he could, without himself becoming a pan-handler, a coke sniffer, or a yegg. He (or she) should be able to mingle with wealthy pleasure seekers, sharing in their frivolous diversions and joining in their inconsequent chatter, without losing sight of the fact that there is more to life than that, or having any desire to live indefinitely in a similar state of unproductive idleness.

The proverb which says that one cannot touch pitch without being defiled is an axiom that, unfortunately, holds good for the greater part of mankind. Human beings in general are strongly predisposed to partake of the nature of their environment, without analyzing that environment to see whether its effect upon them will be beneficial or otherwise. Believers in Vedic precepts maintain that this should not and need not be the case. They assert that we should be able to separate the good from the bad, or the constructive from the destructive, and permit only the former to affect our conduct and our beliefs. To do this successfully presupposes a good grounding in the fundamentals of Vedic doctrine. It calls for a well balanced temperament, a monistic viewpoint, a mind free from illusion, and an understanding of the law of cause and effect. Thus protected, one should be able to maintain an

immunity against harmful influences equal to that of the pathologist who constantly handles germs of virulent disease without becoming infected.

Although Vedic teaching suggests that all of us should know something about the evil forces which surround us, as well as about the good ones, it does not mean to imply that in acquiring a knowledge of that sort we must experience in person all the sins, the shortcomings, and the abnormalities that remove mankind so far from godly estate. Everyone should be able to recognize a cobra or a copperhead when it crosses his path, but he need not let the reptile bite him in order to learn the effect of its virus. About all he needs to know, in order to protect himself, is the appearance of the snake, the locality in which it is most likely to be encountered, and the fact that its bite is fatal unless promptly treated. Anything further than that he had best learn at the zoo, where the reptile is confined for safe observation, and where he can get his more detailed information from the curator who has made reptiles his life's study.

Human snakes should be studied the same way. Their existence and their outward characteristics should be known. One should be aware of their usual habitat and of their effect upon those with whom they come in contact. Beyond that, one had best get one's information about them second hand. Such information frequently is obtainable from someone who, through professional service rendered them, or through some other impersonal contact, has learned a good deal about their habits, their practices, their methods, and the results that accrue from all three.

Our fellow human beings have, when all is said and done, a greater influence upon our individual destinies than any other forces brought to bear upon us. For that reason it is profoundly true that "the proper study of mankind is man." The Aryans thought so, and lived up to that conviction with an all-absorbing perseverance that has not since been surpassed. Those who try to follow in their footsteps today cultivate to the best of their ability a species of detachment which might be called a sort of working principle by which irrelevancy of circumstance is put into action. In practicing detachment, one does not permit anything to make much difference in his beliefs or in his behaviour until he has considered it in all its aspects and decided whether to let it influence him. Realizing the transitory nature of material things, he does not permit himself to become so attached to any of his possessions that its loss would be a major catastrophe to him. Knowing the uncertainties of human nature, he does not bank too heavily upon anyone's permanent loyalty, gratitude, or affection. He enjoys those qualities in others so long as they are maintained toward him, but when he finds that they have changed he is not crushed by the discovery.

This elective reaction to environment, coupled with mental detachment from things material, constitutes what has come to be known as "Brahmanical indifference." Many exceptionally healthy and normal people in the West possess it to a greater or less degree, without ever having heard the term. Such people have been blessed by nature with an inborn tendency to keep their chins up in the face of disaster, to dwell a good part

of the time in certain secret chambers of the heart into which no one else can penetrate without permission, and to get the maximum of enjoyment out of any situation in which they happen to be placed. They instinctively practice moderation, and never are influenced unduly by surroundings or by people without first obtaining their own intellectual consent to be so. They are broad in their views and tolerant of the opinions held by others. Their individual standards are high and they adhere to them at all costs. Life, in consequence, deals gently with such persons. They move through the world with great cheerfulness, experiencing a minimum of sorrow and suffering.

Naturally a capacity for attachment must precede the ability to detach, and is necessarily a part of the same general process. Without attachment there would be no love, which is the moving principle of life. There would be no friendships, no enthusiasms, no loyalties . . . none of the profounder feelings which breed kindliness in the human breast and make life worth the living. One who practiced nothing but detachment would be a stony-hearted person indeed. Most of our treasured memories have to do with an attachment for something or someone, and we would be foolish to make impossible the storing up of such memories by never permitting ourselves any deep interests or desires.

"The fine art of Karma (Cause and Effect)," as those of Vedic training understand it, is the practicing of attachment and detachment in such a way that one may enjoy many of life's transient joys without undergoing the suffering that usually comes with the realiza-

tion of their transience. It is a practice which calls for good heart qualities, considerable force of character, and an exceptionally philosophical habit of mind.

It is the Vedic contention that, by a proper course of instruction and training, it is possible for human beings to become so adept in practicing irrelevancy of circumstance that during the remainder of their lives suffering and sorrow become, for them, virtually nonexistent. This is that "higher state" to the attainment of which so many devotees in India and elsewhere are presumed to be devoting their entire lives. It is known by such names as Nirvana, Moksha, Mukti, and Samadhi, any of which may be translated correctly as meaning "salvation."

For the most part, those who are striving toward that elusive condition have but a vague conception of what it is they are after. To one, salvation means one thing; to another, something different. In a general way it is understood to be a sort of divine ecstacy, a rapturous state of mind in which the individual no longer is conscious of the world about him, but floats away by himself on an endless ocean of bliss. In the West we may safely put that down as being in large part symbology. The present-day oriental is inclined by nature toward the ecstatic, the mystic, and the metaphorical. The state of salvation which most appealed to him would naturally have to be something wholly "spiritual," a condition of some sort which he hoped to reach solely through the use of his mind.

A popular concept of this "higher state" pictures it as a temporary condition of superconsciousness. Were this true, however, the state of consciousness induced

by nitrous oxide would be the same as the "higher state" sought by the Indian devotee. A more reasonable and authentic interpretation of the Vedic scripts indicates that whatever may be meant by a "higher state," it is not a condition to which one can attain simply by the practice of certain mental gymnastics. The salvation taught in the Vedas is salvation and freedom from pain, poverty, disease, heartache, and ignorance, in this life, here and now, rather than in an after life to come.

The method by which that form of Nirvana can be attained, if it is to be attained at all, forms the subject matter for the concluding portion of this volume.

END OF PART II

PART III

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA

Continued from the page facing the Titlepage.

Part III read 17 12/34 chh 4 to the end & then chh 1-3.

Read again Part III through 11.3.35

CHAPTER I

Misconceptions Concerning Yoga

"YOGA" is a Sanskrit word for which philologists give several English equivalents, such as "union," "devotion," and the like. Its root, *yuj,* means "to join," and is the basis for our English word "yoke." Since there is no English word which properly conveys the meaning of yoga, in the sense in which that system is about to be discussed, the old Aryan term will have to be retained, in spite of the writer's desire to get along without the use of any Sanskrit whatever.

Some East Indians give the word yoga a bi-syllabic value, calling it "yoh'-gah," with the stress falling upon the first syllable. But, in the pronunciation heard oftenest among its practitioners, the final "a" is silent. The word becomes "yog," with the "o" long, thus rendering even more apparent its relationship with the word "yoke."

"Yogi" is pronounced as though spelled "yogey," with a hard "g"; not "yoh-guy," as one sometimes hears it. Every yogi is a practitioner of yoga, but not every practitioner of yoga is a yogi. The latter title can properly be applied only to one who, after many years of training and study, has acquired such a profound knowledge of yoga that he is qualified both to teach and to demonstrate its principles. For reasons which will appear later, genuine yogis are comparatively scarce, even in India. It may interest members

of the gentler sex to know that the word "yogi" has its feminine counterpart in "yogini," and that these female adepts always have played a highly respected rôle in the perpetuation of the Vedic teachings.

Many more people in the West have heard about yogis than ever have heard about yoga, but their ideas as to what a yogi is, and what he does, may be put down as ninety-nine per cent erroneous. What they know about yogis they have got by reading cheap fiction, attending mystery plays, devouring the tabloid journals, going to the movies, or perusing certain specimens of the rubbish that passes for "occult" literature. For that reason it is not at all surprising that a yogi, in their minds, is a cross between a tent-show palm-reader and a professional hypnotist.

On the stage and on the screen the yogi customarily is depicted as a turbaned and swarthy individual who gazes into crystal globes, or does sleight-of-hand tricks, or juggles with people's "astral bodies." When living in his own country, according to popular belief in the West, he spends most of his time sitting cross-legged under a tree, sometimes remaining motionless for so long that the spiders spin webs on him and the birds build nests in his hair.

Vaudeville theaters occasionally present performers who stick pins through their flesh, recline on beds of spikes, or permit themselves to be "buried alive." Miracle mongers of that stripe are quite likely to call themselves yogis, without having the slightest claim to that distinction. In these and other ways are built up the mistaken notions as to what a yogi is and how he conducts himself.

Taking up these several misconceptions in the order they have been mentioned, we find first the notion that a yogi is some sort of fortune-teller; a man who reads the lines of one's palm, or fixes his eyes on a glass ball, and then, by the exercise of a weird, "occult" power, forecasts one's future. Here the germ of truth lies in the fact that yogis can and do prophecy what is going to happen to people. But they do not do it by crystal gazing, nor do they do it for a livelihood. When a yogi takes the trouble to peer into anyone's future, it usually is because he wishes to know how that future is likely to affect his own; how it will affect that of some one else in whose welfare he has an interest; or how it will affect society at large. Upon occasion he will exercise his gift for prediction in the case of an individual, and, provided it be some one who has earned the right to such information, will give that individual the benefit of his conclusions. Never, under any circumstances, is a yogi found "telling fortunes" for the passing crowd, at so much per fortune.

As to his methods of foretelling events, they are based upon his knowledge of human nature, his study of anatomy and of the relationship between mind and body, his close acquaintance with the workings of the human imagination, and his understanding of cause and effect. Examining a human specimen, he says to himself, in substance, "This is a certain grade of matter, functioning in such and such a manner. It is being affected by this or that group of influences. According to the character traits revealed by its face, the shape of its head, its voice, its walk, and its general behaviour, the chances are that it will function in the future about as

Supernormal but natural

other specimens of this kind have functioned in the past. Certain known results always accrued from the manner of living practiced by those other specimens. It is logical to suppose that the same sort of thing will happen to this one."

Thus he is enabled to make, with confidence, a prediction that is based on fact, law, and logic. This is something quite different from the "supernatural" powers attributed to the yogis of fiction. To the true yogi there is no such thing as a supernatural power. Supernormal, yes; meaning above the average, and therefore possessed by comparatively few. But not supernatural. Since nothing takes place except through the working of Nature's laws, the yogi regards all powers and all processes as being quite natural. The "super" quality identified with some of these processes merely measures the degree of general unfamiliarity with them. Once understood, they become as natural as any of the others.

The difference between the crystal-gazing, card-reading, sand-divining type of prognostication and the other kind was well illustrated by an incident in the writer's personal experience. It occurred on shipboard in the port of Penang. An emaciated Malay fortune-teller came over the side and was permitted to pick up what small change he could by reading the palms of the passengers. His line of talk was the usual stuff—vague generalities, veiled questions, obvious deductions—supplemented by the shrewd comments which it becomes possible to make after one has studied a great many kinds of people over a long period of time.

A doctor turns tables upon a fortune-teller.

Many of the travellers were quite impressed by the man's "uncanny insight."

Among those somewhat less impressed was an American physician from Manila, who was bound for a medical conference of some sort in Bombay. He let the fortune-teller read his palm, gave him a coin or two, and then said, "I'm something of a fortune-teller, myself. Let me see your palm." The native grinningly held out his hand while the doctor studied it with great care. Tracing the several lines, and speaking in imitation of the native's mysterious manner, the American said, "I see by this hand that you do not sleep well of nights. You have a feeling of being oppressed with a great weight upon your bosom. You cannot get your breath. You are obliged to sit up in bed. At times you suffer from dizziness. If you hasten up a flight of steps, this unseen devil clutches at your heart; turns your knees to water. I see him overpowering you in the end, and, if I read these lines correctly, that time is not far off."

The effect of this on the native was both amusing and pitiful. He was dumbfounded and he was frightened. This was a type of insight that beat his brand all hollow, and he did not know what to make of it. Covering his agitation with a sickly grin, he withdrew his hand and moved over among the passengers on the opposite side of the deck. When the call of "All ashore" sounded, he approached the physician again.

"All that the Sahib said was true," he told him, and added, looking gravely into his eyes, "Is it also true that I have not long to live?"

"Oh, I wouldn't worry too much about that," said

the doctor, heartily, "Death comes to all of us, you know. A little sooner, a little later; what does it matter?"

The fortune-teller salaamed, climbed into his boat, and rowed away, but it was plain that he was genuinely perturbed.

"I didn't mean to scare the poor devil," said the doctor, later, "but all I needed was one look at the way the arteries stood out on his neck. Then I had the whole story. He has an arterial and cardiac condition that was bound to give him all the symptoms I described. He'll last a few months, maybe; not more. The chances are he never has consulted a physician, and has no idea his condition is so apparent. That was why he was so startled when I told him things that happened to him when he was alone in the dead of night."

The doctor, needless to say, was not a yogi, but he was using yogic methods. His prediction had a basis in science. It was founded upon experience with similar cases in the past. He was reasoning from present cause to future effect. This is just what the yogi does, save that the yogi's method is, in some respects, more subtle than that, and takes many more factors into consideration. Its principles are the same, but the manner in which it operates is more comprehensive. It is a method based upon a broader and better balanced understanding of natural laws than is possessed by most people, and therefore the results obtained by it are astonishing to those who possess no such understanding.

Next in order comes the power of hypnotism so frequently ascribed to the yogi. This he undeniably has, to a greater degree than have any of the performers

who go about the western countries putting people to sleep in store windows, or making them play the fool in front of a paying audience. It is not his habit, however, to exercise his knowledge of the principles of hypnosis before the general public. Where he can use it to correct mental ailments, or straighten out the kinks in a nervous system, he may do so, provided conditions warrant it. Should it be desirable to demonstrate to some person or group of persons his understanding of how the human imagination works, he might give an exhibition of hypnotism as a means to that end.

In all this, however, there would be none of the sinister, Svengali-like quality which the public mind associates with hypnotism and hypnotists. Many people seem to regard the ability to hypnotize as being a dangerous power for anyone to possess. They know in their hearts that, could they but possess the kind of power which they conceive hypnotism to be, they would make all manner of selfish, not to say unethical, uses of it. They assume that anyone else would do the same. Fortunately the best authorities on the subject are unanimous in their conviction that no person, while under the influence of hypnosis, can be made to do anything which would not have his moral consent while in his normal mental state.

The yogi applies his knowledge of hypnotism without having recourse to the "mesmeric" gestures and other hocus-pocus made familiar by public performers. His method consists simply in supplying the subject's mind with certain material for it to work upon. If this is understandingly done, the subject seizes upon the concepts presented to him and proceeds to hypnotize

himself. The successful practice of the art necessitates such a thorough knowledge of mental processes as will enable the practitioner to select for presentation only those concepts which will produce the desired results when introduced into the subject's consciousness.

Closely related to the notion that a yogi is a hypnotist, we find the idea that he belongs in the same class with fire-eaters, conjurors, spiritualistic mediums, and other public or private performers whose feats so many people find inexplicable. Here again, a germ of truth lies hidden within an envelope of misunderstanding. Since a yogi governs his whole life according to what he believes to be the immutable laws of Nature, anything which appears to transcend or nullify those laws becomes, for him, the subject of earnest investigation. Were it true that a man actually could inhale fire without injury to his tissues, or that a girl could be sawed in two and joined together again, or that a disembodied spirit could rattle a tambourine, it would undermine his faith in the laws of force and matter laid down in the Vedas. Consequently, for his own satisfaction, he seeks the true explanation of all such illusions as those mentioned. The yogi of today, having thus far discovered nothing in the whole field of magic and spiritualistic phenomena which was not susceptible of explanation upon a basis of familiar natural laws, feels confident that his faith in the teachings of his predecessors is not misplaced. Nevertheless, he keeps his eyes open for new effects in that field, and that is one reason why yogis sometimes are found to be on familiar terms with professional mediums, "escape artists," and prestidigitators.

For another reason, the dramatic and baffling effects produced by the professional magician supply the yogi with first rate illustrations of how easy it is for people to be tricked by their senses. In discussing the Doctrine of Illusion, it is a favorite practice of the yogi to perform for his hearers some feat of magic which seemingly admits of no explanation based upon the operation of natural law. He, himself, accounts for it on some thoroughly unscientific, impossible basis. His hearers, unable to provide for themselves any explanation of the phenomena they have witnessed, either must accept his version of how it came about or go without any. When he has convinced as many as possible that his solution of the mystery is the true one, and they are as certain of it as they can be about anything, he proceeds to show them the real method by which the trick was performed. He points out to them the things they failed to see, and analyzes the false deductions they made from what they did see. In this manner he tries to train them to observe more carefully, reason more logically, and learn to distinguish the genuine from the spurious in all aspects of life.

