

COSMIC FAST



Sri Swami Omkar

COSMIC FAST

Sri Swami Omkar



[Thoughts recorded during the fast & Thirty Days]

THE MISSION OF PEACE

Sri Santi Ashram P.O.

(Via.) Sankhavaram, East Godavari Dist.-533 446, A.P., India

© All rights reserved with:

The Mission of Peace - Sri Santi Ashram,
Sri Santi Ashram Post, (Via) Sankhavaram,
East Godavari District, 533446, A.P., India

Any part of this book may be published or reproduced or translated only with the written permission of the Publisher.

First Edition, 1955.

Reprint, 2001.

Copies : 1000.

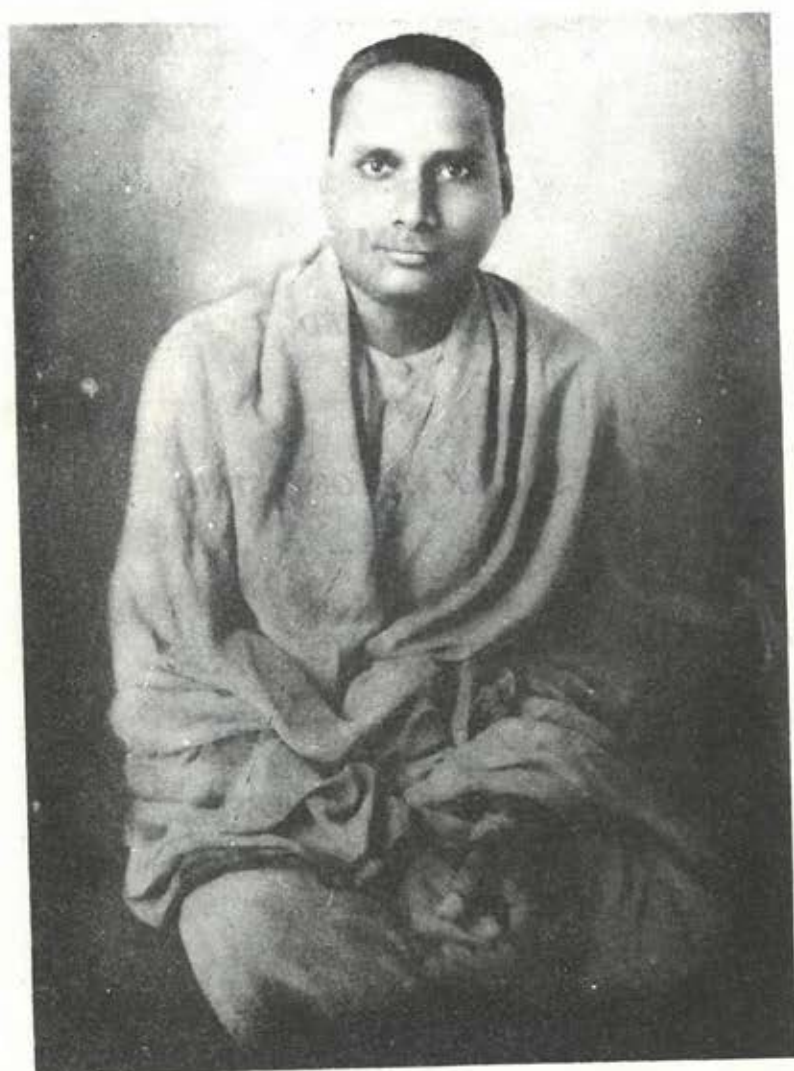
This book is reprinted with the generous donation of
Sister Eloise Divya Prakasha, Canada.

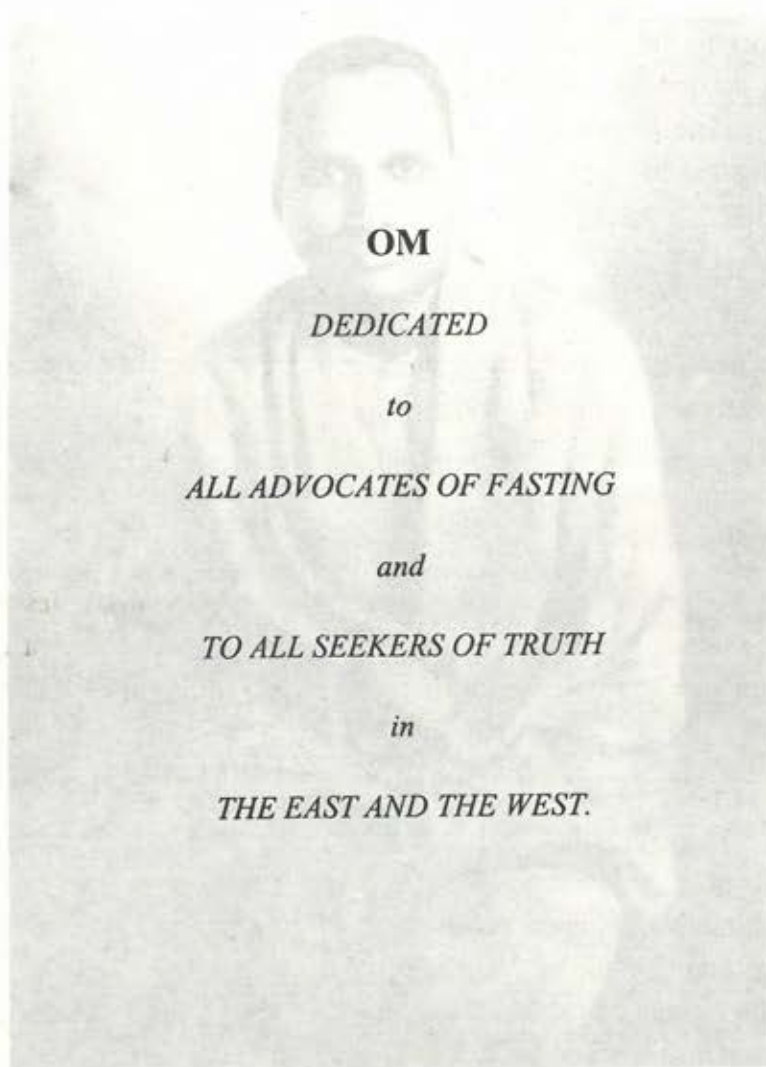
Edited by : Eloise Divya Prakasha

Type Setting generously done by :
Saigowri Computer Point,
23-B, Bansilalpet, R.P. Road,
Secunderbad - 500 003.
Phone : 7532612 (Res.)

Printed at : Image Offset Printers, Vidyanagar, Hyderabad.

Published by : **The Mission of Peace - Sri Santi Ashram,**
(Via) Sankhavaram, East Godavari District,
Pin : 533446. A.P., India





OM

DEDICATED

to

ALL ADVOCATES OF FASTING

and

TO ALL SEEKERS OF TRUTH

in

THE EAST AND THE WEST.

FOREWORD

It is a pleasure and privilege to write a foreword to this book of Swami Omkar, giving an account of his epic fast of a full thirty days carried out smilingly and cheerfully in the silence of his *ashram* life. It is a story of the triumph of the spirit, thrilling and fascinating to the very end, which every seeker of God should read.

Fasting according to the definition of the word in the British Encyclopaedia is "withholding of meat and drink and all natural food from the body for a determined period". It is practised generally to gain mastery over the body. It is a sort of disciplinary measure, a moral restraint, an attempt to create the feeling of exultation and exaltation of the spirit by crushing the lower appetites.

There is an innate desire in man to explore the mysteries of life. Fasting is enjoined in all religions, which shows that it is recognised as a definite avenue towards the exploration of the divinity in man. Mohammed considered fasting as the "gate of religion".

We are told that Jesus Christ fasted for a full forty days and nights in the wilderness. That he abstained himself from all food and drink for this long period is not the only point. What is apparent is, that living in the wilderness he must have subjected himself to all the rigours of the body including abstinence from food and drink, which a life in the wilderness naturally imposes upon man and which is very conducive to become absorbed in God and God alone.

Swamiji has tried to emulate the example of Christ by having

fasted for a full thirty days in front of his own *ashram* friends and devotees so that there can be no doubt of the amazing feat accomplished by this unassuming man of God. The weapon he adhered to was the mantra "OMNIPOTENCE IS WORKING. LET THE MORTAL RETIRE". We might say that it is his entire faith in God which has helped him in this difficult and hazardous enterprise.

Fasting has become quite a common feature of Indian life. Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest exponent and a most consummate practitioner of this subtle and dexterous art. A superman, as he was, it was his prerogative to make use of this instrument of fasting for the attainment of even political ends, especially as it meant liberty of his country. With him, fasting was like a commandment from God for fulfilment of right objects. But when fasting is resorted to by all sorts of people for attainment of all sorts of objects, it becomes a coercive weapon and as such, it has to be deprecated.

Swamiji undertook his heroic fast of a full thirty days in the vicinity of the stillness of Thotapalli Hills encircling his modest *ashram*, and the beautiful picture he gives of each day he passed, of the joy in his heart, of the upward surge of the feeling of divinity in him, as it swept his body, mind and soul, of his great love and longing for all creatures without any distinction, fills us with rapturous delight. One can also realize the rhapsody of his soul in communion with God.

We cannot commend fasting by itself as a way to God realization. We know how Lord Buddha spent eight long years in leading a life of austerity. His each day was a fast. He became so thin and enfeebled that once when he was bathing in the river, he was not able to come out and was on the point of being drowned

when he was pulled out by force. Buddha saw his mistake and gave up his austerities. He has shown us the right way, viz., the middle path. It is not fasting but deep meditation in the stillness of your heart and mind that is acceptable to God. Buddha practised meditation under the shade of the Bodhi tree and he was given illumination.

Fasting is essential in the life of the spirit, as a measure of self-restraint and it should be practised once a week, once a fortnight or once a month according to each person's predilections. But to practise it for long periods, only men of the fibre and tissue of a Mahatma can do. We bow down to Swamiji for his heroic endeavour and achievement, but we do wish that such long fasts are not encouraged or practised. There are other and better ways to realize God.

This little book has given to the writer plenty of food for thought and enjoyment. It is hoped it will serve as a beacon light for it speaks of God, whom we all love, adore and worship, and anything that intensifies our worship of God is most welcome. God is the only Reality.

OM TAT SAT OM ! TAT TWAM ASI !

Karachi,
2nd June, 1955.

Minocher K. Spencer.

INTRODUCTION

The value of Swami Omkar's inspiring book "Cosmic Fast" is greatly enhanced by the fact that it is written not by a layman, nor by a medical man, but by a *Jivan Mukta*, ever intent in doing service to the world.

Fasting, the total abstinence from all food, solid or liquid, with the single exception of water, has for its purpose the promotion and restoration of health. Fasting is generally done either for health or as penance, for overcoming evil propensities, or for Spiritual Illumination. But rarely do we find anyone fasting for enjoyment as the Swamiji has done.

Man ought to eat only when the stomach demands food by means of a good appetite. To eat when one is not hungry or does not actually need food is a sin against the body, bringing a short-lived life. Wrong foods stimulate the appetites of lust, hunger, sex and greed and feed the flesh or animal nature of man. Fasting cleanses the cells, tissues and organs of the body, eliminating the body toxins and poisonous wastes. The more people fast, the healthier and the longer they live.

The great rishis and saints of yore had so transmuted the very cells of their bodies that they could feed on the subtle foods in sunlight, air and water and remain well-nourished without partaking of material foods. Of the modern foodless people two notable instances are Giri Bala and Theresa Neumann. Giri Bala, the woman yogi of Bengal, had not taken food or drink since 1880 drawing her nourishment from the finer energies of sunlight, air and water till she passed away 3 or 4 years ago. Theresa Neumann, the Catholic stigmatist and mystic of Bavaria, had taken no food since Christmas 1926, drawing her nourishment from God's light.