That form of educational technique is such a recognized part of a yogi's equipment that a specific phrase is used to define it. The process is known as that of "illusive attribution, followed by its withdrawal." False appearances, powers, properties, and movements are deliberately attributed to a certain object or process. This produces the illusion that it is something other than what it is. When the observer has accepted the illusion as truth, the veil of deception is removed, and the real truth disclosed. A similar veil, according

to the yogi, screens most of mankind from a perception of the great truth which lies back of everything in the manifested universe.

An "astral body," so far as students of the Vedic scripts have been able to discover, is something which exists only in the mind of a theosophist. There, as best one can judge, it is conceived to be a species of ghost, a replica of the person whose material body it inhabits. It is supposed—by those who believe in its existence—to possess the ability to detach itself from its corporeal host and go elsewhere, much to the surprise of those who encounter and recognize it in unexpected places. It can even roam at will among the stars and planets, returning to its earthly double when convenient, and for reasons best known to itself. That is how it gets the appellation "astral" body; from its flights among the stars. It probably would find no place in this discussion were it not for the fact that yogis are thought of by many as being mysterious creatures who go about projecting their astral bodies all over the shop; sending them on trips through the sidereal system; and occasionally introducing them into the bodies of other people.

This diverting concept may be dismissed with the assertion that no place can be found for it in the Vedic scheme of things. Astral bodies do not fit in with the Aryan theory concerning the nature of matter. Therefore whenever a new "mahatma" is brought forward, and given the reputation of being an astral body manipulator, it may be asserted with confidence that, whatever else he may be, he is not a yogi.

There is more than the usual amount of justification

for that particular notion of a yogi which has him seated cross-legged for long periods at a time, oblivious to his surroundings. All yogis occasionally assume this posture, both during the period when they are intensively studying yoga and throughout their after lives as well. It is a part of their physical and mental training and practice. But *only* a part. That is where the misconception creeps in. The yogi knows that this specific posture is founded upon sound anatomical principles, and that when he is trying to exercise control over his breathing apparatus and his sympathetic nervous system, it is the position which gets him the best results. Therefore he uses it for that purpose, and for such lengths of time as may be required to produce the effect he is after. That effect having been produced, there no longer is any reason for his holding the posture, and so he gets out of it and goes about his business.

The values to be derived from this practice, or from any other yoga practice, for that matter, are contingent upon its being properly used. Each individual practitioner requires a different prescription. Unless the dosage is right, the results will not be of the kind desired. Those who take up the practice of yoga are warned of this, and govern themselves according to their specific needs.

The Hindu fanatic, on the contrary, having grasped a fragment of the yogic teaching, or having seen a yogi in the above named posture, jumps to the conclusion that the maintaining of that bodily attitude is the whole of yoga, and that it must point the way to salvation. Acting on the faulty principle that if one pill is good

for an ailment the whole box will be better, he goes out and sits Buddha-fashion under a tree and stares at the end of his nose until he becomes slightly but permanently cross-eyed. This gives him a queer look which passes for possession of the "mystical eye" one hears about in India and elsewhere. Oblivious to insects, to sun and to rain, and to his fellow human beings, he sits and sits and sits. His joints grow rigid. His body shrinks. He subsists on practically nothing and accomplishes absolutely nothing. For all the use he is to himself or to the world he might as well be the dingy stone image he appears to be. Yet because he makes this gesture that is associated with yoga, the ignorant point him out as a yogi.

The westerner, observing a misguided creature of that kind, is justified in saying, "Anyone who wants that sort of thing can have it. To me it looks like insanity." And that is precisely what it looks like to a yogi. His Vedic training tells him that it is a gross violation of the principle of balance; that it is sheer folly from the standpoint of cause and effect; and that, although it may show irrelevancy of circumstance to a high degree, it is a perverted and purposeless exercise of that faculty. It provides but one useful lesson; it demonstrates the tenacity of life in the human body, and shows what rigors flesh and blood can withstand. The yogi notes that lesson for what it is worth, and dismisses the rest of the exhibition as downright lunacy.

As for the itinerant "human pin-cushions" who stick hat-pins through their cheeks or rest their naked weight on beds of sharp nails, they are not yogis in any sense

of the word. They have acquired one isolated principle of yogic practice, which they have successfully commercialized, but the teaching as a whole is quite unknown to them. A knowledge of this principle, involving the ability to disregard pain, is fairly widespread. The dervishes in Turkey employ it; the Aïssaoua, of North Africa, feature it extensively; and it plays a part in the ceremonies of the Penitentes, in Mexico and the Southwestern United States. The writer once met a Spaniard, with an Irish name, who gave exhibitions of it between courses at a dinner in Pamplona. As practiced for gain, it is partly trickery and partly an actual control over certain sense reactions.

The latter aspect of it is what interests the yogi. In his study of the human imagination he is taught that the difference between pleasure and pain is one of interpretation. If the mind which registers a sensation supplied to it by the nerves is accustomed to considering that sensation as being painful, then the body will react accordingly. If the mind declines to recognize the sensation as being something which must be reacted to in that way, then the concept of pain vanishes. The yogi proves this to his own satisfaction by tests similar to those exhibited by the "human pin-cushion," or the fakir on the bed of spikes. He goes even farther and undertakes the heroic test known as *Kali Mudra*, or the Simulation of Death. The ability to perform this feat legitimately constitutes a sort of hall-mark which certifies that the simulator has gone as far as it is possible to go in the successive stages of physical and mental training which the practice of yoga involves. He must suspend his breathing, stop his heart action,

and cut off all apparent communication between his outer sense organs and his brain. To make the demonstration conclusive, he must remain in that condition for a specified length of time, say half an hour or more, during which period he must not react to any of the usual tests applied by physicians before pronouncing a person dead. Neither must he show any sign of sensation when his flesh is pierced with needles or he has done to him any of the things which the "human pincushions" do to themselves in their public performances.

If he has sufficient control over his involuntary nervous system to do that, it is accepted as proof that he has made the teachings of yoga a part of his being, and, in consequence, is entitled to call himself a yogi. There his interest in the experiment virtually ceases. It is incidental to other and more important things he wishes to accomplish, and is by no means an end in itself. Nevertheless, the native extremist in India, clutching as usual at the form of the thing rather than at its essence, places his bed of spikes in the shadow of a popular temple and lies there in full view for hours at a stretch. Thus he becomes a yogi to the ignorant populace. Sometimes he is a fraud, pure and simple, with his mind intent upon the coppers that the pious wayfarer will drop into his bowl. Sometimes he sincerely believes that by thus mortifying his flesh he will attain to spiritual immortality. In no case is he ever a genuine yogi.

The feat of being buried alive leaves room for considerable more deception than do those involving disregard of pain. It has been performed, both in India

and in the western world, by means and under conditions which involved only slightly, if at all, the powers of self control attributed to the persons buried. The performers using these means generally style themselves yogis, for the reason that the ability to simulate death is known in the East as something which requires the sort of training that only a genuine yogi gets. The public performers who are shut up in large coffins and left to their own devices beneath a pile of loose earth have a long way to go before they honestly can claim that title. Yet they use it, and the average person, knowing no better, thinks they have a right to it.

Even an interested and intelligent person who wished to find out what he could about yoga and yogis would get a surprising amount of misinformation from sources which we are accustomed to depend upon as being reliable. Turn to the word "yoga" in the Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, for illustration. It says yoga is "One of the branches of the Hindu philosophy, which teaches the doctrines of the Supreme Being, and explains the means by which the human soul may obtain final emancipation from further migrations, and effect a junction with the universal spirit. Among the means of effecting this junction are comprehended a long continuance in various unnatural postures, withdrawal of the senses from external objects, concentration of the mind on some grand central truth, and the like, all of which imply the leading of an austere hermit life."

A yogi, according to the same source, is "A Hindu ascetic and mendicant who practices the yoga system, and combines meditation with austerity, claiming thus

to acquire a miraculous power over elementary matter."

In both these definitions, just as in the various ideas of yoga and yogis which have been formed by the man in the street, there is a basis of truth underlying a superstructure of error. The mistaken concepts derived from the original facts are due to lack of complete information, to a misunderstanding of motives, and to a consequently erroneous process of deductions.

Going over the definition of yoga, we find almost as many errors as it would have been possible to make in a like space. Without the slightest desire to quibble, or split hairs, it should be pointed out that yoga is not "one of the branches of the Hindu philosophy," but is the technical method by which Aryan philosophy may be put into action. It does not teach "the doctrines of the Supreme Being," if those two capital letters imply a personified deity. And it certainly does not explain "the means by which the human soul may obtain final emancipation from further migrations." That is a bit of priestcraft introduced long after the original Vedic teachings took form. The scriptures written by the Aryans make no reference to the human soul in the sense the term is used in the above definition of yoga. Belief in monism, which is the Vedic belief, is incompatible with belief in a soul that exists as a separate entity. The Vedas take full cognizance of that indefinable something which animates the human body, but their idea of its nature differs essentially from the idea which depicts it as a disembodied spirit that enters the body at birth, dwells there for a time, and then pursues its independent way through space after its

material habitation has disintegrated. Discussion of the difference between the two concepts must be reserved for a later chapter, the point here being simply that the definition of yoga in the Century Dictionary ascribes to the yogi a belief in the transmigration of souls, a theory which he by no means accepts.

That portion of the definition which refers to effecting "a junction with the universal spirit" comes closer to authenticity than those above cited, but, even so, it is likely to convey the impression that such a junction takes place only at the time of death. That is not the yogi's idea of it. He is convinced that when he dies all the elements that go to make up his being will rejoin their parent elements in any case; that when his moment of dissolution comes, Nature will take him as she finds him and distribute him as she sees fit, i.e. in accordance with the laws that govern all matter. He will have nothing further to say about it, then. Once the breath leaves his body for good, his subsequent place in the universe will depend upon the condition he was in at the moment death overtook him. Consequently his chief concern is to get as much of the universal into himself as possible *while he is still alive*. This process takes on, superficially, a two-fold aspect, the physical and the mental, although in reality, as the yogi sees it, they are one and the same thing. He strives during this life to advance himself as far up the evolutionary scale as he can, so that his mind will partake more and more of the character of Universal Mind, and his body approximate closer and closer to the finer forms of matter. That is what is actually meant by effecting a junction with the universal spirit. The student of yoga

Abstemiousness is not asceticism.

is taught that the sooner he can accomplish it, the more happiness he will get out of this life and the nearer he will be to his ultimate goal when he dies.

Perhaps it should be made clear at this point that "a body approximating to the finer forms of matter" is in no wise to be understood as meaning a body that has been starved, weakened, dried out, and ossified. The deliberate acquisition of a carcass like that is attempted only by those misguided creatures who mistake a part of the truth for the whole, who confuse abstemiousness with asceticism, and who torture themselves needlessly because of a twisted notion that by mortifying the flesh they are saving their souls.

What a yogi means by a finer body is one which is clean, strong, elastic, flexible, and capable of smoothly co-ordinated movement; one which is light in proportion to its strength and to the reserve power within it; one which functions properly because it is well nourished, well lubricated, and contains a proper quantity of the water element. It will be seen that a body like this partakes less of the nature of a rock, a log, or a clod of earth than it does of those higher grades of matter which are marked by their liveliness, their adaptability, their powers of expansion and contraction—the fluids and the gases, in other words. An almost perfect antithesis of such a body is found in that of the emaciated, feeble, dessicated, and osseous ascetic. Here is a structure that contains far too great a proportion of concentrated solid matter. It is stiff, unyielding, angular in action, and has no reserve power whatever. The yogi holds that such an organism is too nearly one with the earth, and too far removed from those rarer,

lighter, freer grades of matter that have progressed a little farther up the evolutionary scale.

The dictionary definition we are analyzing mentions several means for effecting a junction with "the universal spirit." Strictly speaking "spirit" is a poor word to use in this connection. It meant "breath" originally, but it has become so confused with "soul" as to take on a dualistic rather than a monistic significance. Qualified by the word "universal," however, it may serve as well as another to signify "The All." First on the list of means mentioned is "a long continuance in various unnatural postures." Anyone acquainted with the principles of yoga must dispute the choice of the word "unnatural." Had the framer of the definition said "unusual postures" he would have been nearer right, for, in the course of physical training essential to the study of yoga, the many postures taken have each a perfectly natural reason for being employed, and are used to bring about definite results. Grotesque though some of the postures may appear, each is based on a thorough knowledge of anatomy and has for its purpose the stretching or compressing of some muscle, ligament, or bodily organ. "Long continuance" in a posture is correct enough, but the phrase must not be construed to mean the holding of any one position to the point of self-injury. The several positions are assumed and held for just long enough at a time to strengthen a muscle a little, limber a joint a little, or cause an organ to function a little better. Then other postures are assumed, in series, according to the specific results desired in different cases. The net result, in all cases, is cumulative, and is reached through repeti-

tion of the postures at varying intervals rather than by maintaining any one of them for a long period of time. The man who holds his arm above his head until it withers, or keeps his fist closed until his finger nails pierce his palm is not a yogi; he's a fool.

"Withdrawal of the senses from external objects," and "concentration of the mind on some grand central truth" are certainly means used by the yogi in attaining his goal, but they are not so abtruse as they may sound. The reader will find the former touched upon in the chapter on Irrelevancy of Circumstance. The latter is one of the means used for accomplishing the former. Neither of them necessarily implies "the leading of an austere hermit life." There is a certain amount of austerity in the life of every practitioner of yoga; enough, presumably, to maintain a proper balance between severe abstinence and over indulgence. There is a period, furthermore, in the training of every yogi, when it has been found that he can accomplish more in a short space of time by being isolated from the world at large. He is not entirely alone during that period, however. His life is not that of a recluse, even then. Certainly during his post-training existence he mingles with his fellow beings to an extent that makes him anything but a hermit. Human beings—the observation of them, the study of them, the guidance and education of them—are the chief concern of his life. To think of him as a solitary individual who hides himself away from mankind and practices terrific self denial throughout his entire career is a flat contradiction of the known facts.

This disposes, also, of that part of the definition

of a yogi which calls him an ascetic. There is a tinge of asceticism in some aspects of his life, but not enough to make him the sort of fanatic ordinarily associated with the term.

The definition also calls him a mendicant. That he need never be, and yet, in India, a mendicant life is the sort of life he sometimes chooses to lead. The same intellectual qualities, and attributes of character, which make it possible for a man to become a yogi will also enable him to look out for himself most capably in the material affairs of life, should he see fit to turn his energies in that direction. Quite often, however, especially in the East, he feels that his time will be better spent if he devotes it to the culturing of his fellows rather than to the gaining of his own livelihood. Therefore he shares with those who listen to him the fruits of his special training and observation. This is something they could not otherwise get, and in exchange they give him a portion of their earnings, so that he may carry on with his mission. It is a fair exchange, to say the least for it, and is generally so regarded.

In essence the arrangement is identical with that provided for the minister of the gospel in the West. He endeavors to supply the spiritual needs of his congregation, and the members of the congregation see to it that he is clothed, housed, and fed. Nobody calls our preachers mendicants, for the reason that they do not go from house to house with a begging bowl. All the same, the difference between the beggar's bowl and the collection plate is so exceedingly slight that it is virtually non-existent. The only important difference

is that the truth-seeker who drops his contribution into the bowl of the yogi gets much more for his money.

To pick the true yogi from out the swarms of spurious "holy men" that infest India is a task beyond the powers of most Europeans, and of most Indians as well. India is the land of the beggar's bowl. Almost any wild-eyed, crack-brained creature can smear himself with ashes, let his hair become matted around his shoulders, equip himself with an alms bowl, and collect enough to keep himself alive. He is able to do this because the ignorant native over there is inclined to play safe when it comes to his religious contributions. He would rather give a pittance to a dozen frauds and loafers than to withhold it and risk the chance that one of them might be worthy. Superior intelligence would make clear to him that, save for the beneficial effect accruing to his own character, he was doing more harm than good each time he encouraged a worthless beggar in his worthlessness. But the poor native, not being able to distinguish the faker from the sage, gives what he can to as many as he can. And who shall say that in so doing he does not "acquire merit"? Those who benefit most by charity are the charitable. To those who love unselfishly fall the true rewards of love.

The East Indian who gives indiscriminately may do something for himself in a character way, but the net result is that his land is overrun with a horde of disgusting parasites. Finding these human vermin on every hand, and hearing that thousands of natives consider them "holy men," is enough to turn the mind of a western traveller away from any form of eastern teaching. Yet notwithstanding that inexcusable legion of

hypocrites and madmen, the fact remains that there are to be found in India today, as there always have been in the past, certain men whose superior knowledge and training, taken in conjunction with their aims, their motives, and the general conduct of their lives, entitles them to be considered "holy." If such men have anything sane, logical, and constructive to offer the western world, it would be shortsighted on our part not to set aside in our minds the delusion and fanaticism that characterize so much of what passes for religion and philosophy in India, and give their time-tested and reasonable teachings a respectful hearing.

The final portion of the dictionary definition of a yogi says that by means of meditation and austerity he claims to "acquire a miraculous power over elementary matter." If "miraculous," as here used, means "astonishing" or "extraordinary," rather than "supernatural," the definition may be allowed to stand. We need not inquire at this point, what the definer would consider a convincing demonstration of miraculous power over elementary matter. Such power of that sort as the yogi possesses is confined principally to the elementary matter composing his own body. There is too much legend in those tales which credit him with, say, the ability to summon a fog bank out of a clear sky and cause it to envelop a certain locality.

So much for what a yogi is not. What he is, in actuality, may be summed up by saying that he embodies in a living person the qualities of mind, heart, and physique which the Vedas describe as being essential to right living. The manner in which these qualities disclose themselves to others has been touched upon

at numerous points in preceding and subsequent pages. To such scattered references might be added the fact that the genuine yogi, no matter where found, is a simple, natural, unostentatious sort of person, whom the casual observer would not single out at first as being any different from the ordinary run of human beings. He is healthy and hearty, with a great capacity for work and a notable ability to exercise his intelligence equally well in any direction. Being a deep student of human nature, he mingles on terms of mutual understanding with people from many different walks of life. Although a tenacious fighter when necessary, he has a certain child-like quality in his nature which invariably inspires affection among those who know him best. To them he is always a sage counsellor and a worthy friend. His greatest joy lies in finding fertile ground wherein to implant the truths which have been handed down to him, and to that he devotes his life.

If the reader is interested, he will find in various encyclopedias certain more elaborate definitions of yoga and yogis than the two quoted above. They, like the condensed definitions in the dictionaries, are based in part upon truth and in part upon misunderstanding. The proportion of each will depend upon the scholarly attainments of the man who contributed the article to the encyclopedia, upon his opportunities for observation, and upon the source from which he got his information. Unless he be himself a practitioner of yoga, he naturally will be unable to give the accurate and familiar picture of it that might be given by someone who was living the principles it advocates. Yoga continues to be misunderstood, and to appear secret and "occult," for the sole reason that most people will not put in the amount of work necessary to study it. To be able to write authoritatively about yoga calls for a training and an experience which most western scholars have not had. The average person will be quite helpless in his efforts to distinguish the authentic portions of their writings from those based upon misapprehension. To save him the trouble of trying, the following chapters have been prepared.

Lower levels of intelligence write to minor & imperfect forms of Y
and
Full Yoga at the right level

CHAPTER II

Minor Aspects of Yoga
(Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, etc.)

WHEN the compilers of the Vedic scriptures ultimately formulated their store of knowledge, they found themselves confronted with a problem which demanded careful consideration. It was their desire to disseminate as widely as possible the truths they had discovered, in order that mankind might benefit thereby. At the same time, they were shrewdly aware that not all specimens of mankind are on the same level of intelligence and culture. The vast majority, they knew from observation, had not the mental capacity to grasp many of the truths which constitute Veda. A smaller proportion, they thought, would be able to understand quite a number of the Vedic principles and put them into practice. A few, if specially trained, would be able to comprehend the doctrine in its entirety and become living exemplars of its value.

The problem, then, was to select first those truths which could be taught, with safety, to anyone and everyone; and second, to hold safely in reserve such additional principles as must be given only to those who were prepared to make the best use of them.

The result was that numerous commentators seized upon such portions of the Vedic scriptures as were made available to them, and extracted therefrom those principles and practices which chanced to appeal to

their individual natures. They elaborated upon their chosen principles, systematized them to some extent, and eventually built them up into a number of definite codes of conduct which they put forward as various forms of yoga. Some three or four of these forms have become fairly well known in the West through the published writings of numerous swamis and other native teachers who have tried to interest occidental scholars in oriental philosophy. Concerning the other forms there has been little information available to the general public, even in the East.

In a treatise such as this, the scope of which is necessarily limited, it will be possible to give only the briefest summary of some of these various minor phases or forms of yoga. The object of each and all of them is to supply a formula for behaviour, through adherence to which the practitioner is assured he will attain to "liberation," whatever that happens to mean to him in the special circumstances which constitute his life.

One branch, for example—to take them up in no special order—features a life of unselfish devotion to the needs of others. "A life of service," we would call it. Those who practice this type of yoga are animated by the same spirit which moves our settlement workers, our medical missionaries, our sisters of mercy, and other kindly souls who derive happiness from charitable deeds. (Bhakti Yoga)

निष्काम सेवा

A second branch is based on the law of cause and effect, and stresses the doing of one's simple duty in all the affairs of life. The good causes thus inaugurated will, it is believed, result in an accumulation of desir-

कारणकार्यनियतिसा प्रवृत्तिः कर्मयोगः

able effects the net result of which will be happiness. (Karma Yoga)

A third path is offered to the person who finds happiness in the search for knowledge. Those who confine themselves to this kind of yoga hope to reach the ultimate truth through processes of pure reason. This is a species of yoga which appeals especially to the pundit type of mind in India. (Jnâna Yoga)

Still another branch of yoga concerns itself with the love principle in Nature. Its adherents seek the common goal by sublimating the sex relationship to a point where it becomes a beneficent force in their own lives and exerts a helpful influence upon the lives of others. (Lingam-Yoni Yoga)

A fifth branch takes advantage of the remarkable properties inherent in sound. Sound being vibration, those who choose this sort of yoga study the production of sounds which have a salutary effect upon their nervous systems. Their object is to try to get themselves into harmony with the more subtle forms of matter which surround them. (Mantra Yoga)

What we understand as autosuggestion forms the basic principle of a sixth branch. Its followers are given certain constructive verbal formulæ which they mutter to themselves inaudibly, and keep on muttering until, by the power of repetition, the principle involved becomes a part of their natures. (Laya Yoga)

An endeavor to attain bodily perfection occupies the attention of those who follow a seventh branch. They devote much time to exercise, practice various means for insuring internal cleanliness, and are careful about

the chemical and functional condition of their bodies. (Ghatastha Yoga)

Perhaps best known in the West is that form of yoga which promises deliverance through the discipline and handling of the mind, as taught in the celebrated Aphorisms of Patanjali. This differs from the form which stresses the acquiring of knowledge, in that it concerns itself primarily with the *use* of the mind, and the ways of applying its power in all directions. (Raja Yoga)

The fault with all these systems, as the more profound Vedic student sees it, lies in the fact that they lay too much stress upon a single aspect of life, or upon a single quality in the natures of those who practice them. Too much attention to the mind, at the expense of the body, or vice versa; too much attention to sentiment, at the expense of actuality; in brief, too much concentration upon the specific, at the expense of the universal. That sort of specialization, in the true yogi's opinion, does not make for a balanced, well rounded nature. He regards all such forms of yoga in the same light that a highly educated man regards arithmetic, geography, grammar, and all the other studies which he took up during his school and college courses. Each is valuable in itself and is a step toward the possession of what we call an education, but what sort of an education would a man have if he studied nothing all his life but arithmetic?

One or another of the minor branches of yoga has formed the basis for theosophy, vedantism, and all the other cults of like nature which have sprung up in various parts of the world. Though containing germs of

Vedic truth, each cult of that sort suffers from the fragmentary nature of its teachings. Because they neglect so many essential aspects of life, they are ill-adapted to the production of that all-around development which, from a yogic standpoint, is indispensable to the extraction of happiness from this material world.

The tendency of human beings, in matters of conduct, is to devote the most attention to that for which they have a natural inclination. Therein lies the danger of preaching and practicing any of the minor aspects of yoga in isolation. It is the invariable rule that the character quality which the student elects to feature in his own life is the one of which he already has an excess. If, by nature, he is a kindly, self-sacrificing, idealistic sort of person, he will choose the branch of yoga which stresses those qualities, to the neglect of those sterner attributes of character which he needs in order to cope successfully with conditions as they exist in the world today. The Vedic teacher, if he had that sort of pupil to deal with, and were in a position to dictate the pupil's conduct, would see to it that he practiced some form of yoga which demanded less heart and more head; less idealism and more practicality. In that way he would round out the student's character, strengthen his weak links, and make him a more aggressive and capable individual than he would become if left to his own predispositions.

In the following pages, therefore, when the term yoga is used, it must be understood as signifying the practice of the early Aryan principles as a whole; not any specific portion of them.

CHAPTER III

Yoga in Its Broader Aspect

THE simplest and most comprehensive definition of yoga is the one which asserts it to be "the organizing *and using* of all knowledge that has a bearing upon human beings." That is the essence of it when it is stripped of all the esoteric, mystic, and occult trappings which invariably have concealed from occidental investigators its true nature. The virtue of it lies not so much in its revelation of facts that are new to the world at large as in its adaptation and management of knowledge long extant.

It is an orderly, systematic, scientific method by which, in a relatively short time, the individual can make as much constructive progress as would take the race centuries of evolution to accomplish. In other words, yoga *is* evolution, but it is accelerated evolution, applied to the individual. The pathway of yoga is a short cut to the possession of that balanced judgment which is not developed, ordinarily, until a person has but a few years of life left in which to profit by it. Those who follow the path endeavor to heed the warning provided by the mistakes of others, and thus to avoid much of the suffering, both mental and physical, which is the common lot of mankind as a whole.

The sole aim of yoga is the building of character. That is the first lesson in the study of it. It is likewise the last one. To lose sight of that object is to miss the

purport of all the intermediary stages which lead the student upward from his starting point. If the completion of his training finds him lacking in certain essential qualities of character, he will get but few of the ultimate benefits for which he has struggled.

Another way of putting it is to say that "yoga is the Veda lived." It is not enough to know the truths revealed by the Aryan thinkers; their sole value lies in putting them to proper use. Veda, in Sanskrit, means "knowledge," "understanding," "truth." Yoga is nothing more nor less than the Vedic truths put into action. It is the practical application in daily life of those laws and principles of nature which the Aryans discovered and which they found to be of constructive value.

The closest ally of yoga is modern science. An occidental scientist, if he lived a balanced life, would, in the end, become essentially a Vedic, because he works with the same materials as does the practitioner of yoga, and because these materials are governed by the same laws.

Yoga, it must be evident, is not a "pet theory," nor a narrow, biased mode of living. The facts upon which the practice of it is based have been gathered from any and all sources by thousands of people for thousands of years. They are being gathered today, and tested as to their agreement or disagreement with the fundamental principles of Vedic belief. Anything which works constructively and stands the test of time is good yoga, no matter where it is found or who is using it.

To organize and use "all knowledge that has a bearing upon human beings" may seem like a tall order, yet that is what yoga attempts to do. To that end the

Aryans considered Man in all his aspects—physical, mental, ethical, social, religious, and economic. In their endeavor to establish a groundwork for their investigations, they studied primarily the human body itself; that living organism which, so far as concerns mankind, is the source of all feeling, all thought, and all belief.

This body they conceived to be a miniature universe in itself, a replica of the great universe out of which it was created. They believed it to be composed of the same universal materials, animated by the same universal forces, and governed by the same universal laws. Believing in monism, they could think of the body in no other way. Although they placed Man at the top of the zoölogical scale, they recognized the fact that he had much in common with the lower animals. In some respects, they were obliged to admit, certain of the lower animals were his superiors. Such superiority was confined, of course, to matters involving agility and strength, keenness of vision, and acuteness of taste, smell, and hearing. Even so, it was observed that the animals could depend upon their co-ordinated faculties to provide them with an instinctive awareness of many things concerning which Man's more complex thinking apparatus failed to inform him. Therefore, when the Aryans came to their study of the human body, they supplemented it by a study of the animals, as well, and in so doing learned many valuable lessons tending to offset the fact that Man had built up his brain at the expense of his senses.

They studied the human body in life and in death, in health and in sickness, in youth and in age. Their method was superior to that of the modern anatomist

and physician in some respects, chief among which was their reasonable assumption that the body in its healthy state was worthy of as much observation and experimentation as when it was diseased. In fact, they thought that when it was in good condition it deserved more attention, and offered more possibilities worthy of cultivation, than when it was out of order. In consequence the Aryans had a conception of health, and all its resultant potentialities, that far transcends our modern idea of it. The modern man of medicine is predisposed to concern himself principally with bodies that are in a pathological condition. Concerning the body's possibilities when in a state of health he knows but little.

Due to their conviction that Man was non-different from the other things that go to make up the manifested universe, the Aryan scientists naturally looked upon him as being composed of solids, liquids, and gases. They found that people differ according to the varying proportions of those three elements that are present in their bodies, and to the varying speeds of vibration of the particles composing each respective portion. The ancient Indian texts on medicine and surgery devote one-third of their space to the solids of the body, one-third to the liquids, and one-third to the "humors," by which they mean the gaseous elements.

Linking up cause and effect, those wise old thinkers decided that to progress in the direction of evolution and improvement meant to speed up the motion of the finer particles composing the body, and then to harmonize and co-ordinate them; brain with nerves; nerves with muscle, and so on. Matter in its solid form they

knew to be the least powerful of all the forms, and to be wholly dependent upon the higher ones as to its condition and its behaviour. Therefore anything that could be done to evolve the cruder forms of bodily matter into something approximating to the higher forms, they felt to be worth trying.

Going more into detail, we find the Aryan texts dividing matter into the following seven forms, or elements:

1. Earth.
2. Water.
3. Fire or Electricity.
4. Air.
5. Ether.
6. Life or Cosmic Energy.
7. God Consciousness.

It must be borne in mind that, according to the monistic hypothesis, all seven of these elements are, in actuality, merely different modes of motion of the same thing. Those revealed to us by our senses appear in different forms, each sense organ being equipped to register a different mode of motion and present to the mind a different sort of picture. For purposes of study, the seven forms listed above have been divided into as many as ninety-six elements.

The Aryans allotted to every human being a certain amount of each of the seven cardinal elements into which they divided all matter. One of the chief sources of trouble in this world, they decided, was the fact that the proportion in which each element was present in any given individual was all wrong. For centuries they experimented with various methods for altering the

proportion and the mode of motion of the several elements in the human body. The result of their observations made possible the technique of yoga as practiced today.

The marvellous accuracy of observation which characterized the ancient Aryans, and the consequent dependability of the information they gathered, is accounted for by the fact that their senses were more highly trained than ours. Since their senses were their only instruments, they believed in keeping them clean, sharp, and in proper working order. Their logical minds grasped the fact that Man consists of his perceptions. Whatever he is, whatever he knows, and whatever he is to become, depends wholly upon his reaction to stimuli supplied by his environment through the medium of his sense organs. Remove his sense of sight, and, for him, a large portion of the manifested universe ceases to exist. Remove his sense of hearing, and another large portion is obliterated. Remove thereafter his senses of feeling, tasting, and smelling, and the manifested universe vanishes entirely from his consciousness.

In lesser degree, certain portions of the manifested universe are rendered inaccessible to the individual if his sensory apparatus be inadequate, or impaired. For this reason the Aryans, realizing that the condition of their sense organs depended entirely upon the condition of their bodies, strove to perfect those bodies in every way possible, in order that their observation of natural phenomena would not be distorted by reason of faulty perception.

The brain they regarded as a clearing house for the

impressions brought in by the senses. The mind they regarded as the product of action taking place within the brain. Since the brain was obviously a physical organ, nourished by the same blood stream which nourished the rest of the body, and affected by the same influences, both from within and from without, it was clear to them that the quality of their thinking must bear a close relationship to their physical condition. This gave them a second, and even more important, motive for striving toward bodily perfection.

Another reason why the recorded observations of the Aryans have yet to be proven inaccurate is found in the calibre of reflection which followed their observations. They pondered over their data to better purpose than we do; they were better reflectors, more effectual meditators. When they got through thinking about a thing, that thing had been considered and studied from every conceivable angle. There was nothing concerning it left to think about. The scholar in the West makes no specific and purposive preparation for thinking or for reasoning. The thinker in the East did, and does. The preparation is physical, for the reasons given in the two preceding paragraphs.

The Aryans discovered that in order to contemplate all the aspects of any situation, any object, any happening, or any principle that might be presented for their consideration, they must be able to clear their minds of everything having a tendency to distract their attention from the matter in hand. This they found to be impossible unless their bodies were in what might be called a state of perfect serenity. Irregular breathing, erratic nerve impulses, an impure blood supply, pain,

worry, or an incoming stream of peremptory sense impressions meant a mind incapable of functioning to best advantage. "The ruffled surface of a lake," they said, "reflects nothing correctly. But in a cup of still water one may see all the stars in the heavens."