From ancient times, fasting was advocated for curative purposes, for restoring health and for religious purposes. If one is to get all the spiritual benefits from fasting, one should be in prayer most of the time.

Fasting is an entirely natural method of renovating the body and the most powerful of all remedial measures. Every animal, when sick, has no appetite and refuses to eat. It fasts until it is well, governed by its instinct. Fasting checks the emotions, controls passions and the senses, and purifies the mind and heart. When one fasts, one is drawn closer to God and can have a real prayerful mood, as it is the most powerful means at the disposal of any child of God.

Fasting and prayer aid all in overcoming temptations and trials. It is only by fasting and prayer that the soul is able to receive revelations. Fasting intensifies the power of prayer. Only the first few days of the fast are the most difficult to pray because the weakness of the body has not left and the body has not been cleansed. So prayer with the fast is very important as prayer then becomes illuminated. Fasting leads to the mastery of the self and manifestation of the power of God.

The prophets have sought God by prayers and fasting from 21 to 40 days. Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira fasted and prayed in the forest for enlightenment. The Bible speaks of Moses, Elijah, David, Daniel, Jesus and Paul having gained great spiritual strength through fast and prayer. Moses undertook two forty-day fasts and he was revealed the application of law to all phases of life as is seen in the Ten Commandments. The Psalms are largely the product of fasting and prayer. Daniel, after he fasted for 21 days, sought the Lord and received the revelation of what was to befall in later days. Elijah, after a fast of forty days, received the revelation

of the nature and manifestation of God. Jesus, after he fasted for forty nights, went about all Galilee, teaching, preaching and healing all people. John was given the Revelation of Jesus Christ when he was placed to starve to death in the Isle of Patmos, and he converted his intended starvation into a consecrated fast.

In Islam, also, fasting is enjoined by the Holy Quran, as a means of purification of the soul. Fasting does not mean abstaining from food only, but also from every kind of evil thought, word and action. That moral elevation is the object of fasting is clearly seen from the statement in the Quran: "Fasting has been enjoined upon you, that you may learn to guard yourselves against evil". Truly has Swamiji summed up the whole essence of the fast as *Self-Purification* in the closing chapter of this book.

Prayer, the outpouring of the heart's sentiments and a devout supplication to God, is enjoined by Islam as a means of moral elevation of man to purify the heart and to commune with God. It is by prayer that we can achieve the complete and harmonious union of body, mind and spirit, which gives the frail human life its unshakeable strength and makes the outward and inward man be at one.

All diseases take their origin through overeating and verily, fasting is the only method to cure this. Swamiji has in this book truly referred to half the people in God's creation killing themselves with overeating and has stressed the Law of Moderation as the keynote of the spiritual, as well as of the material life. The same thought is poetically expressed by Milton in his "*Paradise Lost*".

"If thou well observe

The rule of 'Not too much' by temperance taught
In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence

Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return;
So may'st thou live, till like ripe fruit, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature".

The goal of our life is said by all the sages, to be *Self-Realisation* or *Union with God*, the Indwelling Presence. As Swamiji beautifully says let us strive every moment of our lives to realise this Unity and Perfection by fasting or feasting, by work or silence, not in the uncertain dim future, but right now.

Om Tat Sat Om !

Shanti Ashram,

Adyar

Madras 20,

12th Dec. 1955.

Govindaraj.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This book on COSMIC FAST will be found interesting not only by the Advocates of Fasting but by all the devoted souls in every religion, as the chapters contain good thoughts, simple stories and interesting illustrations from a personal life that are helpful to aspiring souls. I leave my loving readers now to sip the honey in this book of Cosmic Fast in deep silence, attuning themselves with the Universal Energy, the Common Heritage and the Divine Birthright of all.

I am an advocate of fasting for I love it. I am a worshipper of Silence for I adore it. Fasting purifies and leads one to Silence, and Silence helps one to realise His stupendous Splendours. The goal of life is the conscious realisation and recognition of the Infinite and Eternal Light, the Omnipresent and Interpenetrating Truth. Realise this Truth, the Unity and Perfection, by fasting or by feasting or by work or by silence, not in the uncertain dim future but right now.

I am deeply indebted to Minocher. K. Spencer of Karachi for writing the FOREWORD to this book. Mr. Spencer is an international figure, a mystic, author and poet, and his words speak of the great depths of his vision of Truth.

I am grateful to Dr. Govinda Raj, an old friend of the Ashram, for his learned INTRODUCTION. Being an advocate of fasting himself, living on a diet of fruit and raw milk, he is an authority on fasting and his introduction will be found to be of great help to all seekers of Truth.

Sister Susila Devi (Miss Ellen St. Clair Nowald) who has dedicated her life to the cause of Peace has kindly chosen to write

the POEMS found in the chapters of this book, giving (in simple words) the essence of the message of every day's thoughts. The readers will find them very instructive and interesting. Her poems speak of her big heart of Universality.

Lastly, my warmest gratitude to Sri K. S. D. Aiyer, Hon. Secretary of the Spiritual Healing Centre, Coimbatore for his sympathy and interest in getting this book printed for the Ashram.

May God's richest blessings ever be showered on these friends and well wishers of Santi Ashram and on all of you, my loving readers.

May Peace be unto all.

Om Tat Sat Om!

Santi Ashram.

Thottapalli Hills

Swami Omkar.

12-12-55.

CONTENTS

Foreword	...	i
Introduction	...	v
Author's Note	...	ix
1. <i>Alone with God</i>	...	1
2. <i>Message of the Sunbeams</i>	...	4
3. <i>The Life of Sweet Smelling Flowers</i>	...	8
4. <i>Angels Wait on the Masters of Mind</i>	...	11
5. <i>Call on the Lord</i>	...	15
6. <i>Dedication</i>	...	20
7. <i>New Conquests</i>	...	24
8. <i>Amrita-The Nectar of Grace</i>	...	28
9. <i>Ever Deeper Within</i>	..	30
10. <i>Spiritual Rambles</i>	...	33
11. <i>Purification of the Temple</i>	...	37
12. <i>Nirvanic Bliss in Dream State</i>	...	41
13. <i>The Stages of Realization and Work</i>	...	45
14. <i>The Good Shepherd Divine</i>	...	50
15. <i>The Incense of Pure Thought</i>	...	54
16. <i>Through the Crucible of Divinity</i>	...	57
17. <i>The Soul in Utmost Dedication</i>	...	60
18. <i>Sustained, not by Bread Alone :</i>	...	63
19. <i>Faith, our Life's Sustenance</i>	...	67
20. <i>God — The Perennial Source-Font</i>	...	71
21. <i>Attainment by Persistent Effort</i>	...	74
22. <i>The Food Proposition</i>	...	77

23. <i>The Divinity Within</i>	...	81
24. <i>Love — God's Silent Force</i>	...	85
25. <i>Self-Reliance</i>	...	89
26. <i>Seek Ye First His Kingdom</i>	...	93
27. <i>Centering in God</i>	...	97
28. <i>The Lord is Calling</i>	...	101
29. <i>The Futility of Hoarding</i>	...	105
30. <i>Universal Meditations</i>	...	109



ADORABLE PRESENCE !

Thou Who art within and without, above and below and all around; Thou Who art interpenetrating the very cells of our beings; Thou Who art the Eye of our eyes, the Ear of our ears, the Heart of our hearts, the Mind of our minds, the Breath of our breaths, the Life of our lives and the Soul of our souls, bless us, Dear God, to be aware of Thy Presence, Now and Here. This is all that we ask of Thee !

May all be aware of Thy Presence in the East and the West, and in the North and the South ! May Peace and Goodwill abide among individuals as well as communities and nations ! This is our earnest prayer.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL !

OM! OM! OM!

CHAPTER I

ALONE WITH GOD

In silent fast and prayer

Alone with God, O tend' rest ecstasy

Thus let me rest eternally,

Folded in silence White.

Drifting on waves of Light

To Nirvan, O my Beloved;

On thy sweet Mother breast,

Lull me to dewy rest,

Safely in Thee I hide.

Thus let Thy child abide.

At last the long expected day of my cherished dreams has dawned. This is the first day of the long fast I resolved to take. How anxiously I waited and looked for this auspicious day of days!

Yes, God fulfils all sacred dreams and right desires, sooner or later. The buds bloom only in their appointed time or season. Unnatural anxiety or hurry over them does not hasten or help the full bloom of flowers, nor the fulfilment of our ambitions and undertakings.

Like a greedy miser who looks forward with great expectation to the promised day of getting a hoard of wealth from some caravan, like nature in the frozen winter which awaits the first signs of the bright rays of the spring sun, and as a chaste bride who awaits the coming of her dear lord, I too waited for this blessed opportunity to be alone with the Great Beloved—the Indweller of my heart.

As I started the first day of fasting and silence, there arose within me so great an ecstasy that I closed my 'kutiram' doors, as well as the doors of my heart, to the outer world, and felt His

presence so intensely that I began to commune with Him. With my outstretched arms, embracing and taking Him into the sacred sanctuary of my heart, I murmured silently, "Lord, how anxiously I waited for Thee all along."

I felt that He began to whisper reproachfully, "Have I not been with Thee always?"

I replied, "Yes, my Lord, Thou hast been with me always, but there have been others beside Thee. Now I am all alone with Thee."

At this the still small voice seemed to whisper, "My child, you must learn to recognize Me, even in the many in the manifested. When you can see the One in the many, you are always alone with Me. Then nothing else can exist besides Me, the one without a second."

Indeed! World Peace is based on and centered on this great Truth of beholding the One in the many. Thus I lost myself in this blessed unity, forgetting all names and forms.

I was so happy and contented that I did not know what to do with myself. Hence, I read a page here and there, assimilating some stray thoughts of singular worth, for I felt that I must be careful of what I read, and that I should read only when I could not meditate.

I said to myself, "As I am strong and healthy now, I must be the same on the thirtieth day of my fast as well." All things are possible for those who trust in Him completely. May He be praised for all His blessings. Om, Om, Om!

It was evening. I went on the roof for a little fresh air to drink deeply God's invigorating *Prana* and to enjoy the glory of nature in all its sublimity. The moon was shining and the stars sparkling faintly and there reigned a holy stillness all around. In

ecstasy, I paced over the roof to and fro, all unconscious of time, glorifying God on every side in every form.

Often I fancy, when I chant the holy syllable *OM*, that the hills, trees and birds join in with me. That day, as I was silent, observing *Mounam* along with my fast, they too seemed to be silent and still, without the least motion. In expression of deep gratitude, love and unity, my eyes were lifted towards the moon and stars, and my hands were extended towards the hills and trees. How alive they all were with the spirit of love! Strange as it may seem I take joy not only in exchanging my heart with them, but also in conversing with them lovingly, and they too respond to my love in their myriad hushed voices.

Hours passed, and I sat still on the white parapet of the roof and meditated on the self-shining splendour of the interpenetrating Presence. The air grew chill. I came down reluctantly, leaving the outer beauty but with the consolation and hope of coming upon greater beauty in the stillness of my heart, below in my room.

Since I felt neither weak nor thirsty, much less hungry, I took only one glass of water squeezing a few drops of lemon into it and two glasses of plain water during the whole day. Lemon juice in water is not considered food but as an essential factor for the purification of the body by all the advocates and students of fasting. I do not know why one is asked also to drink as much water as possible, at least eight glasses a day.

As in my previous fasts, I did not force myself to drink much water, without feeling the need of it. Yet I was healthy and strong striving to drink deeply the nectar of Immortality that quenches all thirst and satisfies all hunger.

May God be praised!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER II

MESSAGE OF THE SUNBEAMS

Sunbeams, Essence of all Light and Love!

Golden, raining from above,

How joyously my body, soul and mind

Sips from the Sun-cup of mankind —

The radiant Heart of God!

I feel Thy force and healing might.

O Universal Source of light!