What the Vedic writings attempt to set forth is a practical means whereby Man may attain to a realization of ultimate Truth. It is significant, however, that in guiding him toward that high goal, they begin with the crudest, most material aspect of his being. Only after those have been raised to the standard demanded by yoga practice, does he go on upward into the loftiest realms of human consciousness.

as simple as possible, but every line interesting.

CHAPTER IV

Requirements for the Study of Yoga
(YAMA AND NYAMA)

THE first lesson in yoga, as emphasized in the preceding chapter, is concerned wholly with character qualities. In the so-called Eight Stages of Yoga, therefore, we find the primary stage given over to the study of ethics. Considering what was said on the preceding page, about beginning with the physical aspect of the individual and working upward, it may seem a discrepancy to place ethics ahead of bodily training. In explanation it should be stated that there are several pre-requisite qualities of mind and heart which a person must possess from the outset if he is to study yoga understandingly and practice it with success. There are two reasons for this:

In the first place, unless the individual has those qualities he will find little or nothing in yoga to interest him.

In the second place, even though interested, he will be able neither to grasp the principles of the teaching nor apply them in the solution of his own problems unless he approaches the study of them in a certain spirit. That spirit must be something other than an idle, intellectual curiosity as to "what yoga is all about." No one should take up the study of yogic teachings without at least the hope, if not the convic-

tion, that he will find in them something of great value which he now lacks.

If a person is contented with the religious beliefs that have been taught him; if he is satisfied with the state of his health; if he feels that his store of knowledge is sufficient for his needs; if love plays the part in his life that he wants it to; if his code of ethics seems to net good results; and if the money problem has not proved insoluble for him, he would be foolish to waste any time on yoga. He should be as happy as anyone alive. Yoga holds out nothing to him which he does not already possess.

Contrarily, should he have difficulty in reconciling the theological doctrines of his forbears with the common-sense findings of modern thinkers, the study of yoga might help him get a more satisfying picture of the whole matter. Should his physical condition cause him discomfort or alarm, the practice of yoga might better it for him. Should he be confused as to what moral code is essentially the highest, and yet the best adapted to this day and age, it is the Aryans, strangely enough, who can map out for him a course of ethical conduct that works just as well today as it did when first it was elaborated. In the other aspects of life, as well, the teachings of yoga offer a compilation of much valuable information which has been preserved for the benefit of those able to take advantage of it.

Those who are capable of teaching the Vedic truths have their own ideas as to who is able to assimilate them and who is not. They take the attitude that until a person has progressed a measurable distance up the evolutionary ladder—far enough, at least, to have

developed a few desirable character qualities—it is hopeless to try to make him comprehend and put into use the principles outlined in the Vedas.

Therefore the student who hopes to make any notable progress in the understanding and practice of yoga must possess, in some degree, the following characteristics:

Honesty	Faith	Forbearance	Perseverance
Cleanliness	Kindness	Calmness	Worship
Courage	Self Control	Humility	Concentration
Patience	Unselfishness	Secrecy	Action

The above list does not attempt to set down the several qualities of character in the order of their importance. The yoga texts themselves do not always list them in the same order. Some of the texts head the list with one quality, some with another. Perhaps the ideal way to visualize them would be to print them in a circle, end to end, and so convey the idea that all were essential to a well rounded nature. That is the Vedic conception of them, if the end in view be perfection. For it should be fairly clear, upon studying that list, that if a person possessed all those character qualities in equal degree he would have no need of instruction in yoga. He would already be a yogi.

The beginner, naturally, will not have all of those qualities developed in his nature to the same extent, or anything like it. Certain ones will be quite marked, certain others much less so. Still others will be latent. Should any be wholly lacking, the distance the student can travel along the path of yoga is automatically limited.

It may reasonably be assumed, however, that if a

person has any interest whatever in the study of yoga —and all the more so if he decides to attempt the practice of it—he already has in his nature a number of the requisite attributes of mind and heart. With that as a foundation, his whole problem from then on will be to develop those characteristics which he finds most lacking in his make-up. While he is doing this, he must also hang onto the qualities with which he started, striving to strengthen them, as well, and, in the end, to bring all sides of his nature up to a level that is higher than any of them were in the beginning.

Even with but a few of the requisite character qualities present in his nature, provided they exist in the proper combination, the student of yoga can make astonishing strides in the direction of self culture. Vedic teachers, however, continually lay stress upon the desirability of building up all of the character qualities on the list. Since such teachers never put forward a principle without giving a reason for it, it should prove interesting to take each quality in turn and try to show why the possession of it is considered essential to a complete understanding of yoga.

1. Honesty

This trait in human character is so universally accepted as being vital to constructive progress that no reason need be given for making it a requirement in the study of yoga. The only comment necessary to add is to point out that honesty, according to the Vedic concept of it, must include honesty with one's self as well as with one's fellow beings.

2. Cleanliness

"Dirt, Disease, and the Devil" were the same viciously inseparable trio in Aryan times that they are in the twentieth century. The relationship between them was traced unerringly by the Vedic thinkers. Consequently the yogi is inclined to discount the value of all thoughts arising in a mind that is housed in a dirty body. And by a dirty body he means one that is dirty through and through. Superficial grime counts for little. It is easily washed off. But a polluted blood stream, meandering through unclean tissues, affects in turn the individual's thoughts, his character, his behaviour, and his destiny.

3. Courage

This is another trait which is rightly regarded as essential to success in any undertaking. The courage of one's convictions; the courage required to be honest; the courage to experiment with the unfamiliar and the untried; the courage to act at times in a manner easily misunderstood by the world at large; physical courage in moments of danger; the courage to battle for what is right—these and all the other brands of courage are as necessary in the practice of yoga as they are in every other aspect of life.

4. Patience

The Vedic thinkers were acutely conscious of the healing, revealing, and obliterating power of Time. Patience, to them, meant willingness to await the verdict rendered, or the changes brought about, by the passing of the years. Or, in some cases, by the passing days, hours, or minutes, depending upon the nature of

the question which Time was called upon to settle. Almost any speech or action becomes more effective if withheld until the time is ripe for it. The Vedic sages found that it took considerable patience to await always the proper moment; to refrain from acting upon impulse; to suspend judgment long enough for the gathering of all available data. They saw that people always were demanding something or other before the working of cause and effect had had time to make possible their possession of it. In other words, they wanted something for themselves which had not yet been earned. Becoming impatient, such people either tried to force an unforceable issue or gave up the attempt to get whatever it was for which they had been striving. Had they been content to wait just a little longer the prize, in many instances, would have been theirs. Observing this continually taking place, the Aryans decided that patience was an excellent asset.

In attaining to that independence of environment which is the chief aim of yoga, the student requires patience in large quantities. Results are sometimes slow in coming. The reason behind certain methods of training employed is not always clear, at first. The student must continue patiently to follow out the course laid out for him until time discloses the explanation he was seeking and gives him the results he was after.

5. Faith

Without faith in something, or somebody, the individual cannot survive. In greater or lesser degree he needs it every moment of his life. He must have faith in the druggist who compounds his medicines, faith

in the person who prepares his food, faith in the manufacturer who makes his motor car. He constantly is placing his life in their hands. If they fail him he is lost. Unless he is willing to trust them, together with the many others to whom he blindly confides his welfare, he will be unable to treat himself for illness, unable to eat, unable to go from place to place, or to do anything else in which a part is played by persons whom he cannot observe and supervise.

If he is to enjoy any peace of mind, he must have faith in those he loves, faith in the religious or philosophical principles which have been taught him, faith in ultimate justice, and faith in himself.

In yoga, as in everything else involving the feeling side of one's nature, a certain amount of faith is essential. Not the blind faith required for the acceptance of most religious beliefs, but enough faith to make its possessor willing to give the ancient teachings a fair trial. Such faith may originally be created through intellectual acceptance of the Vedic principles, or through confidence in the sincerity and disinterestedness of some one who exemplifies those principles, or through observation of results attained by those who are practicing them. No matter how he gets it, the prospective student of yoga must have a little of it in the beginning. Otherwise he might never mount the first rung of the Vedic ladder. Once he has climbed a rung or two, and finds himself the better for it, the matter of faith takes care of itself. The student creates more of it within him as he goes along. It is built up automatically each time that a principle in the teach-

ings works out to his advantage, or some form of the practice results in his physical or mental betterment.

Yoga creates faith in itself by means of practical demonstration. There is nothing in it which must be accepted without examination, without question, or without reason. All of it can be proved by the student himself, eventually, granted that he is willing to expend the time and energy necessary for the experiment. The greater his faith at the outset, however, the more rapid his progress, for the reason that the more faith he has, the more will he attempt to practice what is taught him, and, all else being equal, the more he practices, the more will he accomplish.

6. Kindness

Respect for the rights and the beliefs of others; a willingness to live and let live; a tendency to be helpful where others are concerned; the ability to get pleasure by giving it; a certain broad sympathy with mankind in general—these are some of the traits which can be listed under the head of kindness. They are traits the Vedic teacher looks for in the nature of anyone who comes to him for instruction. Failing to find those traits, he knows that the amount of instruction which the applicant is capable of absorbing is extremely limited. Yoga is not for those who are bigoted, hard-hearted, selfish, ill-natured, or bitter.

7. Self Control

Without having in some degree the ability to restrain his desires and emotions, the beginner finds himself under a severe handicap in his study of yoga. Complete self control is the ultimate goal at which he

is presumed to be aiming, and if he has none whatever to start with, he will find the path a steep one. He must learn not to give way to his feelings at the wrong time and under the wrong circumstances. He must avoid excess, in any direction. He must guard his speech as well as his actions, and, in general, must refrain from over indulgence in any of the things which, by common consent, are regarded as being injurious to the health and to the disposition.

8. Unselfishness

In yoga, as in life, the man who is generous, who is willing to co-operate with his fellows, and who does not demand a larger share of anything than he has earned, will set up a series of good causes the results of which are bound to react to his own benefit. The compounders of the Vedic prescription realized the paradoxical fact that one's own self-interest requires one to be unselfish. When people discover that one of their number is thinking only of his own wishes, with no regard for the wishes of others, it is but simple human nature for them to combine in an effort to keep his wishes from coming true. Since every man is dependent in some way upon his fellow beings, it is the most elementary of wisdom on his part to lend them a helping hand when he can. Then when he, in turn, needs assistance, it may be forthcoming. Yoga cannot be studied or practiced independent of other human beings. The one, therefore, who has the most people gratefully interested in his success is the one to whom success is most likely to come.

This is the purely pragmatic, cause-and-effect aspect

of unselfishness. The monistic aspect of it arises from the basic truth that all of us are made of essentially the same stuff and are governed by the same fundamental laws. From a universal standpoint, therefore, whatever one does that is of constructive benefit to some one else, he does for himself as well. The admonition to "love your neighbor as yourself" receives the yogi's hearty endorsement, not because it is a scriptural injunction but because, as he understands it, your neighbor *is* yourself.

9. Forbearance

The practice of yoga, as remarked above, involves, at all times, our relationship with other human beings. These beings have their shortcomings, just as we have ours. If we wish them to make allowance for our faults, we must make allowance for theirs. In all our dealings with them there must be a certain amount of give and take, otherwise the mutual benefits which we hope for will not eventuate. In order to appreciate and profit by the good qualities which one finds in others, at the same time disregarding so far as possible the qualities in them which are undesirable, one needs a large measure of forbearance. The more tact and diplomacy one can call into play, and the more consideration one displays for the feelings of others, the better one is applying the principles of yoga.

10. Calmness

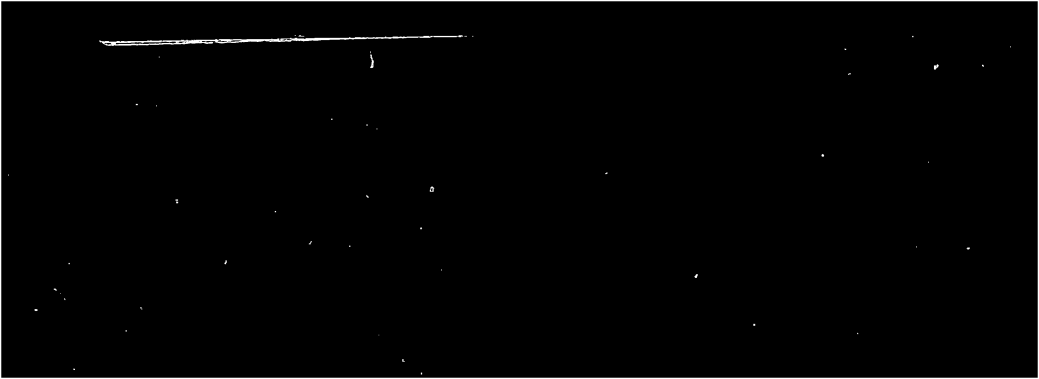
The Vedic scriptures advise the cultivation of calmness for the good reason that, without that quality in the nature, the mind cannot function as it should. The excitable individual who flies off the handle without

due provocation will forever be the victim of his own ill-considered actions. One of the main objects of a training in yoga is to give the practitioner a dependable working control of his faculties under any and all conditions. By learning to govern his reactions to his environment, he is enabled, when circumstances warrant it, to side-track such judgment-warping emotions as rage, hatred, jealousy, and the like. This ability makes it possible for him to focus the cold light of reason upon the situation, be it either a sustained condition or an emergency, and to govern his subsequent acts accordingly.

11. Humility

In setting this quality down as one of the requisites for the successful practice of yoga, a distinction must be made between some of the synonyms by which the word is defined in the West. What the Vedic writers mean by humility is not meekness, or self-abasement, or lack of self esteem. It is the absence of false pride. The broader a person's outlook upon the cosmic parade of people and things, the less likely is he to be impressed with his individual importance. Instruction in yoga is designed to produce the broad outlook. Indeed, a full acceptance of the Aryan concept of the universe should be enough in itself to banish all false pride from anyone's nature. That it does not always do so is largely owing to the fact that the student has given the concept his intellectual endorsement only, without being able to transmute his ideas on the subject into an actual feeling concerning it.

The Aryan sages considered pride a treacherous



attribute to possess, for, even though there be such a thing as, for example, taking a legitimate pride in doing one's work well, or in keeping one's mind and body clean, there is always the danger, so they observed, of developing a sense of superiority which the facts in the case do not warrant. To the man who was unduly proud of his integrity, his generosity, or his good reputation they would say, "Those qualities, and others equally commendable, are no more than you should possess in any case, out of simple duty to yourself and to mankind. You might well be ashamed if you did not possess them, but the possession of them is nothing to be unduly proud of."

Pride blends almost imperceptibly into egotism, and egotism is one of the things which the teachings of yoga seek to banish from the pupil's nature. The person who is over proud of his place in the social register, of his material possessions, or of his personal appearance or accomplishments finds the practice of yoga difficult. He who judges everything and everybody by their relation to what he considers his own importance is employing what the Vedas regard as the wrong measuring stick.

It is the yogic contention that the painful, humiliating, even tragic nature of many things which happen to people are made so because of their pride, and nothing else. Could they but view such happenings from a more impersonal standpoint, they would be able to accept them with complacency. Yoga endeavors so to equip its practitioners that they may turn their hands to any sort of work, mingle with any sort of people, or dwell in any sort of surroundings without feeling that their

essential worth is in any degree altered thereby, and without getting any less or any more joy out of life than they were getting when circumstances were different.

12. Secrecy

Sensible people in the West need no ancient scriptures to tell them of the danger involved in talking too much. The habit of saying the wrong thing at the wrong time in the wrong place has caused incalculable suffering in the past, and doubtless will continue to do so. The student of yoga is urged to place a strict curb upon his tongue, not alone during his course of training, but throughout his life. Aside from its being a good rule for anyone to follow at any time, it has this specific application in his case: it keeps him from discussing his studies with those not ready to hear about them. As he progresses with the unfolding of the Vedic scriptures he is enlightened as to many methods of self culture which he finds so helpful that he is eager to share their benefits with others. In his enthusiasm he is only too likely to forget that others may not think as he does about many aspects of life, and that, for that reason, they are as yet unprepared to understand the methods of yoga, to appreciate their value, or to put them to proper use. He is reminded repeatedly of the proven fact that those who are ready for the teachings of yoga will, somehow, find their way to them. Therefore he is advised to bide his time until some one comes his way who bears evidence of providing fertile ground in which to sow the seeds of truth. Christ gave his disciples the same advice when he said (Matthew VII-6), "Give not that which is holy unto

the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

13. Perseverance

Whereas patience is essential in studying many aspects of yoga, there are other phases of it which require the more active sort of patience which we call perseverance. If certain results are to be accomplished there must be, in the pupil, the willingness to try and try again. This is such a well known factor in success of any sort that further comment upon it would be superfluous.

14. Worship

Unless a person has in his make-up a natural reverence for what we arbitrarily call the higher things of life, there is little point in his taking up the study of yoga. The Aryans perceived that Man was engaged in a ceaseless and endless struggle to attain to a loftier level of existence than that in which he had been created. They devised the yoga system as a means to help him reach his goal. In the centuries since that time, religions and philosophical systems without number have been devised with the same purpose in view. All of them have this in common with yoga: the best results from adhering to their precepts can be attained only by those who approach them in a sincerely devotional frame of mind. A man can make every move in the ritual of majestic St. Peter's . . . chant every hymn . . . speak every response . . . but if he has not a heartfelt interest in what he is doing, he will get from it not the smallest part of the benefit which the simple

peasant gets when he kneels devoutly before a wayside shrine.

The one who seeks to follow the route mapped out by the Vedic teachers must have an honest veneration for intelligence, beauty, and truth. In equal degree he must have a zealous desire to escape from ignorance, ugliness, and deception. If into his efforts to escape he puts something of that lofty aspiration which marks the religious devotee, his progress along the pathway of yoga will be proportionately swifter. Lest this treatise seem to be getting a trifle preachy, it should be explained before going any farther that the kind of worship called for in yoga is not the worship of persons, places, or things, but the worship of constructive principles, natural forces, and universal laws. That sort of worship anyone may indulge in, without stultifying his intelligence or sacrificing his self-respect.

15. Concentration

Here is a quality which need not be enlarged upon for western readers. Its value is well recognized and constitutes an important factor in the success of any undertaking. To succeed at a thing requires one's undivided effort, a principle which applies no less to the practice of yoga than to anything else. The beauty of yoga lies in the fact that to give it one's undivided effort means to pay attention to all aspects of life at once, for, in the final analysis, to practice yoga means nothing more nor less than to practice the whole art of living.

16. Action

In yoga it is not what you think that counts, but what

you do. A person might conceivably have all fifteen of the foregoing qualities of mind and heart, but unless his possession of them was made manifest in the conduct of his daily life, he might as well not have them. The student who grasps a few simple principles of yoga sufficiently well to make them a part of everything he does will benefit infinitely more than will the one who takes up the study of yoga solely as an intellectual exercise. There are plenty of students who know all that the books have to say about yoga. They can describe its fine points and its many virtues with all the fluency of a motor car salesman boosting a new model. Their minds have perceived the truth of its principles and the logic of its laws, but they fail lamentably when it comes to putting those principles into action. Therefore the Vedic teachers say, in substance, "Life is motion. Inaction is death. Keep moving. Do something. Get some action into your life, whether it be work or play or both. But whatever you do, do it intelligently by applying the principles of yoga. Not freedom *from* work, but freedom *in* work, is the goal to strive for. Outside the realm of action, realization has no practical value."

To one versed in the working of the human imagination, the list of character qualities just discussed constitutes in itself a carefully devised prescription, based on a knowledge of the effect of thought upon the nervous system, and thereafter its effect, in turn, upon function, structure, and chemical condition. Through a form of autosuggestion, the possession of those sixteen mental attributes will produce inevitably a physical condition tending toward health, strength, and happi-

ness. Even though the effort to develop those attributes of character be purely a mental process, that process will produce actual physical results.

Such results, however, were not enough for the founders of yoga. If a mere attitude of mind could produce a desirable change in the body, it seemed to them only logical that a little intensive attention to the body itself should produce even more dramatic results, and provide the mind with something of much better quality to work on. Therefore they devised their unique system of physical culture, concerning which the West has heard so much and knows so little. In the following chapter an attempt will be made to show the nature of that system and to point out wherein it differs from other forms of exercise.

Only the concluding part needs recasting — restatement for an adequate level. But the rest as effective as ch IV. Quite right in making this chapter longer than 2-3-4.

CHAPTER V

Physical Practice and Its Relation to the Mind

MOST East Indian teachers of philosophy who have tried to interest the West in their beliefs have had little or nothing to say with regard to physiological yoga. To those who question them about it, such teachers, provided they are sincere, usually reply, "Leave it alone. Content yourself with the doctrine of universal love which I am preaching to you. Let your yoga be the yoga of the mind, not of the body. You will do yourself little good if you attempt to practice physiological yoga independently, and you may do yourself harm."

In nine cases out of ten this is precisely the answer they should give, whether they themselves have been trained in physiological yoga or whether they have not. Most of the swamis and other native teachers seen in the West have not been so trained. They have devoted themselves to one or other of the minor aspects of yoga discussed in an earlier chapter, but always to the mental side of it . . . the philosophical side. Good men, many of them; sincere men; yet men who have had access to a relatively small portion of the Vedic writings. All of them, however, know enough concerning the physical training in yoga to be aware that it cannot successfully be taught except under the careful supervision of some one who himself has had a certain amount of that

kind of training. Therefore, not being able to teach it themselves, and not having met anyone in the West who was qualified to do so, they advise western students to steer clear of it. The advice is well meant and, under the circumstances, fully justified.

Occasionally an untrained native teacher, whose pride will not permit him to admit to a western inquirer that there are things about yoga which he doesn't know, will attempt to teach a pupil some of the practices of physical yoga which he has witnessed in his own country. The best the pupil gets out of this sort of instruction, as a rule, is a sadly disorganized nervous system, for the good reason that he has not laid the proper physical foundation for the sort of thing he is trying to do. The honest native teacher will not essay anything of that sort, but will confine himself to doing such good as he can with what little stock of Vedic truths he may possess. Unfortunately there have been, and are, many natives of India to whom the teaching of eastern philosophy in the West is little more than an easy way to make a living. Such adventurers always can get plenty of simple minded gropers to listen to them and contribute something to their support. The life they lead, at worst, is a more enjoyable existence than the one with which they would have to content themselves amid the primitive conditions of their native land. So they work their turbans for all they are worth, and regale their auditors with pseudo-profundities which sound engaging enough but don't really make much sense.

In those rare instances where the teacher of Vedic truths to the West has been a man thoroughly grounded

in physiological yoga, his answer to most questions concerning it has been the same as that given by the swamis who knew nothing about it whatever. Not that he could not have given the instruction if he would, but because he failed to observe in the questioner a large enough proportion of the pre-requisite qualities of heart and mind.

Presuming, however, that a student has qualified as to his attributes of character, he is then ready to take up his physical exercises.

One thing which sets the yoga system apart from most other methods of physical culture is the fact that its results are obtained without the use of any apparatus. The prescribed exercises, from first to last, may be performed at any time and in almost any place where a few square feet of level ground or flooring are available. A small mat, of the sort used in gymnasiums, is the only equipment needed, and even this may be replaced, if conditions demand it, by a folded blanket, a mattress, or anything else which provides a padded surface upon which to work.

The reason for this becomes apparent when one considers the origin of the system. India is a hot country. Violent exercise of the sort requiring much running about is ill-adapted to the Indian climate. In some regions over there, and during certain seasons, exercise as it is generally understood in the West would be not only extremely uncomfortable but actually dangerous. The Aryans realized that a certain amount of daily exercise was essential to physical well being, and it was only common sense which prompted them to invent a form of it which could be undertaken at any time of

year, and in any small space which offered protection from the elements.

Another factor to be considered is the simple mode of life which obtained at the time the yoga system was developed. Mechanical devices were, for the most part, unknown. Apparatus, such as chest weights, punching bags, and the like, did not exist; to say nothing of tennis racquets, golf sticks, or bicycles. There are records to show that the Aryans indulged in running, jumping, and other forms of activity comparable to our modern field sports, besides going in for javelin throwing, archery, and the many other feats of strength and skill incidental to warfare. That kind of exercise, however, was confined to a limited class. Those who still tilled the soil, or did other heavy work, doubtless needed no more exercise than their daily labor demanded of them, but, by the time the yogic system of physical culture was elaborated, the race had progressed beyond its earlier pastoral period and taken up a much more complex manner of living. There was a vast layer of people between the farmer or other manual laborer on the one hand, and the ruling castes on the other. Sedentary occupations without number had come into being. The Vedic thinkers were wise enough to see that a sizable portion of mankind, in reaching a stage of development which no longer required the earning of daily sustenance by physical exertion, was in danger of neglecting something that was vital to its general well being. It became necessary, on that account, to devise a system of exercises which would replace manual labor in the effects it produced upon the body, and yet could be practiced by gold-

smith, scholar, merchant, or priest, and by the poor as well as by the rich.

Physiological yoga, as taught today, retains all of those original virtues, and adapts itself just as perfectly to the complexities of western civilization as it did to the relatively simple conditions which brought it about. The pupil's home is his gymnasium, his muscles are his apparatus. Once having been shown what to do, he can do it at his own convenience. The exercises are so scientifically thought out, and so specific in their application, that a few moments devoted to them produces more appreciable results than a much longer time spent in aimless exertion.

The Aryans were the first to notice that "man lives in his torso." That, they observed, is the location of those organs which take raw material from the outer world, select from it the portions needed for the manufacture of fresh tissue, and discard the rest. They found that unless this process of digestion, assimilation, and elimination goes ahead as it should in any given individual, the individual's structure, function, disposition, and longevity are affected in greater or less degree. They noted, furthermore, that whereas human beings could be depended upon to shovel into the top end of their digestive tracts all the raw material they could get hold of, they were fatally indifferent to what became of it thereafter. That is why the Aryan texts have so much to say about the principle of elimination. It is pointed out therein that faulty elimination nullifies good digestion and assimilation, and that, on this account, everyone should take special pains to see that his body is not asked to carry around a single

grain of matter of which his system can make no further use. The four avenues of elimination being the kidneys, bowels, skin, and lungs, the Vedic writers stressed the necessity for keeping all four as active and clean as possible.

In the preceding chapter something was said about the yogi's attitude toward a dirty body. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the practice of yoga begins with a cleaning up and cleaning out process which is regarded as the foundation for all that follows. Some of the methods used in this process are little known in the West, even to the medical profession, although the employment of them for thousands of years has proved them to be scientific and practicable. As adapted for modern use, the process frequently brings about such striking improvements in the health of those who undergo it that they find themselves well repaid for having done so, even though they never take another step along the yogic pathway. The other steps are there to be taken, however, and in the Vedic writings on the subject they are listed as follows:

1. Postures.
2. Movements.
3. Breathing exercises.
4. Control of the senses.
5. Control of the mind.
6. Concentration.
7. Meditation.

The reason for assuming the many postures described in the yoga manuals is a desire on the part of the practitioner to increase the strength of the various muscles and other tissues which such postures bring

into play. Tissue building in any part of the body can be brought about only by increasing the supply of blood which reaches that part. The blood stream is the medium by which all units of nutrition taken into the body are distributed among the myriad cells of which that body is composed and by which, also, the worn out cells are carried off to be eliminated. To increase the quantity of blood which flows in and out of any particular muscle or organ it is necessary that the muscle or organ be alternately contracted and relaxed. All muscles lie in pairs, and when one contracts the other relaxes. This is the simple mechanical process which underlies the growth and maintenance of all the bodily tissues. To clean a sponge we hold it under water and squeeze it, thus forcing out the dirt and debris which it contains. Then we release it, allowing the clean water to permeate its every pore. We repeat the process until all the impurities have been washed away, and every fibre of the sponge is expanded with a supply of fresh water. The efficacy of the process depends upon the compressibility, or elasticity, of the sponge and upon its power of expansion.

The same thing applies in greater or less degree to the tissues of the body. The more elastic they are, the more readily and completely can the blood permeate them, and the more rapid is the process of replacing worn out cells with an augmented supply of new ones. The yogi visualizes the human body in the same manner that the physicist views matter in general—as being composed of stuff that is highly porous. Even in its densest parts—its bones, and nails, and cartilages—the particles of which it is composed are, microscopically

considered, quite widely separated from one another. The closer they are together in any given part, the more difficult it is for the blood stream to reach them, the slower is the process of elimination and replacement, and the greater the tendency to sluggishness, stagnation, and disease.

Recognizing this simple truth, the Aryans sought always to keep the bodily tissues elastic and strong. To that end, after experimenting with hundreds of postures, they eventually decided upon thirty-two as being worthy of separate mention. Each of these thirty-two postures has for its object the stretching, or compressing, of some part of the body in such a way as to increase its elasticity. Increased elasticity means greater mobility of the part, a wider range of expansion and contraction; hence, the possibility of its being strengthened and built up by an increased supply of blood.

The structural change in the tissues, thus brought about, lays the foundation for enhanced possibilities in the way of function. Once a greater freedom of action has been made practicable, the next thing to do is to see that such action takes place. Thereupon the student progresses to the second category of yoga practice and takes up the movements prescribed for him. There are twenty-four of these cited in the texts, each with its own particular object in view. That object, as may readily be surmised, is largely the repetition of the contracting and relaxing process made possible to each part by its previously increased flexibility. These movements are directed chiefly, although not wholly, at the region between the neck and the hips.

The Vedic experimenters observed that longevity, endurance, and freedom from pain were not so much dependent upon large biceps and bulging calves as they were upon sound lungs, a strong heart, and good digestive and eliminative apparatus. Hence we find, among the movements practiced in yoga, certain ones directed specifically at the kidneys, others at the stomach, others at the colon, and so on throughout the organs in the whole abdominal tract.

In this manner it is made possible for the practitioner to concentrate upon those parts of his bodily apparatus which are below par. Yoga practice, in that respect, is devised more scientifically, and with a more profound understanding of anatomy, than are those forms of exercise in which the various parts of the system reap only such benefits as are to be derived from generally increased activity. In performing the several movements called for by the yoga system, the student knows exactly what he is about. He knows where his several organs are located, how they function, and what can be done to make them function with increased efficiency. He consciously directs his attention toward that portion of his bodily machinery which he wants to get at, and in so doing increases the efficacy of his efforts. A few minutes of that sort of exercise is worth more than hours of haphazard activity that has no special object in view.

Once the beginner has his machinery in good working order, has cleaned up his entire system, and has toned and strengthened the tissues of his various organs, he is in shape to undertake the breathing exercises. But not until then. In yoga practice everything

must be taken up in proper sequence. Each stage in bodily development is made possible only by that which precedes it. That is why undesirable results sometimes accrue to persons who somehow have stumbled upon one or other of the yoga breathing exercises and who attempt to practice them without proper instruction. Certain of those exercises are too strenuous to be attempted by one who has not had the requisite preliminary training. In teaching the practice of yoga, full consideration must be given to the physiological idiosyncrasies of each pupil, not only in the beginning but throughout his entire course of training. He must assume only such postures, perform only such movements, and breathe only in such a manner as his bodily structure, the soundness of his heart, and the condition of his lungs and his nervous system will permit.

Many authorities on anatomy and physiology maintain that the end and purpose of all exercise is simply to increase respiration. Those familiar with yoga practice are inclined to agree with this. They go even farther by making the assertion that the physical and mental benefits inherent in proper breathing are something of which most people have not the slightest conception. Even so simple a thing as the daily changing of the residual air in the lungs—which not one person in a thousand accomplishes—makes a tremendous difference in a person's general health. How much more beneficial would it be, then, thought the Vedic investigators, if people occasionally would do a little breathing with some specific end in view, and with a better understanding of how their breathing apparatus works.

Experimenting along that line, the Aryans discovered many principles of respiration so far reaching in their results as to be well nigh unbelievable. They observed not only the highly desirable effects which proper breathing had upon the heart, the circulatory system, and the nerves, but they reached some astonishing conclusions as to its direct bearing upon the operations of the mind. These conclusions led them into a new and fascinating field of investigation, concerning which more will be said a little farther on.

During the course of their experiments, the Aryans noticed that each of the various mental and nervous states into which human beings get themselves is accompanied by a distinctive manner of breathing. High strung people breathe more rapidly than do those of a calmer, more reflective nature. In moments of excitement the rate of respiration speeds up most noticeably. Moments of depression bring about the long drawn sigh of despair or weariness. Sorrow, to the weeping point, produces breathing that is spasmodic and convulsive. The Aryans asked themselves, "What produces these various nervous states?" and answered themselves by saying, "It is the reaction of the mind to the messages brought in by the senses." Thinking this over a bit, they then ventured this speculation, "If one could learn to bring his breathing apparatus under better control, so that it would always do as he wished, might it not be possible for him to curb the manifestation of these various nervous conditions, at times when it seemed desirable to do so?" They tried it and found it to be quite possible.

Observing the rate of respiration normal to various

animals, they discovered that those of greatest longevity were the slowest breathers. That inspired another thought. "Perhaps," they said, "if human beings habitually breathed more slowly and deeply than they do, they would live longer." They gathered data on that point and found their hypothesis to be correct.