I quicken at Thy touch of flame,

Into a life past form or name.

Thus let me merge in boundless Love

And like the sunbeams from above,

Spend forth myself upon the earth

Glorifying Him Who gives all radiance birth.

Here is another glorious day to live, breathe and feel His presence. I spent the night peacefully and satisfactorily, except when one of the little kittens disturbed me, repeatedly trying to crawl into my blanket. I was able to be aloof from everyone in the Ashram, but not from the kittens. In spite of the watchfulness of the boys who take care of them, they often manage to escape their vigilance and come to me through the windows. As if they are also able to understand the spirit of my fast, they come softly and without mewing, sleep at my feet or by my side without purring. But one little kitten wanders all over the Ashram in the day time and when the hour of rest comes, it slowly creeps into my room to repose on my lap or nestle close to my very heart and sleeps, reminding me that sooner or later, to all of us, even though we wander all over the world's highways and byways, a time will come when we need

rest and everlasting Peace, when we should also softly creep into the Universal Heart of God.

Both yesterday and today I much enjoyed long sun baths on the roof, meditating on the message of the life-giving sunbeams. Have we ever thought over the blessed mission of these soul-awakening sunbeams? What is life, what is existence without sunbeams? May we all strive to be just like SUN BEAMS penetrating into the frozen hearts, heavy hearts, and dejected hearts of humanity!. Let sun beams burst from our loving hearts ceaselessly until they fill and refill the whole world, creating one luminous mass of stupendous light of the Sun of suns.

As it is the winter season, the rays of the sun are not so warm. Hence I felt like continuing my sun bath indefinitely, identifying myself with the Soul of the silent sunbeams.

After the sun bath, I had my usual bath with tepid and cold water. Remembering the following sweet prayer of a devout sister, "MY LORD! GIVE ME EVERYDAY A LITTLE WORK TO OCCUPY MY MIND, A LITTLE SUFFERING TO SANCTIFY MY SPIRIT, A LITTLE GOOD TO DO TO COMFORT MY HEART", I too tried to engage myself in some work of the Ashram for a while.

Verily, how hard it is to pray or meditate all the time! Hence, we need a little work to keep us busy, a little suffering to purify us and to keep us in close touch with the Lord and a little good to do, for the growth and happiness of our souls.

In spite of the work, I felt strong and happy. As I felt strong and healthy, I wished to remain the same even at the end of my thirty days of fasting. As thoughts assume form, I want to meditate

on STRENGTH and gain more strength. 'As a man thinketh so he is.' We become what we think or meditate upon sooner or later.

Weakness is often associated with fasting. On the contrary, divine strength or cosmic energy is to be associated with fasting. It is never through weakness that one realizes God, but it is through strength, the supernatural strength. Then the Universal Love and Infinite Peace take possession of us.

In spite of the nearness of God, I often find myself unconsciously repeating those beautiful words of Sri Rama Krishna, "ANOTHER DAY HAS GONE BY IN VAIN, AND THOU HAST NOT YET COME TO ME."

It was Kabir that said, "The day has gone, wilt thou waste the night, also, without Him?" I listen to the whispering voice of Christ, repeating, "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN." Often I listen to the silent voice of the immortal Sages and Saints of Vedas and other sacred scriptures proclaiming the essence of Truth in fiery words, 'THOU ART THAT'.

Amidst these conflicting thoughts, the God of my heart seems to rise rebuking me silently, "THOU OF LITTLE FAITH, WHY DOST THOU FORGET AND IGNORE ME WHEN I AM ALWAYS WITH THEE, PERVADING AND PERMEATING THY VERY CELLS? BEHOLD! THOU AND I ARE NEVER TWO BUT ONE. SO CEASE THY AIMLESS SEARCH AND REST CONTENT IN ME, FOR I AM WITH THEE ALWAYS EVEN UNTO THE END." Thus, perceiving Him within and without, I became silent, no more feeling sad or worried over the passing of the days, for in Him there is neither past nor present neither space nor time.

According to the stage and temperament of the mind, certain forms of meditation are helpful at certain times. At sunset when lying again under the open sky on my roof, bathed and laved with the soft sunbeams, I felt a great ecstasy by meditating on breath, the universal Breath. How near and dear to us, nay, inseparably one with us is God, the luminous energy filtering through every sunbeam! Verily, He is the Soul of the sunbeams, the Breath of our breaths, the Life of our lives and the Soul of our souls.

May we ever abide centering ourselves in the Universal Breath of *SOHAM* which is vivifying every sunbeam, and radiating to every open heart.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER III

THE LIFE OF SWEET SMELLING FLOWERS

*Let us to sweet flowers turn,
Holy lessons from them learn,
How to lead a lovely life,
In this vale of tears and strife,
Like a flower — face each day.
Lift our hearts to God and pray,
Give out fragrance, never craving,
Human praise or things enslaving,
Live for God and nothing more,
Saint-like pure our days outpour.
Brief life, flowers pass away
But in Him, both bloom always
Let us to sweet flowers turn,
Sacred lessons from them learn.*

I woke up early, greeting the luminous, enfolding presence of God on every side. After a silent meditation, I went out and lay down on one of the pials in front of my 'Mandir' (building) basking in the mild rays of the rising sun in the early hours of the dawn.

When I turned my head towards the right, I felt happy to see clusters of 'morning-glories' looking at me in all their freshness and beauty. Watching them for a time, unconsciously, my lips began to utter silently, the following prayer to the Lord of men, as well as of flowers.

O Lord! bless me with the life of a sweet-smelling fragrant flower. How fresh, tender and beautiful it is, shining with variegated colours, drawing the minds of one and all towards its sweetness! Who can make a flower except Thee, the Creator of

vast universes, as well as of little flowers? How the flowers silently bloom and live their carefree life, without worry about the morrow! Hast Thou not said through one of Thy sons, "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin," yet they are splendidly clothed by Thee. O Father! bless me, with the life of a sweet flower, radiating beauty and fragrance towards all those that pass by me without expecting the least reward. Above all may Thou bloom in my heart as Thou art blooming in the golden heart of a little flower, is all that I ask of Thee!

It is such a great ecstatic joy to lose one's self in the deep, still heart of nature. After a while there came a whispering from within, saying, "the life of a flower is only for a day. Art thou prepared to wither and perish as the flower, for it closes its fragrant life in a day?" I replied, "Yes, nor does the life of this body, this physical life-sheath, last for ever. This life too is only temporary and evanescent. Instead of living like a banyan or an oak tree for a thousand years, better to live a life of fragrance, beauty and service even if it is for a day and then to pass on to higher realms".

Some advocates of fasting have remarked that in observing a long fast, the first, second and the third day are the most troublesome days. In my case, I felt happy on the first day, strong on the second day and quite cheerful on the third day. When one identifies himself with the Spirit—the Indwelling Presence—all days are alike, are they not?

As our PEACE magazine is being prepared for publication, I had to work hard over the proofs etc. for nearly five hours. But work is mere play as long as the mortal retires allowing the Omnipotence to work through him. After my work, I rested for a time meditatively, which refreshed and strengthened me a great deal.

I often wondered what to do with myself, having so much time that I could call my own! It was really a happy coincidence that a beautiful picture of Lord Christ was put up in front of me on the wall only a little while before I thought of taking to this fast. Needless to say, it helped me when I looked and gazed into the face of the Holy One who fasted forty days, spending all the time in prayer and meditation.

I often silently asked him several questions regarding His fast of forty days, — Dear Lord! How did you spend all your time, both day and night? Did you pray and meditate throughout the twenty-four hours? Did you not rest or sleep? Pray, help me to spend my days, also, as you spent them in those blessed days of your memorable fast. I long to pray and meditate like you, spending every moment of my time just as you did in those days of your fast. As I may never get this blessed opportunity again, let me not waste even an hour or a minute in vain, but make the best use of every moment in reaching higher and higher and thus coming nearer to Thee day by day. This is all I pray of Thee.

Several times a day, whenever my eyes wandered towards His picture, I conversed with Him, trying to feel His tender Love and Spirit, and awaited an answer. But He neither spoke nor smiled but continued to look into my heart and Soul with His penetrating eyes of love as if asking me to merge within, to be still and to listen to His answer in the stillness of my heart.

Thus my third day started with the sweet message of fragrant flowers and ended in the embrace and enfolding love of Christ.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER IV

ANGELS WAIT ON THE MASTERS OF MIND

*Great are they who do His will,
Their pure behests angels fulfil,
And ring from out their hearts ajar,
The temple bells of joy afar.
Then may our hearts be free of taints,
Share company of God and saints,
For verily, masters of the mind,
Enjoy such Grace and mercy kind.*

It is easy to abstain from every kind of food and drink, but alas, how difficult it is to abstain from every kind of imagination and to control the mind from its crowding thoughts of various forms.

Last night, I was disturbed by the rush of continuous thoughts, not harmful or dangerous in themselves, but average or common place thoughts passing in endless succession. Yet thoughts are thoughts, as chains are chains, whether they are forged of iron or gold. They fetter and drag the mind away from concentration.

What shall one do, when one's unity of life and solidarity is dissipated on useless and wandering thoughts that lead nowhere? One way is to let go of all control and wait for the tempest to calm itself. Simply introspect, marking all the thoughts that sweep through your mind. Remain the subject or witness of them. But this is not so easy if one has not enough control to remain thus. Nevertheless, it is worth trying and helpful if one succeeds. The next best way is to insist upon beholding and recognising the Presence of God everywhere and in everything, especially in the

things towards which the mind is ceaselessly wandering.

When once we realize with firm conviction that all is God, not theoretically alone, but practically, the mind ceases to fly and flutter, and finally gets itself settled in the all-pervading Truth, wherein it is all One and the same Presence.

This is the happy, blessed state to attain for which kings have abdicated their thrones, and men in the East and West have renounced the worship of Mammon. The summit of this realisation was attained by Krishna, Christ, Buddha and other saviours of humanity, and they have set an example to us, so luminous that we may also walk in their sacred foot prints.

As for my fasting, it is glorious and wonderful. I am feeling stronger day by day in every way, physically, mentally and spiritually. Silence helps me immensely. *Fasting and silence are the imperishable mines of wealth for all seekers of Peace.* May He be praised for all His blessings!

If there is any thing most pathetic in this world, it is to see the sad and helpless state of a man who is a slave to the senses, restlessly suffering day and night with numberless desires. His desires will not allow him either to rest or to sleep. Desire alone is the root cause of all physical and mental diseases.

It is wonderful to desire the Highest. But unfortunately how very few and rare are those blessed souls who are living only for the Essential and Eternal Truth! All are desiring only the enchanting things of phenomena, ceaselessly running after some name or form.

It has been said that devils will be dancing always around the man who is full of selfish desires, laughing and pitying his

restless and forlorn state. Verily, he is to be pitied, for being a child of God and an image of Him, he forgets His imperishable wealth of Divinity, the Substance, and runs after the dark shadows of the changing world.

One who begs never gets anything, and he never amounts to anything especially in the spiritual life. Verily, begging is death and only giving and sharing is life! Hence one must be anxious not to beg or endeavour to accumulate as much wealth as possible in the world, but to give and pour out all that he has on suffering creation. It is wonderful to be ever in the attitude of a giver of Peace, Joy and Love!

Hence we read in the scriptures that Angels stand waiting on the masters of mind. They are waiting to be serviceable and to fulfil the slightest wish of such realised souls. How strange and paradoxical is life in this world? So long as we are filled with desires—selfish desires—devils will be dancing around us. When once we shun the desires and rise above the little self, Angels will be waiting upon us.

It once happened that the minister of a certain kingdom was engaged in various kinds of worship to amass untold wealth. He prayed for the same, to all the deities in all the temples and churches. He excavated all the mines and places where he hoped to find riches. He meditated on the burning ground, invoking the favour of entities to bless him with wealth but all in vain. He worshipped all the gods and goddesses and even Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, to bless him with his heart's desire. But the result was only disappointment and sorrow.