Another striking thing they observed was the universal tendency to stop breathing altogether in moments when all the faculties are concentrated upon some startling event; for example, that sudden catching of the breath which is inevitable among spectators who see a fellow creature falling to his death from a great height. During such moments no incoming sensory messages distract the attention of the person who is holding his breath. His whole conscious being is focussed upon the happening which has claimed his attention, and he does not breathe again until the happening comes to an end. Analysis of this phenomenon led the Aryans to the principle of breath suspension, which proved to be the key to mind control and all the higher practices in yoga that are cited in the various texts.

Methodically thereafter the experimenters worked out the several breathing exercises which are a part of all yoga training. The object of the exercises, generally speaking, is to equalize the flow of the incoming and outgoing breaths, to induce an habitual rate of respiration which is slower than that of the average individual, and to make possible the retaining of the breath in the lungs for a considerable period of time.

The results of these exercises which probably will be of most interest to western students are those per-

taining to the changes in the physical make-up of the practitioner which they unquestionably bring about. Properly understood and persistently employed they make for steadier nerves, sounder wind, stronger heart action, and more elastic veins and arteries. The corollary effects of these changes should be obvious to anyone having the slightest knowledge of physiology. Perhaps the effect which is of the greatest importance is the creating of a blood stream which is livelier, better aërated, and more thoroughly distributed than it was before. That alone tends to produce better general health, a clearer complexion, and greater immunity to disease.

The results in the sensory and mental field are obtained by methods too technical to be entered into here. They are described at great length in some of the lesser known Aryan texts, and involve attention to diet, temperature, season, and many other factors. Practice of such advanced methods leads gradually to a placing of the involuntary nervous system under voluntary control. The expert becomes enabled to take conscious charge of certain bodily functions of his which ordinarily are directed by the sympathetic nervous system alone. Instead of having always two distinct forms of nerve action, one of which enables him to direct the movements of his body at will, and another which goes right on functioning with no thought on his part, he acquires the ability to blend the two to a certain extent, and thus introduce the element of volition into the action of his heart, the movement of his lungs, and the reflexes normally resulting from external sensory stimuli. His mind force, to put the statement in

another way, is directed into channels from which it formerly was blocked off, and so begins to exert itself over a wider field.

It is claimed that once a person gains this mastery over the sympathetic nervous system he is enabled to isolate his thinking apparatus from all sensory interference, focus the whole of his mental power upon a chosen object or idea, and hold it there as long as he likes. One need not be overly acute to realize that an ability of that sort would be something worth having.

Always logical, the Aryans realized that even though a man acquired the ability to direct his stream of thought in the direction he wished it to go, or arrest it at will for purposes of contemplation, such a power would be of little use to him unless he knew what to think about. Therefore they devoted much study and observation to mental processes in general, in order to determine what thoughts affected human beings in this way or that, and how they affected them, and why. What they discovered about the workings of the human brain might well supply material for several volumes the size of this one. Psychology is the field in which the Aryans stand supreme to this day. Their understanding of it is superior to that of modern psychologists chiefly for the reason that they never lose sight of the physical sub-structure underlying all mental phenomena. This material foundation served them as a basis for all their metaphysical speculations, and always acted as an anchor to windward that kept them from drifting too far upon the seas of unproveable hypothesis.

One of their fundamental discoveries was the fact

that consciousness is the mental registration, or "imaging," of forms. Man, they found, is conscious only when he is aware of the numberless forms among which he lives and moves and has his being. This awareness, this ability to differentiate between one form and another, is developed in him through the accumulation of pictures supplied to his brain by his senses. These pictures, in one combination or another, are constantly passing in review, not unlike the scenes cast upon a screen by the rapidly moving images on a motion picture film. Such "images in motion" constitute thought, or, as the modern Vedic psychologists prefer to call it, imagination.

Imagination, as the Aryans conceived it, is not merely one department of brain action, but the whole of it. Ribot, and other writers on this subject, consider imagination as being but one of several capabilities possessed by the brain. The Vedic writers assert that all our mental processes, without exception, are the result of the brain's faculty for registering inward images of external forms. Even the most abstract thinking, they point out, is still done in forms. We are "form beings," they say, every atom of us, and therefore are incapable of conceiving anything except in terms of what is, to us, reality.

It is important for the reader to understand that the word "imagination," as used in this connection, is not meant to convey the idea of "delusion" which so commonly is attributed to it. It is not applied solely to what is fanciful or non-existent, but to the actual, as well. When a child is frightened by seeing what he believes to be a grizzly bear lurking in the shadow of

the lilac bushes, and his mother quiets him by saying, "That was nothing but your imagination," she is stating but half a truth. Had there actually been a bear under the bushes, the child could have been made aware of the fact in no other way than by the functioning of his imagination. How else could he know the bear was there, other than by the ability of his brain to create a mental image of something existing in the external world?

The fact that the child mistook a shifting mass of shadow for a grizzly was due simply to faulty observation. Had he had more experience with shadows and with bears he would have been able to tell one from the other. At least, he would not have reacted to his first impression until he could corroborate it in some other manner. Not having had such experience, the child's ability to observe correctly was limited. As best he could judge, from what little he knew, that was a bear under the bushes. Therefore he was frightened out of his small wits and ran to his mother for protection. He would have acted no differently had the bear been substance instead of shadow, and, in both cases, the cause of his action would be the working of his imagination.

The adult mind works the same way, in principle. A man thinks he hears a burglar in the house and starts downstairs to investigate. Half way down he sees what appears to be the invader, crouching in the moonlight at the edge of the landing, ready to spring at him. He lets fly with his pistol—and drills a neat hole through the cap which his little boy left hanging on the newel post. During the few seconds it took him to raise his

gun and pull the trigger, that newel post was, to him, a deadly menace which had to be disposed of at once. Of course, as soon as some one turned on the lights, rendering clearer and more varied the images which his eyes supplied to his brain, he naturally interpreted them differently and realized his mistake. But it was the same imagination working after the lights were turned on that had been working in the semi-darkness. The difference was that the light provided the brain with more and better images with which to work, and the brain, placing these images in proper relationship with other images it already possessed, produced a train of thoughts quite different from the one generated by the incomplete information which was supplied to it in the moonlight.

The point to be brought out is this: that the mind functions in accordance with the nature of the material which the senses supply to the brain. If the picture presented is inaccurate or incomplete, the mind's reaction to it will contain an element of error. The thinking which follows the observation will be faulty thinking, and the action which follows the thinking will not be justified by the facts. But, be the premise true or false, the resultant process is that of imagination, and this process is the same in principle whether it goes on in the head of a king or of a man who sweeps the streets.

This leads us to the conclusion that Man is guided in all his acts by what he believes to be the truth concerning the material world about him. Things, to us, are simply what we think they are, and they remain so until we acquire more information about them. Or, put differently, each man's world is the sum total of all

the images that have been impressed upon his brain. It matters not that some of those images have faded from his memory; they had their effect when first received, and they played their part in making his brain what it is at present. His world is whatever he conceives it to be—whatever it appears to be as best he can judge from the pictures of it that pass through his mind.

This is another way of saying that each man's world, and everything in it, exists only in his imagination. It is a world wholly his own, and is different, in a thousand ways, from that of anybody else. What has not come within range of his consciousness, does not exist—for him. It may exist in the imaginations of others, but not in his. Therefore the nature of a man's world, as well as its size and its scope, is dependent upon the number and the quality of the cells which are active in his brain. The brain of an elephant may be larger than that of a man, but, being of coarser fibre, it does not contain as many cells in proportion to its size. The number of impressions it is capable of receiving, and the interplay of associated images possible to it, are in a class far below the capabilities of the human brain in those respects. Man, for that reason, lives in a world that is much more extensive than that of the lower animals.

The Aryans observed, however, that there is a wider gap between the calibre of thinking displayed by the highest and the lowest types of human beings than there is between the thinking power of the lowest human types and that of the highest types of animals. That is to say, the most advanced specimens of the

human family are so far superior to the most primitive specimens that they might as well belong to a different species altogether. The two specimens live in worlds entirely different, and that difference is exactly proportionate to the difference in their respective powers of imagination.

Observing this, the Aryans decided that the only thing that really counted in the existence of any individual was what went on in his brain. They saw that what goes on in the brain depends upon the images it is able to create, and that the nature of those images depends, in turn, upon the impressions supplied by environment. They soon came to realize, furthermore, that, so far as concerned its effect upon his power of imagination, not the least important factor in a man's "environment" was his own bodily condition.

With those thoughts in mind—that a man's imagination is essentially his whole life, and that his thoughts and actions are the result of his environment, of which his physical self is decidedly a part—the Aryans devoted a great deal of their time to studying the various sorts of thinking that influence the *genus homo* in his blundering efforts to get the most he can out of his earthly existence.

They noted primarily that people en masse are disinclined to do any purposive thinking at all; that they judge almost wholly by appearances, and show little desire to go beneath the surface in search of more facts upon which to base their judgments. They took note, also, of the fact that the calibre of brain action almost universally encountered tends to produce selfishness, pride, and sloth. Such constructive thinking as does go

on is too likely to be spasmodic and unsustained, they discovered, and rarely is concentrated upon one object long enough to accomplish much.

By recording these shortcomings of human thought, these frailties of human nature, as we would call them, they were able to shape their own thinking in a different mould. They separated the beneficial types of brain action from the other kind; strove to strengthen by repetition such groups of thoughts as made for desirable character traits; and learned to direct their stream of mental images in a given direction until a desired result had been brought about.

Above all, they learned the trick of controlling their mental reactions to their environment. They found out how to make certain of those reactions elective instead of compulsory. To the extent that Man can do that, it appeared to them, and to that extent only, can he become the captain of his fate. If his world consists only of what he imagines it to consist of, then it lies within his power to censor, in part, at least, the material which he allows to pass his mental boundaries. They took cognizance of the fact that the same set of living conditions which would constitute poverty to one person would, to another, appear as affluence. The difference, it was clear, lay not in the conditions themselves, but in the mental attitudes of the two individuals. By studying this principle they armoured themselves against the vagaries of fortune, and developed that indifference to circumstance which was among their most highly prized possessions.

Yoga being nothing if not practical—being essentially a scheme for making the most of life in the world

of here and now—its students are given an endless amount of instruction in the behaviour of mankind in general. They are taught the ways in which men and women react to what they register in their surroundings; the motives which guide them in their actions; the manner in which those actions may be influenced by a proper handling of environment. They are instructed how to use their imaginations in their social life, their commercial life, their physical life, and their evolutionary or constructive life. They are shown how imagination can be applied to one's self, and how it may be applied to others. It is impressed upon them at all times that the outcome of one's whole life is determined by the quality, quantity, and direction of one's imagination.

This sort of instruction customarily accompanies all the preliminary stages of yogic training—the postures, the movements, the breathing exercises, and so on—to the end that when the pupil reaches the stage at which he gains some degree of control over his senses and his mind, he will understand something about the nature of the field in which he is to exercise it. He will have acquired a fair working knowledge of human nature, and will be able to govern his conduct accordingly.

To judge by most of the literature bearing upon the final stages of yoga—upon mind control, that is to say, and its higher manifestations in the realm of concentration and meditation—its devotees in the East seem to go through all of the preliminary training with but one end in view. That end, one is led to believe, is the acquiring of the power of pure undistracted thought; a species of brain action that temporarily requires no

external sensory stimuli, but is self-creating and self-sufficient. Having acquired that power, they are said to center their attention upon the concept of that limitless sea of matter which constitutes the source of all being. There they hold it until, for a time, they are virtually isolated from the material world and have merged with the Absolute. That merging process is said to be productive of an ecstacy which, for one who never has felt it, is quite unimaginable, and which, when sustained for a period of time, constitutes the state of being commonly referred to as Samadhi.

Those who claim to have experienced this blissful condition say it is something which cannot be described, but must be felt before it can be understood. That seems logical enough, all things considered, and until the student of yoga has duplicated all of the steps taken by those who say they have attained to Infinite Joy, he can do no more than take their word for it when they assert that they have reaped the reward they went after. The proof that they actually have done so, according to those competent to judge such things, is to be had only by watching their reactions in various crises; noting how they bear up in moments of great sorrow, for instance, and observing, in general, how their philosophy stands the test of every day living. If they have undergone the experience indicated in the yoga texts, the whole conduct of their lives thereafter is said to offer symptomatic evidence of the fact, to those enlightened enough to interpret it.

Probably most people living west of Suez feel that they can get along quite nicely without ever tasting the joy of Merging with the Infinite. They are not inclined

by temperament toward that sort of thing in the way that the oriental peoples are. Possibly, could they attain it, they might enjoy it just as much as the Brahmin does, but the chances of their making the effort are most remote.

Considered impartially, as a means of escape from the irritations and disappointments of daily life, it would seem to be saner and less harmful than most methods employed in the West for accomplishing the same end. The objection to it, from the western point of view, is that it does not provide enough action. The person in this part of the world who desires temporary escape from his environment feels it necessary to "go places and do things." He seeks excitement in some form, something that will cause him to become oblivious for awhile to the things he wants to forget. He does not stop to realize that, in its ultimate analysis, the effect he is after—whether it be obtained through alcohol, drugs, jazz, or what not—is the effect upon his mind. That being true, if the yogi can sit down quietly with his hands folded and withdraw his mind from the unwelcome aspects of this material world, without its giving him a hang-over or impairing his nervous system, who shall say that his method is not the better one? Nevertheless, it is a method which never will become popular in the West. The active, dynamic peoples of the newer countries will continue, in all likelihood, to dismiss as a poor, deluded numskull anyone who can sit cross-legged with his eyes shut and imagine he is having a good time.

In point of actual fact, the genuine yogi employs very little of his own precious time-allotment in that man-

ner. Were that the end and aim of yoga, it could rightly be considered too selfish, too individualistic an objective to be worth striving for. What the oriental writers really mean when they extol the unbounded rapture of becoming One with the Infinite, is something which the yogi himself is able to discuss in much soberer terms. According to his version of the matter, the Salvation to which the Vedic scriptures refer is simply salvation from pain and suffering in this life; and the Isolation they mean is not isolation from the world, but isolation in the sense of being immune to the undesirable effects of environment. That is a species of salvation and isolation which any practical-minded person can understand.

One who reaches that state of development should, in all conscience, be the happiest kind of person imaginable. He is equipped to face with equanimity whatever life may bring to him, and for that reason is under no compulsion to withdraw from it. He has no need to isolate himself from his fellow beings. His inclination is quite the reverse of that. He understands his fellows so thoroughly that he finds something worth while in almost all of them, and, regarding them from the detached point of view which his training has conferred upon him, he is able to judge them impartially and to deal with them without bias or self-interest. He is not so much a citizen of the world as he is a citizen of the universe. His whole life is governed by such natural laws as make for constructive evolution. Amidst the complexities of modern existence he still is able to get his greatest joy from that which is simple, direct, and wholesome.

Anything which tended to produce that attitude toward life would, in the opinion of many thinkers, prove to be of enormous value to the western world. It is an attitude rarely developed in the West save among those of advanced years. As people grow old they are inclined to discard a great many things which once they deemed essential, and to derive their greatest pleasure and satisfaction from life's more elemental aspects.

The pity of all this is that so many people never really learn to live until they are about to die. One of the cardinal purposes of a training in yoga is to give the student of its principles, while he is still young, a shrewder estimate of comparative values than he otherwise would attain. It strives to teach him which aspects of life are of most enduring worth, and how to prepare himself so as to derive from them the maximum of happiness. The course of physical training outlined in this chapter constitutes that preparation. And although it begins as a purely physiological procedure, the reader will note that it progresses step by step into the realm of the mental, and that its end result is the formation of a definitely desirable kind of character. No other educational system of which the writer is aware has this for its avowed object, or goes about the attaining of its object in such an orderly, detailed, and scientific manner.

splendid. I must know what he means or whom he refers to (? Spinoza) p 236 Both his allegories or metaphors chains are apt & illuminating. His exposure of the soul-superstition is methodical & thorough.

CHAPTER VI

Yoga as a Religion

IT is a matter for regret that so many people, if they are to take seriously anything concerned with what they regard as the spiritual side of their lives, must have it presented to them in trappings of strangeness and mystery. The place in which they hear about it must be a spacious, awe-inspiring edifice, where vaulted caverns throb to the deep notes of an organ, where the light of the sun is robbed of its glory by being strained through colored glass, where candles throw the deep recesses into shadow, and where burning incense fills the air with smells which the worshippers don't get around home. There must be complicated rituals, chanted in a tongue its auditors do not understand, and the stage manager in charge of the show must wear clothing that is different from theirs, even if only to the extent of buttoning his collar in the back.

All of this environmental influence has its basis in a good working knowledge of psychology. It constitutes a direct appeal to the emotions. Those who devised the dramatic and sensuous accompaniments to most religions were well aware that men and women as a whole are moved more by their feelings than by their reason. If certain desirable brands of behaviour are to be encouraged among human beings, the methods used to that end must not depend much upon logic. They must rely, rather, upon getting the individual into

a sensory condition which will make him receptive to suggestion. Hence the clever use of music, perfume, costumes, colored lights and all the other appurtenances which a good showman employs when he wants to get the spectators into a sympathetic mood.

From the Vedic standpoint this is excellent salesmanship, and is just the thing to use upon a large percentage of mankind. Its chief drawback, as the student of yoga sees it, lies in the danger that people will get to thinking of religion as something to be practiced only at such times as the incense is burning at the altar and the organ is rumbling a hymn. Unthinking persons are prone to identify religion with ritual, and to separate it entirely from other aspects of life. It is true that religious people attend divine service, be it in church, synagogue, or mosque, but it is equally true that not all people who attend divine service are religious. Conversely there are innumerable people who never attend divine service, yet who are essentially more religious than many who do.

The purpose of all religious ceremonials, broadly considered, is to impress upon their participants the value of adherence to certain codes of conduct. Any code of conduct, of constructive nature, must be based upon definite ethical or philosophical beliefs. Religion may well be defined as "philosophy put into action." Its object is to strengthen the characters of those who believe in it, and make them live up to their belief at all times.

That, likewise, is the purpose of yoga, but in striving to attain that object, the Aryan scriptures do not counsel the following of a certain course of action

simply because it pleases God; they try to bring about an adherence to that course of action by means of logic and demonstration. The idea of an all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful God is admittedly an indispensable aid to spiritual advisers in dealing with the major portion of humanity. Voltaire was right when he said, "If there were no God, it would be necessary to invent Him," for it is unhappily true that one cannot get results with most people by saying to them, "Don't do that; your common sense should tell you it is wrong," or, "The whole story of mankind proves that this course of conduct you are following will get you nothing but unhappiness." In most cases that is not enough. People must be told, "Look out! God's watching you! He'll be very angry if you do that, and will punish you severely." Or, on the other hand, "If you do thus and so God will be highly pleased and will reward you when you get to Heaven."

That is the threat-and-promise method of making people behave themselves, and with millions of human beings it probably works as well as any means that could be devised. It is the Vedic contention, however, that there are many individuals who no longer need the concept of a supervisory deity to make them conduct themselves in a manner that will best insure their own welfare and that of their fellow men. Such people need only to be shown that the history of human beings and the workings of natural law both point indisputably to certain kinds of behaviour as being constructive and to certain other kinds as being the opposite. Convinced of that, your wise individual governs himself accordingly, perhaps out of sheer self-interest, if one

chooses to regard his conduct in that light, but certainly with more enthusiasm and reason than that which actuates the individual who does what he does because he is afraid to do otherwise; afraid of what God may do to him in this life, or of what He may do to him—or withhold from him—in an after life to come.

To illustrate, suppose one man listens to a minister of the gospel expounding the ethical precepts attributed to Jesus of Nazareth, in the latter's capacity as the Son of God. He is told by the preacher that those principles are the ones God wishes him to follow and that if he doesn't follow them God will see to it personally that he is properly punished. The man decides to take no chances, and thereafter governs his life according to biblical injunction.

Another man gets hold of those same ethical precepts and examines them as being the well considered advice of an exceedingly wise teacher—a human being who understood his fellow beings through and through, and who knew what he was talking about. Studying the admonitions of the Nazarene from a purely philosophical, rational standpoint, regardless of the divine authority attributed to them, our second man might say to himself, "These principles of living are well worth practicing; they are logical, they have a basis in the law of cause and effect; they violate no laws of Nature, and, best of all, they seem to work." Thereupon he, too, might decide to pattern his behaviour in accordance with the principles in question.

Both men, from then on, would be equally desirable members of society, so far as concerned their ethical deportment, and both would be entitled, logically, to

the same reward. Vedic belief would hold that if any preference in the way of recompense were to be shown, it should be shown to the second man, for the reason that he conducted himself as he did because of his own volition and with sound justification for so doing, rather than because he felt himself to be the victim of a sort of divine duress which left him no option in the matter.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the teachings of Buddhism contain no reference to an anthropomorphic deity, i.e. a deity like the God of the Christian, to whom are ascribed such human qualities as affection, wrath, and the like, and in whose image Man is said to have been created. Yet the code of ethics outlined in the Buddhistic scriptures is just as high as any now being offered for the guidance of mankind, and, in the opinion of many students of such matters, even higher. A thoroughgoing Buddhist, who lives up to the tenets of his faith, is a man whose moral standards are just as lofty as, for instance, those of the devout Christian. So true has this been found to be, that missionaries seeking to spread the gospel of Christ in the Orient find themselves able to work quite harmoniously with those preaching the gospel of Buddha. They have discovered that both doctrines seek to accomplish the same result, which, in the last analysis, is simply the strengthening of certain desirable attributes of mind and heart in human beings as a whole. One religion uses the concept of a supernatural, extracosmic God as an aid to that end; the other gets along without it.

The reason why Buddhism does not feature a per-

sonal deity is not far to seek. Contrary to general opinion in the West, the founder of that religion was not the first one to promulgate its principles. The term "Buddha" means simply an "Enlightened One." There had been other Buddhas prior to the advent of Gautama—twenty-five of them, according to Buddhistic students—and there has been at least one since. What gave Gautama the Buddha his powerful hold upon his contemporaries and upon posterity was the fact that he was the first to put the ethical portions of the Veda into popular form. At the time he began his career, the Brahmin priesthood had surrounded the ancient Aryan teachings with so much mystery and ritualism that the simple truths contained therein were in danger of being lost to the Indian populace. Gautama drew aside the veil of mystery, disregarded the established conventions of priestly procedure, and got down to first principles. His preaching was done in the vernacular, and the Buddhistic scriptures, instead of being written in Sanskrit, were set down in Pali, the tongue spoken by the people to whom he preached. But what he taught is found, upon examination, to be the essential aspect of Veda, and for that reason his doctrine has survived. Today there are some five hundred million Buddhists in Burma, Ceylon, the Malay Peninsula, China, and Japan; and if Buddhism, as a religion, is not so widespread in India proper as it was at one time, it is because the Brahmin priests were shrewd enough to incorporate its popular features into their own doctrine, and thus continue to do business at the same old stand.

If one disregards the various guises in which the

ethical truths contained in all great religions are presented—guises made necessary by diversity of racial characteristics—it will be found that they are virtually identical. Buddhism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, Judaism . . . all are seeking to inculcate in the hearts of men the same basic principles of behaviour. Some kinds of human beings have to be reached in one way, some in another. Temperaments differ, mental capacity differs, tribal and racial customs and habits differ. What will have a strong emotional appeal to one portion of mankind has no effect upon another. Consequently whichever religion produces the desired effect upon those who believe in it is the proper religion for them to embrace.

A comparative study of all the doctrines preached in the various churches, synagogues, and temples throughout the world shows that whatever they contain which is of constructive value to the human mind, heart, and body had its source in that deep understanding of natural laws and principles to which the Aryans attained many centuries ago. All the rest—all the hair-splitting dogmas, the pageantry, the fables, the promises, and the threats—is but a superficial embroidery of name and form, priestcraft, and politics.

That is why there are no mosques, tabernacles, or cathedrals dedicated to the preaching of yoga. Anyone capable of understanding yogic principles and putting them into practice can have them imparted to him in a hall bedroom just as successfully as in a temple. If its simple truths have the power to affect his conduct in any degree, he will grasp them by virtue of his own intelligence, and will recognize their value without hav-

ing first to be placed under the spell of external sensory influences. A person who is interested in yoga, to the extent of wishing to study and practice it, is already past the need for parables, mysticism, mummery, and miracles. When unfamiliar ideas are presented to him he is able to test their truth in the scientific manner, by means of analysis and discrimination. He is not struggling under the handicap of bias, prejudice, or bigotry. Were he not so constituted, he still would be content with one or other of the faiths whose adherents have no curiosity along philosophical lines and who, lacking the analytical ability to dispute what is preached to them, must perforce accept it without demanding why or wherefore.

The student of yoga has the satisfaction of knowing that he is dealing with what savants who have investigated the matter consider to be the ethical roots from which all religious systems have sprung. Therefore if he can comprehend those root principles, in their purest and simplest form, he will have no need to bother with the creeds and rituals used in an effort to disseminate such principles among various peoples at various periods in history. He will come to realize the truth of the oft-repeated assertion that religions are like paths ascending a mountain: they start from widely divergent points and are hidden from each other most of the way. The viewpoint from each path differs from those of all the others; the ground it traverses is not the same; and it may, in comparison with the other routes, be a more tortuous or a more direct way to reach the summit. Only when the paths converge at the peak do the travellers all get the same picture, and that picture,

if scholars are not mistaken, is the beautiful concept of life contained in the Vedic scriptures.

One great difference between yoga, considered as a form of religion, and all other faiths of a religious nature, is that whereas most religions say, peremptorily, "Do thus and so and you shall be saved," the Vedic teachings not only explain *why* it is wisdom to do thus and so, but also *how* to do it and get the best results. Yoga is put forward as something having a much wider scope than other religions have. It is something to be practiced at all hours of the day every day in the week. It provides standards to be adhered to, and constructive principles to be borne in mind, in all departments of daily life—in parlor, bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen; in the social world, the business world, the mental world, and in the worlds of art and science. Nothing was too commonplace to warrant study on the part of the Aryan thinkers, and nothing too lofty. All of it was a part of life, and all of it was inter-related. A truth was a truth, to them, and was to be reverenced as such, no matter what it dealt with.

For that reason yoga does not, as do most religions, confine itself solely to the ethical side of Man's life. Or, to put it more correctly, it considers all sides of his life to have what might be called an ethical aspect. The ethical thing, Vedically considered, is the constructive thing, the thing that makes for health, happiness, and long life, and wins the co-operation of one's fellow beings. Religions, for the most part, deal wholly with ideas and beliefs, and with the conduct resulting therefrom. Yoga goes farther into the matter by recognizing the fact that the nature of one's ideas and beliefs is

governed in great measure by one's physical condition. One's physical condition, in turn, is dependent upon a great many factors to which religions, as a rule, pay little or no attention. Such means as they do provide to safeguard the physical welfare of their adherents usually takes the form of a blanket injunction relative to diet or hygiene, issued, so it is claimed, upon divine authority. Familiar examples of this sort of legislation are the Mohammedan injunction against the use of intoxicants, the Catholic ban on meat eating during one day out of every seven, and the Hebrew prohibition of pork as an article of food.

All of these are wise provisions, from the standpoint of physiology, and show a keen understanding of the people for whose guidance they were intended. The yogi appreciates their value as rules which tend to encourage moderation, and he, himself, is guided by them to a certain extent. At the same time, he believes that they are based purely upon natural law and have nothing to do with the wishes of a Supreme Deity. He knows, furthermore, that they are not iron-clad decrees, the violation of which inevitably spells disaster. Some people, he is aware, can use intoxicants within reason and reap no ill effects. Men engaged in heavy manual labor can eat meat three times a day every day in the week and keep strong and healthy on it. Pork, if properly cooked, is a nourishing food when taken in moderation. Whether ill effects accrue to an individual from his violating any of the three injunctions in question depends entirely upon his physiological and chemical make-up, and upon his powers of elimination. What would be a moderate proportion of meat in

the diet of one person might constitute a harmful excess in the diet of another. Yoga takes into consideration all such idiosyncrasies, not alone in matters of diet, but in other things as well, preferring to let common sense be the governing factor, rather than divine edict.

It may be worth noting, here, that the true yogi's attitude toward his food is singularly reverential. And why not, since, according to his belief, the food on a man's plate today is by tomorrow the man himself? The truth of that concept is inescapable. Each of us is composed of varying proportions of earthly material gathered from all quarters of the globe; cantaloupe from California, mutton from Australia, bananas from Jamaica, tea from Ceylon, sugar from Hawaii, beef from Wyoming, coffee from Brazil, rice from Louisiana, wheat from Canada, fish from the boundless oceans, and so on throughout the list of all the food products the world has to offer. Today they are part of the external universe—solid, material, inert. Tomorrow, by the alchemy of our digestive tracts, they become transmuted into living, sentient tissue. What we regarded but recently as a conglomerate accumulation of meat, fruit, vegetables, and groceries, we now regard as a human being. It has been altered in shape and size during a brief lapse of time, and has been subjected to different forces. Therefore we give it another name, but the yogi knows that it is the same old universal substance, appearing for a time in a different guise. Since, however, that guise happens to be the one in which he himself is appearing for the moment, he tries to see to it that the materials which go to make him up are the best he is able to obtain.

Knowing this, the members of other castes in India sometimes laugh at the Brahmin and say that his religion is a religion of the kitchen. Had they the Brahmin's conception of matter, and did they know its relation to mind, they would find nothing in that idea to laugh at. For it is the Brahmanical notion, based on Vedic teaching, that thoughts seldom excel in quality the physical organism in which they take rise. Dirty body, dirty thoughts; weak body, weak thoughts; sickly body, sickly thoughts. Therefore, seeing that character is based upon thought, the person trying to live a yogic life makes the care of his body a part of his religion. It is essential in yoga training to learn something about anatomy, physiology, and physiological chemistry, and to look after the structure and function of the body with a solicitude that has in it a large element of reverence. When the earnest practitioner of yoga sits down to strengthen the muscles of his digestive tract, he puts into his exercise the same sort of fervor which the professed religionist puts into the singing of an inspiring hymn. His attitude is much the same toward everything else of a cultural nature that he does, be it physical or mental, work or play. With him it all comes under the head of purposive activity, and should be performed with an enthusiasm worthy of the ultimate end in view.

Were the devotee of yoga gravely concerned as to the welfare and the destination of his soul, he might devote more attention to things of an abstract nature, and less to the concrete. Happily for him, he is not so concerned. His concept of matter will not permit him to be. He is a monist, not a dualist. He does not divide

the universe into two departments, matter and spirit; it is all one substance, to his way of thinking, although appearing in different forms. The terms used by the dualist to describe what he calls soul—such adjectives as invisible, impalpable, formless, imponderable, etc.—are the same which the monist uses in describing the higher forms of matter. The monist attributes to matter in its more rarefied states all the qualities which the dualist concept attributes to soul. His reverence for it is just as profound, his ideas about it just as lofty as are the ideas about soul which are held by people to whom matter and spirit are two different things. He does not, however, find a place in his scheme of things for a ghost-like entity, gifted with volition and memory, that moves into the human body at birth, departs from it at death, and continues thereafter an independent, individual existence. He can account on other and more demonstrable grounds for everything that human beings do and feel, and to him it seems neither probable nor even desirable that the ego, as usually conceived, should be maintained beyond the grave.

How he can believe this, and still be a happy, hopeful, enthusiastic sort of being, is, naturally, beyond the comprehension of people who have been taught that their souls are the all-important part of their make-up, and that their chief hope of happiness lies in an after life. Nevertheless, the believer in the Vedic teachings has every reason to be a cheerful, contented, active, and forward-looking individual, undisturbed by qualms as to the future, and busily getting the most out of the present. It may be difficult to explain to many western readers why this is true, yet perhaps the effort should

be made, in order properly to round out the picture of yoga thus far presented.

Inability to rid their minds of the soul concept has proved to be a stumbling block in the paths of many students of yoga. To them the notion of dispensing with what they had been taught to look upon as their immortal souls was a terrifying and insupportable idea. If they were mistaken as to their having an immortal soul, what was left to cling to? What could take the soul's place? Was it not wicked even to entertain the idea that there might not actually be any such place as Heaven, a place where all the spirits of the departed gathered together and where they remained throughout eternity? Wasn't that blasphemy, or something, and couldn't one be punished for giving it room in one's thoughts?

The person who has had the Vedic teachings explained to him can appreciate that attitude thoroughly, and can view it with kindly understanding. He thinks he knows what it is the dualist refers to when he talks about his soul, but he doesn't think the dualist himself is quite clear as to its nature. He feels that he has within himself the same thing which the believer in dualism calls a soul, but his ideas about it are somewhat different from those of the dualist. According to Vedic scripture, that part of his being which the dualist calls his soul is not the individual, private, distinctive entity which he thinks it is, but is merely that portion of the universal life force which happens to be functioning in his organism at the moment. By universal life force the Aryans meant that highly rarefied form of matter which, when in motion, constitutes the

animating principle in all things that we de
being alive. It functions in plants, animals, a
beings alike, but in Man alone, owing to its
complicated organic equipment and more complex structure, does it manifest itself with such dramatic effect as to make him consider himself different from all other products of Nature and, in his conceit, to endow himself with a soul.

To use a crude but fairly accurate modern illustration, let us imagine a huge radio broadcasting station to be sending out through the ether an uninterrupted flow of impulses. Those impulses spread in all directions and are the common property of anyone who can put together certain materials in such a way as to constitute a receiving set. If the materials used in constructing the set be meager and ill-adjusted, they will offer but a limited field of action for the impulses which are playing upon them. The set will manifest only slightly, by faint squeaks and buzzes, the fact that certain of its parts have been set in motion by a force which has an external origin.