Finally, feeling disgusted with his life of disappointment and failure, he renounced the world and all his desires and was retiring into the forest. Then lo and behold, Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth,

was following the minister. She begged him to accept all the wealth he wanted, but he refused the offer saying, "So long as I prayed day and night and worshipped everyone, everywhere, you did not come to me. When I renounced the world, you offer me all your wealth." Lakshmi smiled and replied: "So long as you were praying and worshipping, you yourself stood in the way of your desires, filled with selfishness and ignorance. Since you have renounced the self now, I am at your service, waiting to serve you."

How true are the words that Angels are ever ready seeking the blessed privilege of serving the masters of the mind. So let us master our restless minds, to be ever restful in God. Verily in knowing Him, we will be able to know everything. In having Him, we have everything. Our selfless desires will be fulfilled. Our life will be complete.

May we all be blessed with that Completeness or Fullness of Peace, which is the divine heritage of all the fully self-controlled masters of mind.

May Peace be Unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER V

CALL ON THE LORD

*I called to God in silence bless'd,
And woke reclining on His breast,
I sought my Lord in burning prayer,
And woke to find Him everywhere.
I sought the Lord of my salvation,
And found His sacred habitation
Without, within, and all around,
In men, in beasts, in birds, in sound.
They come, all bringing tokens sweet,
Rare perfume of His Lotus feet,
Their myriad tongues voice hymns of praise
Of Him who fills my nights and days.*

Here is another blessed day to serve, to love and to recognize Him. This day also I have to correct proofs of our PEACE magazine. While correcting the proofs, I felt happy and thrilled to read the inspiring article CALL ON THE LORD contributed by Swami Ramdasji. The very heading, CALL ON THE LORD, is very uplifting and since then, these words have been ringing in my heart continuously.

I too love to call on the Lord, not only with the lips, mind and heart but with my very breath. How glorious it will be when each and every cell in our very being lives for and calls on the Lord! It is very rare to see people who are completely dedicated and consecrated unto God. Out of hundreds of persons, there are only a few who offer twenty-five or fifty per cent of their minds to God. And all the rest are worshipping Mammon with hundred per

cent of their minds. When such is the case, how can we expect the Lord to come to us?

As I call on the Lord with my very breath with each and every breath, the breath which is no other than the Universal Breath, I feel that the Lord is drawn to me, wherever He may be, even from His mystic regions of incomprehensible splendour and glory.

Where can the Lord be in the first place? This is a perplexing question to beginners, but His existence is an established and settled fact and reality to realised souls. The conception of God and of His existence varies according to the state and stage of individual evolution. If He is within, if God is one without a Second, if He is always abiding in the sacred sanctuary of our hearts, why should we call on Him and from where do we expect Him to come to us?

In spite of the firm belief in the philosophy of non-quality or *Adwaita*, I too take joy in conversing with Him often. Recently I was praying thus:

"O Lord! Am I not calling Thee with all the strength of my heart and soul? Why dost Thou not come to me? Am I not living, breathing and working for Thee? If I am still weak or frail, purify me, bless me with Thy Universal Heart!"

Soon the answer came in the still small voice:

"Lo! I am with you always!"

All that one needs is to open one's eyes of Love and Unity and to behold that He is here —everywhere and in everyone.

Strange as it may be, it is surprising how visitors are pouring in especially during my days of fast and they only wish to see me, without speaking a word or expecting to listen to a word from me.

As I do not want anyone to go away sad and disappointed, I allowed the first batch of visitors to be brought to me. Offering their salutations, they came and sat in mute silence and veneration.

Lo! in a flash I felt the Lord had come at last. The Lord whom I sought so love-hungry in prayers, fasts and silence, comes to me now in the form of these visitors. My heart is unburdened and it feels happy and light for He has come to me!

In expression of gratitude, tears of ecstasy flow from my eyes ceaselessly. Glory!Glory! Glory!

What else can I write about His limitless mercy and boundless compassion! *His ways are mysterious and incomprehensible.* He comes to us in a thousand forms, manifests in a million ways. We but need open our eye, the inner eye, the eye of wisdom, to feel and recognize Him.

After this first group left with profound feelings of love and inspiration and while I was waiting for the second group of visitors, the Lord came to me in the form of a kitten through the window mewing, expecting my love and recognition. What else could I do other than to welcome the Lord with open arms who comes to me in every form!

The next group of visitors were government officials and educated people. They too sat in silence offering their salutations, feeling the silent force which vibrates in their hearts, from the moment they entered the precincts of our Abode of Peace. I wrote the following words and passed the message to them:

Dear Beloved Ones,

I am deeply grateful for your visit to Santi Ashram, which is your own Spiritual Home. My heart longs and craves to help and

serve you, but my help is only secondary, for **real help** comes from within yourselves. Verily, as God is shining in your own hearts, realise Him in stillness and thus be a blessing to yourselves and others.

In memory of your visit, may I request you to meditate with me for a little while feeling His Presence, forgetting all else at least for the time being! May God Bless you with Peace and long-life is the prayer of your own brother *Omkar*.

They too left me with a taste of His love and a touch of His presence. How Silence speaks louder than words! Now I am waiting for the third group of visitors, making the best use of my time in writing out these thoughts during intervals. This does not seem to be a fast or silence day, with dozens and dozens of visitors pouring in. Yet as Krishna teaches in the Gita, those blessed souls who find *activity in inactivity and inactivity in activity* are perfect. This is rather a hard nut to be cracked for dry intellects.

Then came a Swamiji with a group of nearly twenty-five sisters and brothers, who were all his disciples. They brought nearly half a cart load of bananas, oranges, apples etc. How contradictory and strange are the movements of the wheel of the Law again! While I was fasting, my room was filled with all kinds of fruits! There were times often when there was not a single fruit of any kind even to taste in the Ashram. What should I do with these fruits? Of course they were distributed among the devotees who brought them, and also among the members and workers in the Ashram.

One lady remarked, "I brought a nice big apple for Swamiji **to eat.**" As if to satisfy her wish in a way, I smelt the fragrant **apple with a smile.** What a sweet aroma even an apple gives forth!

It was on the chair in my room along with many other delicious fruits. But none of these fruits could tempt me. I did not have any desire or craving for any fruit or anything. May He be praised!

As usual after spending a few minutes in stillness, in deep meditation, the Swamiji wrote on a paper that all of them were waiting to give *Harathi*, the burning of camphor and incense before me, and if I did not give permission, they would be terribly disappointed. So I replied writing on a paper that they might burn the camphor to the Indwelling Presence, to the Interpenetrating Light of their hearts as well as of the Universe, offering their little selves in the flames of the camphor.

Then I closed my eyes and there was fragrance and light all around and when I opened my eyes, the devotees were being led away into the Ashram and I was left to my deep silence and Peace again. Thus finished this busy day in the silent recognition of the Lord in the form of all the various friends and visitors.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER VI

DEDICATION

*"His years are eternal as the Heavens
All glorious is His Form.
Wisdom endureth through all the ages,
For He is the Teacher of the Law."*

Here is another blessed day, but even so, I should rather say: "Here is another opportunity in this finite life to utilise its experiences and gain strength and courage as stepping-stones to go from the finite to the Infinite, from the unreal to the Real."

I mused thus because, having to engage in many activities, such as correcting proofs etc. though craving within to merge in Silence, I felt a slight sense of poignancy and inexpressible longing and further mused: "What is the object of my fast? Is it only to abstain from partaking of food? Is the aim of this fast and abstinence from speech, merely to be aloof from everyone? Does it not have a deeper meaning than this?"

Despite this earnest trend of thought, the following day happened to be the Foreign Mail Day and many dear ones were awaiting a word of love and cheer from me, so I turned to my correspondence again, and worked like a beaver writing letters and addressing magazines so that PEACE might reach the friends in the north, east, south and west before Christmas, with the greetings and messages for that joyous season.

At length the work was finished and I felt weary and hungry for a true spiritual feast. Therefore, I sought to withdraw into great Rest, in deep meditation, laying aside all outer action.

Very soon I felt *overshadowed* by the consciousness of a lovely, sacred Presence enfolding me as a zephyr enfolds a drowsy, closed flower at even-tide. The heavenly dew, tears of ecstasy began to flow from my eyes. He has come and He is here. The Lord of my heart and of the Universe—how can one do otherwise than melt with love and intense joy into the radiance and peace He sheds about Him?

Ah, but what can I offer my King of kings, I, a poor : Having naught besides, I offered my streaming tears as : to His quiet feet. He received my offering, and tarried with me in divine and inexpressibly sweet communion. After tasting His love, I whispered to Him: "Beloved, why dost Thou not always abide with me thus forever?"

He deigned to say in the vibrant Voice of Silence: "My child, I neither come nor go. I am always with you. But you pass me by at times, as if your eyes are veiled with the glittering dust of the world. If you love Me with all your heart, mind and soul, then strive to pierce this veil at all times, beholding Me, who is the interpenetrating Presence of the whole Cosmos, ever abiding with thee."

I bowed my head very low, greatly moved by the indescribable love and compassion of His gentle mien and voice, reproaching myself for my blindness at times. I also implored His Grace that I might dedicate myself to Him anew by living, breathing, working for Him and always abiding in my Beloved, as the perfume is one with the champa flowers that lie high on temple altars.

My soul arose in mighty inspiration and cried: "If I cannot realise anything else from this silent fast, at least may it remove

any cloud that might ever obscure the fair vision of my Beloved from my fixed gaze! What a blessed state to enter into *Nirvana* ever bathing in the sunlight of His Presence! To count no longer days or years, lost completely in the Light of Eternity! O Wonder and Mystery of life, now unveiled and face to face forever! Glory! Glory! Glory!

Verily there is no end to activities in the Ashram or the world. It resembles a cascade of water ever tumbling down with always more to come. But what a happy thought! So is, also, the boundless love of God a perennial flow of the Living Water of Life, Light and Love! The more we delight in it, the more His Spirit outpours upon and through us. Let us then be worthy channels to receive his never-ending floods of power and blessings.

As to my fast, I had almost forgotten that. It is glorious! May God be praised for His infinite blessings! I, by myself, can do nothing, but He doth everything in heaven and earth and under the deeps. The blind can see with clear vision, the deaf are made to hear, the lame stride over the three worlds in His Name.

In Him, I am strong and full of health. No adverse symptom mars my equanimity. Only this doubt confronts me. Perhaps have I not yet started my true fast? The genuine fast will only commence when I can forget entirely the body, mind, Ashram and the world! In His Infinite Wisdom and Compassion, may He soon bless me with this perfection in the Law, not for my sake but for the Work in His Name, is my earnest supplication.

Nectar of Life whereon we may feast!

Flowing for greatest, flowing for least,

Light of the soul, O sweet Shining Grace!

Guide our frail barques to Thy Holy place.
With the strong golden cord of Super-mind
To Thy will, Dear God, our anchors now bind!
May we find in the haven of 'Peace-in-Thee,'
Rest from delusion, from care and strife free,
And in heart observing the Law of God,
That the way of Peace may be ceaselessly trod.
In Thee we are One, in death or life,
Through days of sweet calm, or trouble rife!
May we merge in Thee, blest Spirit, for aye!
O Fountain of Love!-this sanctified day!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER VII

NEW CONQUESTS

*The Lord's way is best
Trust in Him and rest.
Cease all vain care and woes,
Let all in God repose.
He doth thy heart indwell
And every cloud dispel.
Then live in Him full blessed
Assured God's way is best.*

It has been said that man is a bundle of impressions, thought-impressions that are the result of desires. Desires are the outcome of attachment to objects of the world, be they good or bad. We are all slaves of our own habits in some form or other. As we grow in discrimination and we give up a habit, the seed-thought, however, often still survives in the subtle plane, in the form of *Latent Desire*.