If other materials are added to the set, in more complicated fashion, and with finer internal adjustments, the impulses from the broadcasting station will have a larger field of action in which to display themselves, and the results will be proportionately impressive.

If the finest possible materials be used, with all the known grids and tubes and selectors delicately adjusted to form a highly complex mechanism, the reproduction of the original impulses will be so perfect that the instrument will seem to be creating them itself.

Accepting the Aryan concept of a flow of life force, or cosmic energy, which plays incessantly throughout the universe, we may look upon plants and other simple organisms as being crude receiving sets, in which the cosmic energy can manifest itself only to a limited degree. Animals, having more elaborate nervous systems and more specialized organs, are like the medium grade sets; while Man, having organs even more specialized, and one particular nerve ganglia developed to a phenomenal degree, is the finest receiving set yet turned out by the process of evolution. He is equipped to take advantage of the universal animating force as is no other creature on earth. He gets such extraordinary results with that highly developed nerve ganglia which he calls his brain—results so much more varied than those obtained by the lower animals—that his egotism prompts him to credit himself with having within him something distinctive and superior that no other being possesses. That he calls his soul.

The Aryans held this to be an erroneous conception. In their study of the human imagination they were able to account for Man's superiority on the grounds of brain action alone. Man, they found, was a finer piece of mechanism than any other on earth, and therefore capable of functioning in more complex and startling fashion. But what the dualistic man calls his ego, his psyche, his self, his spirit, or his soul, they decided, was simply the sum of all the reflexes produced by the action of sensory impressions upon his brain. The only soul he had, in their opinion, was a bit of the Universal Soul, appearing in him as an animating force, just as

his body was a part of Universal Matter, appearing for a limited time in the form of a human being.

The Aryans concluded that what left the body when a human being died was not the soul but the breath. They noted that when a child was born it did not begin its existence as a living being, independent of the mother, until the first breath of air inflated its lungs. To breathe was to live, then; to cease breathing was to die. Evidently the life force accompanied the flow of air in and out of the lungs. For that reason one of the Sanskrit terms for cosmic energy is The Great Breath.

Observing the infant, the child, the youth, and the man, the Vedic scientists traced the gradual development of that interplay of sensory impressions and nerve reactions which we call the working of the human brain. They found what modern science knows to be true, viz., that sensory messages coming in over the nerves from the material world outside, leave impressions upon the cells that compose the brain cortex, and that these impressions, or "mental deposits," are made more lasting by repetition. They found that such impressions take the form of mental pictures, or images, and that a series of these pictures passing in review before the "mind's eye" constitutes what we know as a thought. They noted that the cells of the brain cortex seem to have an intercommunicating system of their own, which operates in such a manner that whenever two or more groups of cells are stimulated simultaneously, upon one occasion, it often needs the stimulation of only one group, at a later time, to bring into play all the others that were involved the time before. Upon

this fact they based their understanding of the association of ideas, the phenomenon of brain action which makes possible the faculty of memory.

Once a brain is capable of remembering the impressions brought in to it by the senses, it becomes capable of sorting them out, classifying them, and determining the relationship existing between them. This power leads to an understanding of cause and effect, and thence, in turn, to the faculty of logical reasoning.

What actually separates Man from the lower animals, in the opinion of the Aryan thinkers, is his superior ability to reason from cause to effect and from effect to cause; his consequent powers of analysis and prediction; and his capability of self-examination. It was not their opinion that these abilities are his because of a formless familiar that resides within him and directs his acts. It seemed more reasonable to them to believe that his superior powers were due to his superior brain. Man's brain, they observed, has room for a larger number and a greater variety of impressions than those of other animals. His network of memory cells is far more comprehensive and more intricate. The system of intercommunication between these cells is so complete that the brain is capable of creating within itself one series of mental pictures after another, without the necessity for constant sensory stimulation from without. It is this sort of independent brain action, this ceaseless parade of mental images before the mind's eye, without regard to what the body may be doing at the moment, that gives rise to the concept of mind as being something which has nothing to do with the body.

Yet it was plain to the Vedic observers that the two were vitally interdependent. They could see quite clearly that mind was a product of brain action; that it was a set of symptoms arising from the play of certain forces among the cells of the brain cortex, and that these symptoms constituted a force in themselves. The brain, obviously, was a physical, material organ. It moved with every beat of the heart; it was fed by the arterial system; it grew more complex when exercised by considerable thinking; and it remained undeveloped when not used much. If several mental deposits on a brain cortex were destroyed by accident or disease, it was noticed that just that much of its owner's mind was missing from that time on. If injury befell the cells entrusted with sending out motor impulses, for example, it was seen that neither the mind nor the soul seemed able to manufacture such impulses until the physical damage to the brain cells had been repaired. If a stupefying drug entered the blood stream, through the lungs or otherwise, and the nerve cells of the brain cortex became temporarily paralyzed, then the mind disappeared altogether and did not betray any evidence of its existence until the period of paralysis was over and the brain cells resumed their normal function. The body might be in grave peril during the period when consciousness was absent, but no one ever observed that the soul—presumably free from all physical hindrances—was able to do anything about it. Were the drug so noxious as to paralyze the involuntary nerve centers, as well as the rest of the brain, death ensued. And the soul seemed unable to do anything to prevent that, either.

In sum, the Aryan physiologists and neurologists not only were unable to find evidence of the existence of a disembodied spirit in the human organism, but they were at a loss to know of what use such a spirit would be to a person if he had one. Being a substitute for neither memory, consciousness, nor motor impulses, of what value, they asked themselves, would it be to a material being in a material world? It could not help him to adjust himself to the numberless laws and forces of nature; it could not warn him of physical danger; it could not bring the breath back to his body once it had departed. Then what good was it, even were it shown to exist?

To those holding the dualistic concept of the universe, the soul is, of course, that part of a human being which persists after death. They are vague as to precisely what it is like, or where it goes to, or how it gets there, but it is supposed to retain the thoughts and feelings generated in the body it has just left, and is curiously willing to sit back and wait somewhere until such time as it is joined by the souls of those whom it knew on earth.

The Aryan truth seekers, who probed the mind and heart of Man to depths never since exceeded, were unable to find the least shred of credible evidence in support of that particular concept of the soul. So far as they could determine, when death came to a human being—or to any other living organism—the solids in that organism eventually rejoined the solids of the earth; the liquids in it were absorbed finally by the water element; and the gases in it blended with the gases comprising the atmosphere. The life force itself, having in the case of that specific organism no remaining medium through which to manifest its power, merged indistinguishably once more with the universal life force from which it really never had been separated. The phenomenon of death, as those thinkers saw it, was simply a change of forms and modes of motion in the component parts of some infinitesimal portion of the universal substance which had existed, for a time, as a human being, an animal, or a plant.

"But," says the dualist, aghast, "if that be so, what becomes of immortality? Would you rob me of my belief that I, in some form or other, am going to go on existing forever?"

In reply to that, the monist probably would deny that he wished to rob any individual, or any group of people, of any belief which had proved itself a comfort to them in the tribulations of this earthly life. If thinking that things were going to be much better for them in the life to come made it any easier for them to endure their present lot, well and good; let them think it. If the desire to win for themselves the reward of a blissful life everlasting in the next world would make them behave themselves the best they knew how in the meantime, so much the better for them and for mankind in general. It would be needless cruelty on anyone's part to shake a faith like that in the heart of anyone incapable of grasping a more impersonal and universal concept.

Nevertheless, to one trained in Vedic beliefs, the desire to launch one's soul into the timeless reaches of infinity, and keep intact all its little earthly idiosyncrasies, its trivial earthly interests, and its unimportant

earthly memories, is merely an indication of unenlightenment. It represents a self-centered viewpoint that is out of harmony with the cosmic concepts held by the Aryans. The Vedas teach immortality, right enough, but not the "I, me, and mine" idea of it upon which the believer in the individual soul pins his reliance.

One gleans from Vedic writings the idea that Man is immortal only in the sense that all matter is eternal, and that he persists after death only to the extent that he lives in the memories of other men, or affects their destinies by reason of what he has done during his lifetime. His after life is not his own life in a future world, they say, but the lives of his earthly descendants or other human beings who reap the effects of the causes he has generated. They maintain that the only reward he ever will know will be the reward he gets here in this life; that Heaven is but a synonym for peace of mind, and Hell a synonym for its opposite.

"But that means that death is the end of everything," cries the dualist, in dismay.

"Death marks the end of but one phase of existence," the Aryan philosopher would correct him, "We 'died' out of some other form when we were 'born' into this one. When we 'die' out of this one we will be 'born' into one of still a different sort."

"All the same, if what you say is true," persists the other, "I must live out my short span of years, for weal or for woe, and then plunge into outer darkness for all eternity."

"Not so," says the philosopher, "This 'I' of which you speak is but an illusion. There is no 'I,' no ego,

save as a false concept developed in your mind by the deceptions of name and form. Your body is an entity, it is true. For the time being, and with reference to other bits of matter in certain stages of evolution, it is, to all intents and purposes, an individual thing, separate and distinct from the material world in which it has taken shape. Your brain, which is a part of your body, differs from other brains because the impressions it has received from its environment were not identical with those received by other brains in other bodies. Your mind, being the product of what goes on in your brain, differs, likewise, from other minds. Beyond that there is no separateness between you and anything else; no 'self' that exists apart and divorced from the rest of the universe. If you choose to call your mind 'you,' very well; but your mind will cease to exist when your brain ceases to function. Then what becomes of 'you'?

"And as for your 'plunge into outer darkness,' why must it be darkness? Why not light? Is all of Nature such a distasteful domain that you dread to become identified with it? Just think! Were you to return to the elements of which you are composed you could be part of the flaunting, gorgeous sunset. You could help create the rainbow that dances on the crest of the sun-lit wave. When the jasmine unfolded at night it would be your perfume that pervaded the garden. The breeze that cools the sleeping infant's cheek would be partly you, and you would be infused in the moonlight that shines on youthful lovers. You would be one with the cataract that plunges into the majestic gorge; you would ride the wings of the cyclone, leap through the heavens on a thunderbolt. . . . Or would you rather

hang around the Pearly Gates, pluming your wings, and learning to play the harp?"

That sort of reply is likely to do little more than bewilder the person who never has been given any metaphysical concept other than the soul theory. Either he was so fond of certain persons who have died that he cannot relinquish the hope that he may see them again, or he is tremendously impressed with the cosmic importance of his own personality, or he is disgusted with his present lot in life and is determined to cash in on the delights which the scriptures promise him as being part of the life to come. In any case, a grasp of the Aryan picture calls for too great a stretch of his imagination, and so he continues to conduct himself with reference to the destiny of the helpless wraith which he thinks he is harboring some place inside of him. In his opinion, people who do not believe that they possess any such ghostly tenants are doomed and damned and stand no chance whatever in the hereafter.

With all respect to that viewpoint, what are the respective results brought about in the characters of two individuals who honestly and earnestly govern their behaviour in accordance with such widely differing beliefs as monism and dualism?

The dualist says to himself, in substance, "Every act of mine is being watched by Some One On High. Each thought and deed is recorded. When I die, my soul will have to stand before the Judgment Seat, and if the Big Book shows a record of too many bad thoughts and evil deeds standing against me, I'll be sentenced to everlasting punishment. If the record shows more good thoughts and helpful deeds to my

credit than the other kind, my soul will pass on to a region of eternal bliss. I'd better be as good as I know how and try to keep the balance in my favor." Acting upon that belief, he conducts his life according to the best ethical standards of which he is aware and becomes, so far as concerns his moral deportment, at any rate, a desirable sort of person to have in any community.

The monist reasons more like this: "Every act of mine is followed by a corresponding result; good acts, good results; bad acts, bad results. Each thought that I have affects to some extent my bodily function and, if repeated often enough, will affect my structure also. Therefore it behooves me to keep my thoughts wholesome and fruitful, and to govern my acts by that kind of thinking. Every day is Judgment Day for me, because I am rewarded or punished in some measure today for what I did yesterday; and what I do today is going to determine what happens to me tomorrow. Thus I gradually create my own Heaven or my own Hell as I go along. I know that constructive thoughts and deeds react not alone to my benefit and the benefit of my contemporaries, but the benefit of posterity as well. To that extent, at least, I shall play a part in the future life on this earth.

"The existence of a future life somewhere outside this material world has not been proved to my satisfaction as yet, but my desire to create my own heaven here on earth is sufficient to keep my conduct up to a standard fully as high as that of the fellow who is looking forward to a reward in the hereafter. If his qualifications for the enjoyment of happiness in a

future life are to be judged by his performance here on earth, then I am willing to be judged on the same basis. We both are meeting the same conditions on the same proving grounds, the difference between us being in our idea of what is to happen when the test is concluded. In case his theory turns out to be the right one, I don't believe the powers that govern the region to which he is going will refuse to admit me when my turn comes, solely because no one, during my lifetime, had been able to convince me that such a region existed. I cannot think it possible that mere belief in the existence of Heaven will entitle anyone to enter it unless he has earned the right while still on earth. And if mere belief will not admit anyone who has not earned the right to enter, surely disbelief will not bar anyone who *has* earned that right. And while we're both here on earth, I have just as good a chance to earn that right as the other fellow has."

Therefore he, too, conducts his life according to the best ethical standards he can discover, and also becomes a desirable member of the community. An impartial observer, not knowing that one man believed matter and spirit to be two different things, while the other regarded them as identical, would give the two men an equal chance for happiness in a possible hereafter.

Were the impartial observer above the average in discernment, he might notice that the monist—or, to put it more specifically, the practitioner of yoga—appeared to get rather more out of life, in the long run, than do most people who do not share his beliefs. As in everything else about yoga, there is a reason why this is so.

In the first place, the believer in the soul theory is inclined ofttimes to lay so much stress upon the spiritual side of life that his body becomes something to be regarded with a species of contempt. It is a "carnal" thing, a thing to be hidden, a thing that is not nice to talk about or to know much about. Feeling that way about it, he neglects it, and it is not long before his body is, indeed, the vile and repulsive object he was taught to consider it. Disease, pain, and a needlessly early death are the usual penalties which Nature demands of one who becomes too "soulful."

In the second place, their belief in an after life seems to remove from many people the incentive to accomplish much in this one. Things may be breaking badly for them at present, but instead of doing anything about it, they endure their hardships as best they can and console themselves with the idea that in the next life everything will be much better. Among people like that there is too great a tendency to say, "The Lord will provide"; too much needless resignation in their prayer, "Thy will be done." The monist is a firm believer in the principle that "the Lord helps them who help themselves." He thinks that the Lord's will often would be exercised in quite a different manner if He saw His children exercising a little more will power of their own. As one modern Vedic teacher puts it, "When the tombstone says, 'It has pleased the Lord to remove our beloved Lucy, aged sixteen,' the monist is willing to admit that it is too late to do anything about it. But if he knows that Lucy died as the result of chronic constipation he cannot help feeling that had somebody only taught her how to keep her bowels open, it might have

'pleased the Lord' to let Lucy live for quite awhile longer."

In the third place, the dualist is not likely to share the monist's lively appreciation of the value of time. The latter, having no idea that he is to be granted an eternal *mañana* in which to accomplish the things he would like to accomplish, or enjoy the things he would like to enjoy, has the greater incentive to make his efforts count for full value as soon as possible. "I know that I have this life, at least, in which to achieve the things that will make me happy," he tells himself, "but I know, also, that my time here is limited. For that reason it strikes me as wisdom on my part to step out and busy myself at once. If there is a life after this one, so much the better; I'll be just that much ahead for having got more out of this life than some others did. But I think I'll not gamble too much on that after life, for, if it should turn out that there isn't any, what a pity it would be that I didn't take full advantage of the time that was granted me here on earth. So far as I can see, I have everything to gain and nothing to lose by conducting myself as though this earthly life were the only one I ever was to enjoy. Therefore I must do as the Sanskrit Salutation to the Dawn enjoins me to, and 'look to this day . . . for yesterday is already a dream and tomorrow is only a vision.' The present is all I am sure of. May I have the good sense to utilize it."

For this reason it is worthy of note that people who have taken to heart the teachings of yoga are, as a general rule, exceptionally active, healthy, intelligent, enthusiastic, and many-sided individuals. In one way

or another they manage to get a great deal out of life. Their material success may not in every case be up to western standards, but they eat well, they sleep peacefully, and seem to derive a singular pleasure from the mere fact of being alive. They are passionate lovers of Nature, and great respecters of Her laws. Yet for all their love of life, their faith is such that, when death comes, they can face it serenely, without regret and without fear. That much the Aryans bequeathed to those who understand their teachings. The West has a claim to this legacy quite as valid as that of the East. It is to be hoped that the future will see the claim being exercised to a greater extent than it has been in the past.

THE END

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