It is a bad habit with most of us that on finishing a work requiring much effort and patience, we give way to the thought: "O! Now I am tired and exhausted." But work never really tires us. We never are exhausted merely by work that is done with the bodily or mental instruments. It is the thought of weariness and exhaustion that makes one feel unduly tired, for as we think so we become. It has been repeated often, we reap what we sow and thoughts are things.

Work done in the right spirit and with proper understanding exhilarates the spirit, strengthens the mind and stimulates the soul and body. Hence, it has been quoted that those who have found their real life-work are indeed blessed. Those who have found work that is helpful and suitable to their respective temperament, those

who have found their true vocation are never really weary, but ever happy and contented, radiating joy about them.

All discord, enui and weariness arises when we attempt fixing a square plug, as it were, in a round aperture. There is no wonder that work in such an unfortunate state of affairs becomes enervating drudgery.

Applying these musings personally, I am happy to say that I am serene and contented with my fast and silence, serving the cause of Peace with inspiration and zest. Every day as I awaken at dawn, I feel so newly resurrected, vital and strong as to make me wonder whether or not I have begun my fast. How strange and wonderful it is, despite one full week of absolute fasting, to feel so strong and well. Yes, indeed as we have often discovered, *thoughts are things*.

Today, I have done some deep introspection by merging within, resulting in a firm determination to weed out all signs of negativity so that the blossoms of Truth might bloom in full glory. The aim of a true fast should always include the discovery and expulsion of all weakness and error, visible or invisible, in one's life. By self-examination, I could see that my greatest weakness lay in my attachment to the Ashram and the Mission of Peace. Because of this root cause, I have had to surrender a little to worry, fear and expectation.

When there is, at times, no paper on which to print our magazines, when there are no stamps to mail either journals or letters, when there is no food in the Ashram, it is difficult to soar completely above worry, for the time being. Then I lay all burdens at His gleaming feet, and rise buoyantly in renewed faith made easy by some unexpected token of His ever-abiding love and care.

I do not fear death, disease, loss or any such events that haunt

the average life, but a fleeting sense of fear passes across my heart when some negative, subtle thing threatens or assails the cause of Peace, clawing with ignorance at the white blossom of many years of careful cultivation in a humble corner of the Garden of Truth, Santi Ashram and its Mission. But comes the happy, cloud-dispelling thought, which flashes from within, to join the Infinite Light, and thus gives birth to positive affirmations and manifestations. What can stand against us when God is with us enfolding all that belongs to him in a flaming aura of Light and Love! Even though assailed, Truth comes through all bludgeonings "bloody but unbowed" Like violets temporarily covered by winter's snow, the blossoms of Truth lift their heads anew, and send forth sweetness into the earth, unable to contain it within their own hearts.

Every great work has its opponents and foes. The greater the work, the more far-reaching and fruitful, the harder press the negative forces. Through crucifixion one reaches resurrection. How narrow and rugged is the Way of Truth!

Our Ashram is fortunate in having several royal, distinguished and powerful friends, some with great material possessions. In my zeal for the cause of Peace, I have at times entertained momentarily the secret thought that they might be divinely moved and blessed to substantially aid the cause of Peace, and so let rivers of beneficence flow forth into the world through such philanthropy.

It is a sad fact that those who pose as our dearest friends, especially in these days of depression, become almost foes when their practical, material help is solicited. It aids one to realize that expectation is wrong, from any but the King of kings, with His ever-flowing and limitless coffers. After all, what is mortal help?

It is only God who truly helps, He who is the Master of the Universe!

Material riches among mortals are loaned in Divine dispensation temporarily, as custodians or guardians and only if faithfully used to hasten the Kingdom of God are they of any lasting comfort or joy to the trustees. The Law is ever in operation. By His will are all things done. Instead of expecting from this or that temporal source, it is wise to only go directly to the Sovereign, Almighty Father who is the Giver of all gifts and the Fulfiller of all ambitions. That which is His work will be cared for in its growing needs as it expands.

With all the mighty wealth of silver and gold, and chests of priceless gems, no mortal man can take with him, when death calls, even a broken needle. Hence it is blessed, while there is yet time, to share what has been entrusted to us with others who need it.

It is resolved in memory of this sacred fast to weed out these three latent impressions from my life: *worry, fear and expectation. Worry leads one nowhere but to decay and old age. Fear saps our life's blood, leading us to an early grave. Expectation kills the present moment of peace and joy, leading to false hopes and empty delusions regarding the future.*

May all negativity be consumed in the eternal fire of God-consciousness and may Light, Love and Prosperity be ushered into all lives with His Fulfilled Plan for all creation!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER VIII

AMRITA — THE NECTAR OF GRACE

I woke up as usual, bathing in His Love, feeling strong within and without to merge in and glorify Him, another blessed day.

It is strange that there is a sweet taste in my mouth. I am wondering whether I am having the taste of a tiny bit of Amrita, the Nectar of the Immortals, which is the common birthright of every individual on the face of the earth. I want to drink It, not with this tongue and finite senses, but with all my Soul, completely rising above the plane of senses.

Men of God-realisation say that the perennial spring of Amrita is ceaselessly flowing in everyone of us and those who are selfless and God-imbued can drink It. Such lives are a blessing unto all.

Sooner or later all are bound to reach those Blessed Heights — the blind, the lame, the deaf, the poor, the sick, the weak, the oppressed, the depressed and the most sinful. What a consolation and joy it is even to think of this Vision Beautiful, that awaits one and all!

It is surprising to see how wonderfully I am getting on with my fast. God is certainly with me ceaselessly watching, protecting and blessing me with His love and Divine strength.

Hitherto when I fasted for a week, or even for a short period, my toes used to get twisted on account of weakness and now there is not the least sign of twisting or weakness anywhere in the body. May God be praised!

If only man could have a little control over his tongue, with a sincere craving to reach the Goal of life, he could fast indefinitely, at least for a few months, without the least danger of dissolution of

this body. For in man, in most of us, there is enough of reserve fat and other surplus matter to keep us alive for a long time. During the days of a fast, when one stops every kind of food and drink, he is nourished with the fat and other substances reserved in abundance within him; hence, no wonder I feel strong. Especially during the days of a fast, the stomach will be like an unceasing, burning hot furnace, consuming all dross and foreign matter within itself.

In these, my happy fasting days which should really be called my feasting days, I feel light and buoyant both within and without and pure just like a newborn babe. Often I feel a state of formlessness or an ethereal sense as if devoid of body.

But it is sad that I am disgusted with both plain and lemon water. Everyday I force myself to drink a glass or two. It seems incredible if I say that I feel everyday, instead of emptiness, a sense of fullness in my stomach, at times causing belching, just as after a sumptuous repast.

It is an established fact from every point of view that when once a man contacts the Universal Energy—the Cosmic Breath, he needs no longer gross, physical foods. He is nourished with pure *Prana*, the ethereal food, *Manna* and Nectar of God.

I am never tired of repeating that all fasts done with body-consciousness are complete failures and fasts that are undertaken and kept up assimilating the Nectar of the divine energy of God's Love are the only true fasts for emancipation of sacred souls.

So, may I, too, be privileged to continue my fasting, feasting on this Heavenly *Manna* and *Amrita*, the Nectar or Grace which is ever ceaselessly showered, and which awaits one and all, as the only real spiritual food and drink given by our Heavenly Father, the Universal God.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER IX

EVER DEEPER WITHIN

*Dear unseen Hands compelling me,
Unto the sweetest Mystery,
In lotus posture — head erect and spine
Let me dissolve in Silence all divine.
O, pull me deeper in
Thy sea of Love, bright pearls of Truth to win.*

Silently going ever deeper within, I curled up in my bed with eyes closed, repeating in a fervour of longing with tears in my eyes : "I need Thee, my lord. I need Thee always. I need Thee more than ever now. Without Thee, I cannot live any longer."

And the Lord seemed to say: "My child you do not need Me as much as you think that you need Me. You can very well live without Me, for you lived enough years without Me, or away from me. You need many other things more than Me; hence, your mind wanders towards all these things that you need and crave for. *If you need Me alone, as you say, your mind shall be one-pointed and fixed on Me alone.* Freedom comes to those souls, whose minds are ever fixed or centered in Me, so even now fix your mind on Me — the Universal Self or Truth, and think of nothing else."

Realizing the Truth of those words, I clung to Him more and more, promising to stand by Him always, fixing my mind on Him alone.

It is quite permissible, comfortable and easy to meditate in a relaxed, reclining posture facing the north and keeping the spinal column straight and the hands folded one upon the other over the solar plexus and the heels together, but the sitting in *Padmasana*, or lotus posture, is more beneficial and helpful in attaining high

results in the process of meditation. One is apt to sleep instead of meditating when in the reclining posture. Although it is a bit difficult to meditate in the sitting posture in the beginning, it becomes easy when one grows accustomed to it.

Sometime after the accident that befell my hip, while I was in one of the meetings of our Peace Centre in New York after I finished my discourse, it seemed one lady whispered to her friend: "How could he give such a wonderful message sitting all the while in such a curved or bent posture." Of course, the friend explained about the accident, and that it was a strain for me then to sit absolutely straight for any length of time.

However, this incident made a deep impression on my mind and whenever I sit bending my spine, I seem to hear the remark of that lady, and I try to sit straight keeping my spine erect.

It has been said if we sit crooked, our thoughts also get crooked. If we sit straight, our thoughts are straight. The habit of keeping the spine, neck and head in a straight line plays an important part in the success of our lives, not only spiritually but even physically.

As we watch people sitting in churches and temples, it is sad to see ninety percent of them sitting in crooked postures, with curved spines etc. It is the duty of parents to teach their children, while they are yet tender and flexible, to sit up straight. When once they get into that habit, it becomes second nature to them and they can always sit, work and walk straight. In India our ancient *Yogis* have said that the vital fire, *Kundalini*, passes up the spine and, therefore, it should be kept straight so that it may have a free and direct channel, vibrating to the brain with its illuminating powers of regeneration.

There are, I have learned, several doctors in America, who

attribute most diseases to the crookedness of the spine. If the spine is adjusted and straightened, one is healthy and strong, they say. I think these doctors are called *Chiropractors or Osteopaths*.

If we try to be perfect in little things, big things take care of themselves. Today I have been working the whole morning, afternoon and evening. I had to see several groups of visitors. Since they come from long distances, I cannot disappoint them. When once they come and sit by me, I do not want to send them away without sharing some humble blossom from my heart's garden. So I begin to write a message for each one of them for it makes me sad if any go away from me without receiving a little spiritual strength and inspiration for all the pains they have taken in seeking me out. In spite of rather heavy work and interviewing many visitors, I feel quite strong and happy and not at all tired. The more I work, the more I enjoy it. Today I felt inclined to take a walk feeling full strength from the Fountain of Life, revitalizing every cell as I went on breathing in *Prana*, Peace and Joy.

I read two small booklets on fasting, but found nothing new in these books. What ever information we want, all comes from within if we dive deep enough into the limitless and unfathomable ocean of Peace and Bliss within us, full of the Pearls of Knowledge.

May God be praised! There is a craving for prolonged meditation, for going ever deeper within. May I spend the remaining days of my fast in profound union with the Cosmic Principle, day by day, moment by moment, attuning myself with the Universal Truth.

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER X

SPIRITUAL RAMBLES

*Through life's winding way,
As we ramble day by day,
Let our hearts be full of song,
And our thoughts around Him throng.
May His Presence light our Path,
Guide us from Delusion's wrath.
God, who leads the pilgrim-soul,
Ever nearer to the goal,
Lead us in our upward climb,
To Heights peaceful and sublime.
May we enter one by one,
His great heart—Nirvana won!*

DREAMS:

It was on the tenth day of my precious fast that I wrote my message on "Fasting for Enjoyment". How similar things recur now, which are assembled in the store-house of long past impressions! Last night I rested well, but in the latter part of the night I had too many dreams. Dreams, it is said, are the result of indigestion. I am wondering now whether I still have any kind of indigestion in spite of completing ten days of my fast. Maybe, I have the mental indigestion of too many thoughts. Perhaps, dreams come because of an empty stomach also. But I do still feel that my stomach is full, and hence the dreams.

I think dreams are, after all, the result mainly of our crowded thoughts. What we experience or think of in the day time, we

often repeat in dreams during the night time. Last night in one of the dreams, I was writing a letter to a dear friend of the Ashram requesting him to spend a little time both in the morning and evening in silent and deep meditation and to carry the Presence of God throughout the whole day, and thus make his life a ceaseless flame of devotion to God. I closed my letter saying that I expect all my friends and devotees not to identify themselves with the perishable body but with the imperishable Truth or God. I added at the end, "Kindly keep a little space for me in your big heart of devotion."

How clearly, word by word, I remember this letter! It may be due to fasting that my perception and memory are both so clear.

IN THE HEART OF GOD:

As soon as I woke up, I felt ashamed of writing letters to men instead of to God, especially in these consecrated days of my fast and silence. I ought to request God, not man, to give me a little space in His Big Universal Heart. Then came the consoling thought that man and God are not two, but One — the manifested and the great Unmanifested.

How beautiful it is to pray to God to give us a little space in His Infinite Heart! But has He not given us that privilege already? As He is Omnipresent, are we not already in His heart, wherever we may be? We are filled with and surrounded on every side by His love, and this is at all times. Let us, having eyes, be no more blind! Let us open our eyes even now, to His Love, Beauty and Glory! As I often emphasize, what we need for our emancipation or freedom is *Recognition and Awareness*.

All through the day I have been repeating to myself the wonderful statement: "*I am in the heart of God!*" What great

strength and inspiration it gives, even merely to repeat this affirmation! Whether we are rich or poor, young or old, healthy or sick, virtuous or sinful, we are all in the Heart of God. There is never a moment when we can slip out of His Universal Heart. This one fact or truth is enough for our salvation.

THE EIGHTEEN ADAGES:

During these days, we have been printing SANTI CARDS in our printing works. As I read and re-read these silent messages while correcting the proofs, it fills my mind with mounting joy and inspiration, and I long to share the same with my loving readers. Hence, I am giving the messages of the SANTI CARDS below.

1. Truth is one; men call It by various names.
2. Practise always to live in God, and help others to live in Him.
3. From every face, I see God shining forth.
4. Service of man is service of God.
5. Reform yourself before you reform others.
6. To Inhale and Exhale Peace is thy Birthright.
7. Omnipotence is working; let the mortal retire.
8. Forgetfulness of God is death.
9. Knowing THAT, they melt in silence.
10. To think oneself weak is a sin.
11. Do not hurt nor be hurt by others.
12. Every being is a moving temple of the Infinite.

13. "Out of the depths, fresh Strength,
Out of the darkness, new Light,
Even in the gloom, we are on the Way."
14. Religion and life are not two, but one.
15. Do not be an outcaste by recognizing castes.
16. Do not love, but live as love.
17. Constant repetition of *OM* leads to Freedom.
18. Be still, and know that "I am God."

These contain the concentrated essence of Life and Love, and one could readily meditate on any one of them as a *Mantram*. One could easily write an inspiring volume on each of the statements for they give rise to a flow of inspiring thoughts. Assimilating the essence of these, let us merge within and meditate on the Soul-song of each of the above affirmations to realize in stillness, the Peace that passeth all understanding.

May Peace be unto All!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XI

PURIFICATION OF THE TEMPLE

*This Body Temple is all Thine,
And may its consecrated shrine,
No baser metal ever hold,
Than Thy divine and burning gold.
In flesh and blood and mind and heart
Thou plied an Omniscient art,
To build a holy resting place
That I may see Thee face to Face.
O Great Beloved, so anxiously sought!
In aisles of pure and fiery thought,
Stay now with radiance cool and white
And flood this Temple with Thy Light!*

FLYING DAYS:

These fasting days are passing away like happy hours. I am neither sorry nor elated for allowing the days to pass thus. So long as I feel His Presence, what does it matter if days pass on, months vanish, and even years roll by? This is the eleventh day, and I have not as yet felt even vaguely, the least sign of headache, nausea, hunger, thirst or any negative symptoms, such as weakness or faintness. I feel only His Lightning Presence within and without, flashing in each and every cell of my being, and I am satisfied with it, nay joyous with it beyond expression.

As the days of my fast pass by, the Ashram work also is increasing day by day. I felt a little pain in my back because of

sitting in one position for several hours at a stretch. But who would not feel pain sitting in one fixed posture from morning till evening? With a little relaxation and meditation, the pain disappeared.

CLEANSING THE PHYSICAL TEMPLE:

Since the beginning of my fast, I have been taking an enema everyday to keep the alimentary canal clean and it is strange how even now some accumulated waste matter is thrown off. Today I put into the enema water a little Epsom Salt. It helped to remove dangerous matter which the activities of the blood circulation bring to the intestines freely during a fast.

If I find my condition like this at the end of the eleventh day of my fast, just think of the interior physical state of the people whose one work and diversion seems to be to eat, stuffing themselves, morning, noon and night with breakfasts, in between refreshments, dinners, suppers, bed-coffees and mid-night drinks! It is no wonder people often are so morbid, restless and sickly. Foreign matter rotting and clogging inside the system is enough to keep one from expressing the best and highest thoughts and from walking in the path of Truth. Soul and spirit is weighted and enmeshed in heavy, fevered flesh, full of irritation and auto-intoxication.

When the body is pure, the mind is also pure and when the mind is pure, the Self, or God, manifests in the mirror of one's own soul. It is quite essential or at least greatly helpful if one takes an enema or mild saline laxative once in a fort-night in the name of health, which is one's real wealth. Of course a hygienic, light and pure natural diet must precede all these measures.

I am still feeling that my real fast has not yet begun, for I have been busy with so many activities of the Ashram. To me the

real fast begins, not when I abstain from food alone, but when I can fast or forget the Ashram, the world, and all the latent impressions within, and when I keep the flame of God brightly shining in my heart, without effort. May such blessed days of perpetual communion dawn soon, is my prayer!

AWAITING THE MOON:

Every night I go out on my roof and inhale the invigorating, cool breeze and feel so happy and strengthened. The moon comes up over the hills very late these nights. Now the sky is decorated with the lamps of God, millions of them, each of them shining in its own splendour. The moonlit night has its beauty, and the starlit night too has a beauty of its own. The cloudy and rainy nights too have their own aspects of beauty. How wonderfully God expresses Himself in so many phases? In whatever form He manifests, it is our duty and life's mission to recognize Him, not only in every phase, but in every face.

Last night I sat on the parapet of my terrace as usual, looking at the millions of stars and awaiting the rising of the moon. As the Ashram grounds are surrounded by hills, we cannot see the moon, rising from the horizon. But it is most beautiful to see it mounting high from behind the jungle hills. There is a prescient, glowing halo of light on the hill where the moon rises. I waited and waited patiently, but alas, the moon did not come. So feeling tired, I rose to descend. Again thinking that I ought not to be defeated in my quest of moon-beauty by giving way to impatience, and since I promised myself that I would see the rising moon, I resolved to sit there patiently till it came as a little act of secret discipline.

Thus, I sat and my patience was rewarded, for when it rose at last, lo! it was a sight for the gods to envy. It was all darkness

before the moon came. With its advent, slowly the light began to creep forth and spread like snow everywhere. The higher the moon rose, the more was the world filled with the light — soft and radiant.

THE MESSAGE OF THE RISING MOON:

Pondering on this incident, a revelation came to me, which opened my eyes wider to the one great Truth, i.e. as long as the moon of Love and Wisdom does not shine in our lives, we are veiled in darkness. When once the Radiant Truth begins to shine within oneself, slowly its light spreads everywhere, and radiates all over the world like the light of an ascending moon in a clear blue sky.

This is a state not to be expressed or described in words, but one must probe and understand it from one's own personal touch or experience with truth.

May the pure Bright Moon of Wisdom purify our temples, shining its soft Radiance in all of us, finally dispelling and transfiguring all clouds of dark doubts, superstition and ignorance in our lives, is my prayer!

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XII

NIRVANIC BLISS IN DREAM STATE

*Wrapped in the golden folds
Of faith and love,
O! let me oft forego myself
In dreams of pure, Nirvanic bliss.
As drifting ships into their havens slip,
And roving waves merge in the ocean deep,
As running gold into the ring is wrought,
And dawns and sunsets melt in the endless sky,
So merges many a dreamer and his dream
Into the Great Reality.
O, may all breath flow but in God's
And every thought be merged in Space,
That when Death, deepest dream of all,
Comes with its lullaby of Love,
To fold us in Eternity,
Then may this calm transition prove
A fusion with Great Samadhi!*

BEATIFIC VISION:

I awakened early from a pleasant dream, feeling a mystic joy and inspiration. It seems that I was giving a message, a spiritual discourse to a group of devoted souls. It was a highly inspirational subject, for as I continued to deliver the message, I was so overpowered with the spirit of it that I could speak no more, but could only feel an interpenetrating fire of ecstasy thrilling through my frame.

I could indeed feel that pleasant sensation of melting, as it were, into formlessness as I now write my thoughts; pleasantly recollecting my dream. At first a certain state of numbness began to creep all over my body. The senses became still, rather they did not exist at all, in that state. Even the mind and intellect disappeared or dissolved. All that was and is has been merged into an inexpressible calmness, indescribable Peace, incomprehensible silence and flowing bliss—the bubble dissolving in the River of Perfume.

In the beginning, as I was entering into that state of ecstasy, I felt that I could talk or continue my discourse if I wanted to, but the divine ecstasy was so soothing and soul-awakening that I continued to be led, surrendering my ego and impulses to the Higher Self. I do not know how long I remained thus in that blessed condition, which seemed only a mere dream. But I was filled with the nameless wonder of Nothing, a Nirvanic Bliss.

It is for this holy state, I work day and night, offering my all in all at the altar of Truth, struggling ceaselessly when I strive to experience it voluntarily in the waking state of consciousness. And lo! the occult paradox, I am blessed with a glimpse of it when uninvited, unexpected. It comes without the least effort on my part in the dream state. Indeed, how strange and paradoxical Truth seems at times! Yet, the Divine Laws are simple, natural and common to one and all and these sacred, secret flashes of Divinity are the buds of our latent, spirit fruits.

PERFECTION IN STILLNESS:

As I analyze the experience, I perceive by a practical lesson that it is the very effort to grasp the incomprehensible Truth that is often keeping us barred from enjoying the Vision-Universal. For

Truth is an effortless, transcendental state or condition. It seems in great disasters at sea that a man who does not even know how to swim that can save himself by just keeping his equilibrium and poise. As the specific gravity or the relative weight of sea water is greater than man's, naturally he floats on the water, but in his very struggle to save himself, he gets drowned by throwing all faculties into disharmony. By contrast, Christ and other Yogis have been known to tread the waves.

Many of our attempts, almost all our attempts, to realize God and all our prayers, concentration, and meditation, are based only on effort with a lot of feverish strain or tension. Hence it is no wonder that Truth is sealed from us. *It is in stillness—in the deep stillness that can be compared to the quiet ocean depths — that we realize God. So we have been taught in the Bible “BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.”* But we impatiently want to realize Him, or call ourselves gods, without a trace of this stillness either within or without. Ripe fruit drops from the tree when mellowed by long days of sunshine, rain and wind; evolved souls go to their source after due experiences.

It reminds me of that wonderful statement, “OMNIPOTENCE IS WORKING. LET THE MORTAL RETIRE!” Samadhi, Nirvana, Nectar of Immortality, Kingdom of Heaven or Peace that passeth all understanding will be the immediate and direct result, only when the mortal retires completely and not until then. Therefore, it lies with us to take a firm hold of our divine birthright, through our self-resignation, today or tomorrow, in this birth or in the births to come. The sooner we realise our Godhead, the better it is for us and for the well-being of humanity.

BROTHERHOOD IN CREATION:

In studying nature in all its phenomena, links and ties of the great brotherhood of created things, we can find that what is good for each is good for all, in the long run of evolution. And in spite of all the millions of castes, creeds, colours, and nationalities in East and West, the whole of humanity is indeed one vast mass of God's manifestation. It is a mystical body which can never be split or divided into parts. One man's sorrow is the sorrow of the whole world. One man's joy is the joy of the whole universe. It is only those God-imbued and God-consecrated souls who are established in their sacred Heritage that can ever worship humanity as One without a second. Unto such souls belongs Peace Eternal, and unto none else! May all homage be unto them!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XIII

THE STAGES OF REALIZATION AND WORK

WORK, Child of God, for self-realization

By steady, ceaseless Self-purification.

And then in Love and Wisdom kind,

WORK as a leader of the Blind.

With mercy, heal each suffering soul

And WORK to help men reach the Goal.

WORK for thy good and that of all —

Our needy brethren — great and small.

GRADUAL STEPS :

To the average layman, what I have been writing in the different chapters of this book may seem to be a mass of contradictions and some may be led to think that I have no definite or settled conception of Truth, for sometimes, I soar high up into the subtle, ethereal regions of *Adwaita*, the unity or Monism, where the Father and Son are not two but One, and the Individual becomes the Universal. At other times, I represent the attitude of *Visishtadwaita* or Qualified Monism, where the Kingdom of Heaven is within oneself, and the Son is inseparably connected or united with the Father—the Individual is related to God, as a ray of light is related to the Sun. At other times, I write as a dualist, or servant of God, aloof from Him, praying for the Kingdom to come, loving, reaching out to embrace and worship Him with all the love and strength of my heart. These different grades are the examples of occult paradoxes and their tender, teasing phases.

RUNGS OF THE LADDER :

Apparently these three different paths or aspects of worship seem different from and contradictory to each other, but when

understood from the experience of Spiritual Life or the personal Touch of His Love, they not only complement each other, but are the gradual steps or rungs in the ladder of life, leading one to Perfection, stage by stage. The sensitive instrument of our perception plays its melodies of simple or intricate motifs in accordance with the will of the Divine Player.

Thus, to all *Sadhakas* or aspirants, as well as to laymen who are often troubled with this conflicting doubt, I love to answer in the words of HANUMAN, the great devotee of LORD SRI RAMA, who when questioned as to his conception of God, replied in the following striking manner:

"When I am conscious of this physical frame, I worship Him as my Lord, considering myself as His servant.

When I am conscious of JIVA, the Individual Self, of the subtle body, I worship Him as the Universal Spirit with Whom I am inseparably connected, as a ray is connected with the Sun or as a wave with the Ocean.

When I feel that I am Truth or Spirit Itself, altogether forgetting body, mind and ego, I meditate on the Self-shining Glory of Truth, which is not separate from me, but One without a second. There is but One Reality and That Reality is my Self. Om!"

We find these natural and respective stages of realization, not only in every religion on the face of the earth but in each and every individual in the whole of creation, who continually ascends towards the Goal. Thus, instead of wasting precious time over arguments on non-essential questions or in hair - splitting contests, the earnest seeker of Truth should assimilate the basic essence, and try to become wise and silent in Him —keeping in letters of

fire, engraved in the heart, the words "*Knowing That, they melt in Silence.*"

FASTING EXPERIENCES:

Recently I have not been writing anything about my fasting and my daily progress with it. I am afraid of taxing the patience of my readers by always repeating "I am feeling fit and strong" etc. I do not know why, especially today, I am feeling very strong. Those beautiful words of a Western physician and writer, Dr. Cove, are ringing in my ear: "*Every day, in every way, I am getting better and stronger.*" May God be praised!

I am sorry that certain writers on the technique of fasting who are perhaps without proper experience, give negative and misleading suggestions and ideas, such as that one feels weak on the first day and still weaker on the second day and that one should not work at all and that there will be headache or nausea, etc. Believing some such hypnotic statements and writings of a few, I too expected that at any moment I would get headache or nausea, but by the blessings of God, these maladies did not show up at all and *day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better.*

AFFIRM GOD:

I do not feel any fainting sensation, but I feel a liking for walking and running. I do not feel like being lazy nor avoiding work, but I enjoy doing a little work to keep my mind busy and my body invigorated. When I think of work, I love to repeat that wonderful poem by Angela Morgan. Each time I read it, the words inspire me and I feel as if I am dancing in clouds of luminous ecstasy. Allow me to quote it for you here so that you too can be blessed and inspired with useful work, which is the same as worship.

WORK

(A SONG OF TRIUMPH)

WORK.

*Thank God for the might of it,
The ardour, the urge, the delight of it —
Work that springs from the heart's desire,
Setting the soul and the brain on fire.
Oh, what is so good as the heat of it,
And what is so glad as the beat of it,
And what is so kind as the stern command,
Challenging brain and heart and hand?*

WORK.

*Thank God for the pride of it,
For the beautiful, conquering tide of it,
Sweeping the life in its furious flood,
Thrilling the arteries, cleansing the blood,
Mastering stupor and dull despair,
Moving the dreamer to do and dare.
Oh, what is so good as the urge of it,
And what is so glad as the surge of it,
And what is so strong as the summons deep,
Rousing the torpid soul from sleep?*

WORK.

*Thank God for the pace of it,
For the terrible, keen swift race of it;
Fiery steeds in full control,
Nostrils quiver to greet the goal.
Work, the power that drives behind,
Guiding the purposes, taming the mind,*

*Holding the runaway wishes back,
 Reining the will to one steady track,
 Speeding the energies faster, faster,
 Triumphant over disaster.
 Oh, what is so good as the pain of it,
 And what is so great as the gain of it,
 And what is so kind as the cruel goad,
 Forcing us on through the rugged road?*

WORK.

*Thank God for the swing of it.
 For the clamouring, hammering ring of it.
 Passion of labour daily hurled
 On the mighty anvils of the world.....
 Oh, what is so fierce as the flame of it,
 And what is so huge as the aim of it,
 Thundering on through dearth and doubt,
 Calling the plan of Maker out;
 Work, the Titan: Work, the friend,
 Shaping the earth to a glorious end;
 Draining the swamps and blasting the hills,
 Doing whatever the spirit wills,
 Rending a continent apart
 To answer the dream of the Master heart.
 Thank God for a world where none may shirk,
 Thank God for the splendour of work.*

Angela Morgan

May all homage be to the selfless Karma Yoga ideal, and to
 all universal workers in the Vineyard of Truth and Peace!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XIV

THE GOOD SHEPHERD DIVINE

*Take me, O Good Shepherd, take me,
Make and keep me all Thine own;
Meekly walking where Thou showest,
Pure and lowly let me go.
On the cord of Grace and Patience
Far from evil, sin and strife,
Guide me to the peaceful pastures
Where the soul finds manna rife.
Holy Shepherd lead and keep me
In the meadows of Thy care,
By those still and shining waters
Flowing from Thy heart of Love!*

SUN-BATHING:

Well, here is another blessed day of sunshine to love, serve, worship and to recognize Divinity, melting in profound silence. It is strange that I do not know what to write to-day, except to repeat that I am feeling strong, happy and peaceful more than ever before. I enjoy sun baths everyday, assimilating vibrant energy from the life-giving rays. As usual after my daily bath, I go out into the sun and directly facing it, I massage and rub vigorously my hands until it gets quite dry without using a towel. All this exercise invigorates the body, awakening all the cells into activity. The alimentary tract is also getting cleansed day by day. The more it is cleansed and emptied of all morbid matter, the happier and stronger I feel in everyway.

RESTING ON LORD'S BOSOM :

My mind is completely calm and at rest. I do not know, as I stated already, what to write either today or in the days to come. Yet it is the Lord that writes if I but give Him the opportunity to write. It is not 'I' but He that does everything. All that is best and fine belongs to Him Who is all Good.

How blissful it is to rest on the bosom of the Lord from day to day, like a swan resting on the waves of a lotus lake serenely floating. It knows that no harm can come to it. Even if danger threatens, it has its wings with which to fly. So too, one can always fly into God's all-embracing Heart of Love, even under most trying conditions, for He is the Refuge, Redeemer, Soul and Goal of all beings and creatures on the face of the earth. From Him we come, to Him we return!

To-day I was reading the following poem in the inspiring magazine 'Epoch', which fittingly illustrates the point that the Lord is our Shepherd and we do not want anything, for He is ever watching, and protecting and guiding us.

I SHALL NOT WANT

(Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want)

I shall not want rest,

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

I shall not want drink,

"He leadeth me beside the still waters."

I shall not want forgiveness,

"He restoreth my soul."

I shall not want guidance,

"He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

I shall not want companionship,

"Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."

I shall not want comfort,

"Thy rod and thy staff comfort me."

I shall not want food,

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

I shall not want joy,

"Thou hast anointed my head with oil."

I shall not want anything,

"My cup runneth over."

I shall not want anything in this life,

"Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life."

I shall not want anything in eternity,

"And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

FIGHTING MY BATTLE:

In spite of my fasting days, it is surprising that the work is piling up day by day. It is impossible to be free from all thoughts for long when one is claimed by so many activities. Sometimes I get wearied both with myself and the responsibilities of the Mission, yet I have to fight my battle like a brave soldier and not shirk from doing my duty for the Cause of Peace in the corner of this vineyard that was started through this instrument. But how I would love to be mentally waveless and free from all thoughts, sooner or later, as infinite Peace is only in that thought-free, impression-free

condition, the mirror-smooth lake where Divinity reveals Its Presence face to face.

WORK — A SILENT OFFERING :

Recently whenever I am not able to be free entirely from every thought and crowding activities, I approach Him, the Indweller of my heart, and silently murmur the following words in fervent communion:

O Lord! If it is Thy will that I should be busy with all these activities instead of enjoying perfect stillness in waveless-calm, I shall not grumble or murmur, but resign myself into Thy Holy Will. Bless me, I earnestly pray, with that ceaseless flow of consciousness of Thy All-pervading Presence, wherein I shall be ever firmly rooted, where work is no work and thought is no thought. In short, I do not want to work or think without feeling Thy Presence. If Thou givest me labour, bless me also with Thy strengthening Presence, making my constant work a steady and silent offering unto Thee. This is all I ask of Thee.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XV

THE INCENSE OF PURE THOUGHT

AFRAID OF DOCTORS :

I am afraid of doctors, nurses and other medical attendants though they be angels of mercy, for they create or suggest sickness in sensitive minds and they remind one of diseases, and thus one cannot help thinking of some sickness or other when one is in their company, professionally.

It was Sri Ramakrishna who said that if we meet a lawyer, we naturally think of lawsuits, if we meet a Doctor, we think of sickness, and if we meet a Spiritual man, we are forced to think of God.

By the blessings of God, without the need of any doctor or anyone else, I am halfway through my journey in the care-free fasting world and enjoying perfect health. Some of the loving devotees of the Ashram who are doctors by profession have so kindly offered me their services especially during my fast. Some of my over anxious friends wanted to bring other doctors to take care of me during this long fast, but I firmly declined all offers with gratitude and thanks. What can these well meaning, loving friends and kind doctors do for me, other than disturb my rest and peace and examine now and then my pulse, heart-beat, blood pressure, etc?

RELIANCE ON THE DOCTOR OF DOCTORS :

All that I want is to be left alone with my Divine Doctor and His healing touch. There is the Divine, unfailing, and ever-protecting Doctor, Who is within me, the Indwelling Presence of

every heart, guiding and leading me towards the Goal of Life and Light. He is the supreme Doctor of doctors, and one who trusts Him completely, never fails in anything. As He directs, I try to follow Him through with faltering steps.

ETHEREAL FREEDOM:

This is the fifteenth day and I am feeling light and buoyant in body. There is a certain kind of freedom and lightness or aloofness from the body, which I cannot express to you in words. Day by day I feel that I am getting detached from the physical sheath — the gross body. There is a certain kind of freedom which is ethereal in its expression or manifestation. May all praise be unto God for all His benign blessings.

As days are passing one by one, there is deep and great craving within me for intense and serene meditation. Hence I meditate most of the time, but I am not yet satisfied. I wish to meditate perpetually, ever keeping that unbroken flow of ceaseless divine consciousness. But alas! how very difficult it is to live *in tune with the Infinite* each and every moment of one's life!

TO THINK IS TO PRAY :

One cannot pray all the twenty-four hours of the day, neither can one consciously meditate all the time. But one's thoughts are incessant at times even when asleep. Only in deep sleep, one is blissfully free from all thoughts. In the dream state, one is again full of thoughts and rambling fancies. Hence, as it is easy and natural to think always, I find great consolation and strength in that beautiful, wise saying, '*to think is to pray*'

What a sublime statement it is, that we pray whenever we think! Verily, every thought is a prayer provided it is directed

towards the Almighty. Prayers have been called frankincense, ascending sweetly to our Divinity—the interpenetrating Universal Presence. Weak and wicked thoughts cannot be prayers, for they are leading one on the downward path of destruction. Helpful and constructive thoughts directed towards the service of man which is no other than the service of God are the only real prayers and lead one to freedom. Thus, I try to spend as much time as possible in meditation and when I cannot meditate, I take shelter under the wings of the sublime statement that *'to think is to pray'* and thus abide in the secret place of the Most High even in activity.

PERFUME OF INCENSE:

How wonderful it is to allow every thought to ascend high like the smoke or perfume of incense until it pervades and fills the whole atmosphere, spreading through and permeating the whole atmosphere, spreading through and permeating the whole of humanity with clouds of love and harmony!

Whether it is through Meditation or Prayer, Silence or Activity, may our lives be dedicated and consecrated to the service of God, the God of Humanity—the One Who is shining in all hearts, seeing through all eyes, and moving with all creation's breathing as the One Universal Breath of *SOHAM* is my prayer.

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XVI

THROUGH THE CRUCIBLE OF DIVINITY

*O! Alchemist, this heart refine,
Within Thy crucible divine,
Love stirs the Flame.
Ecstatically I cry His Name.
Master, do Thou Thy will, heed not mine own,
Nor will I sigh in anguished moan,
Upon Thine anvil, 'neath Thy blows,
For heart is purified and grows,
By anvil tried, by flame refined,
Into a Type of all mankind,
An image of His form and mould,
A vessel wrought in God's own gold,
To stand before His Holy face,
Shining with everlasting Grace.*

MONKEY IDEA :

It was related by Sages in the Scriptures of the East that once a spiritual teacher gave an initiation with a secret *mantram* to one of his disciples, promising as he whispered it in his ear that the disciple would reach the goal of life by the faithful repetition of that magic *mantram* (the sacred affirmation). But he added one condition to be followed by the disciple, without fail, while engaged in meditation. That condition was *not to allow the thought of a monkey to enter into his mind, especially when repeating the mantram.*

The disciple tried to follow the instructions of the *Guru*, meditating always both day and night, but the helpless fellow could not succeed in carrying out the injunctions of his teacher, for the imaginary monkey was always there, jumping before and behind

him, obsessing him almost every moment of his life, especially during his meditation. Of all the things in the world that the teacher warned him against, only the one taboo, the monkey, troubled him much, for the monkey idea alone manifested in all his meditations. It was most pathetic and disgusting, to say the least.

Hence, in utter humility, the disciple approached the *Guru* and said, "O, Holy Sir, had you not warned me against the monkey thought, putting that idea into my mind, I would not have thought of it even once in all my meditations. But now, since you asked me purposely not to think of the monkey, the monkey thought alone occupies the first and foremost place in my meditation; and I see a world of monkeys on every side."

How true it is, that as long as the restless monkey-mind is not fully controlled, one cannot help but be a slave of all fancies and imaginations!

FORBIDDEN DISH :

Thus, what is forbidden and what we want to avoid seems most persistently confronting us like Nemesis and tries to block our way on the path of Truth. In the books on Fasting, we are repeatedly warned not to think of food at all during the fasting days. But, on the contrary, the monkey-like mind, when forewarned, insists stubbornly on thinking only about delicious food of every kind. I am ashamed to say that my mind began to fancy a certain tasty dish that I ate in America, and prepared by a brother Swamiji. How very difficult it is to check the mind, especially to prevent all its past impressions from raising their heads to strike one after another, like cobras! As an apt illustration, students of the Bible are familiar with the ancient story of Adam and Eve and the one forbidden fruit.

TESTS AND TRIALS :

The more one tries to walk in the path of Truth, the more are

the tests and temptations. One is tried and tested to the very extreme, in the fire of secret ordeals, to see whether one yields on the way or succeeds in reaching the Goal. We read of Saviour Christ when He was fasting in the desert. He too was tempted in so many ways by Satan. But He stood the test and triumphed over all temptations. We read also about Lord Buddha, and how He too was tempted by Mara and he too came out victorious from all His tests and trials. Life can never be called real and progressive, without its tests and trials. The harder the tests and trials, the greater and brighter is the glory of the souls that have come successfully through them.

NARROW AND RUGGED WAY :

As said by Lord Christ : *"Narrow and rugged is the way that leadeth to Heaven, and broad and wide is the way that leadeth to destruction."* He added also that we find many travelling on the wide and broad path, but very few take to the narrow and rugged way. It has also been said that the path of Truth is never strewn with flowers, but beset with thorns. Hence the seekers of Truth must be prepared for all kinds of tests, trials and temptations, ever centering themselves on the firm rock of God-consciousness. They should never yield even under the most trying conditions, but always triumph over every temptation, for infinite joy is never in yielding but only in surmounting every obstacle and rising above every ordeal. Such souls are the masters of their minds, always setting noble examples for humanity to follow in their blessed foot prints. *In the fiery Crucible, Divinity transmutes and refines His Gold!*

May all homage be unto such divine souls of self-dedication and Soul-realization, who may indeed be compared to this pure and precious metal.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XVII

THE SOUL IN UTMOST DEDICATION

*Before Thy feet I cast the galling chain
Of ignorance, of spoiling fear and pain,
Into Thy Peace I pass my last concern,
And to Thy Light, my face I turn,
Thou art my Mother, Father, Lord.
Protect me with Thy Flaming Sword,
Against all untruth and its guile.
Let me thus rest forever in Thy smile.
Bliss I found only in Thy lotus feet
Naught else, O Lord, can be so incomparably sweet!*

EAST AND WEST :

The whole of yesterday, until late in the evening as I was writing and writing, on and on, I began to feel a cramp in my wrist, which gradually rose to the forearm and elbow. I feared for a moment that I might not be able to write any more during the remaining days of my fast. In these silent days, my right hand alone has served as my mouth piece. It was only this morning that I wrote a long message on *The East and the West*.

Some say the East and the West can never meet. Those who have touched the heights, encompass East and West and the whole Cosmos, considering the Universe as their very own Home. If ever Peace—Universal Peace—is to be established in this world, it must be based on Christ's love, Krishna's wisdom, Buddha's compassion, Mohammad's strength and the Universality of the other great companion souls of the world. Such are some of the thoughts in my message written yesterday, the writing of which has caused the cramp in my wrist.

REAL PAIN :

As long as a real and inspiring message is the outcome of a little temporary pain, I say : "Blessed is this pain. For two hours I could not sleep because my arm began to ache. I tried to feel His Presence in the very pain. But alas! how hard it was! I am always of the opinion that the only real pain *is the anxious pain of separation from the Beloved or Truth*. All the other pains are only mere passing incidents, just like the morning clouds, which the wind blows along and dissolves."

MYSTIC SYLLABLE OM:

At last I slept soundly, feeling His Presence and when I awakened, the pain had disappeared. Instead of resting and sleeping without giving any work, especially to my erstwhile ailing hand, and since I could not sleep any more in the middle of the still night, I started to write a message on *The Significance of the Mystic Syllable, Om*.

This message was announced in our December issue, as the editorial for the coming January issue of PEACE, nearly a fortnight before. This duty was ever impending and I was concerned because I was not yet inclined to write it. I even thought "Should I get weak through fasting, I may not be able to write this message and our New Year number will be incomplete without it."

If it had been any other subject, I should have written it a long time back without the least hesitation, but this being a very deep, subtle and practical subject, I have to dive into the Ocean of *Dhyan* to bring up a real message. After all, the fruit of our life and meditation belongs to Him who gives it, and who is the Master within. As an illustration of His precious Omniscience, I fell asleep last night with pain in my hand and wrist, and on retiring, I never dreamt that I would wake up in the middle of the night and would

be restored with such mystical strength and inspiration to write this message out from an overflowing heart!

When I say that it is the Master who really writes through this instrument, I do not mean some ethereal ghostly master of the many current sages and delusive tales. I mean the Master of masters, who is the Indweller of every heart, Who is the eternal sleepless Eye of the whole Cosmos. For all that is best and good in us and all glory and praise belongs to Him alone, the Origin and End of Goodness. May He be ever praised and glorified for all His innumerable blessings!

FASTING :

After this philosophic strain, I must now turn to something about my main theme, the fast. It is most astonishing how strong I am feeling today! I cannot even imagine that I am fasting, nor can any one else who does not know of my fast, for there are no negative symptoms, such as we are inclined to expect. To-day I feel like singing, walking and running in exultation. May I ever feel thus all through the days of not only my fasting, but all the rest of my life, and thus, controlling this instrument and attuning it to His lightest touch producing the harmonies of Truth, Peace and Love!

Perhaps I am happy and strong because I have accomplished much of my work. At a stretch I finished my message on "Om" and by that time the dawn began to break rosy on the eastern horizon as if to greet me and bless my message. Yes, happiness has a great deal to do with selfless work and mental strength. Blessed are they who are ever contented and happy!

May you all be contented and happy, whether you are fasting or feasting, is my prayer!

May God bless you all with Infinite Happiness!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XVIII

SUSTAINED, NOT BY BREAD ALONE

*Let us eat from the Sun,
Elect feast of the Highest One.
Let us quaff from the Volatile-air,
Light and Life, Manna subtle and rare.
Let us take into hearts that are vernal,
Sustenance from the Spirit, Eternal.
Let us transmute thereby our Earth-form,
To the Luminous, Pure and God-born.*

SUSTAINED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Certain wonderful spiritual thoughts often ring in my ears like temple gongs of silvern notes. Recently the statement that "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by the Spirit of God,*" is uppermost in my thoughts. How very true these words are in my present life of fasting!

The wisdom of sages teaches: Man shall not live by bread alone! Yet everywhere we see millions of men in both East and West attempting to live only on material bread, ignoring the Bread of Life or the Spirit of God. Is theirs Real Life—the true Life of God or Truth? Ah, no, such materialism is death and not life. A worm or beetle grovels in the mire and is satisfied and contented to do so, for it knows not the joy of wings. So are the souls who grovel in the mire of earth, desire and ignorance, but is their Life, the Life spoken of by the Word? We need the Spirit of God to keep us alive, truly alive, in the Eternal Life of the Spiritual Law or Divinity.

MEDITATING ON BREATH

If man lives not by bread alone but also by the Spirit of God, he must necessarily attune himself with that Life-giving Spirit and thus truly live. Where is the Spirit? Ah! this is all that we need to know.

It is not so easy to have a real conception of the Spirit, or even to comprehend It. The seers and sages, the men of great realization said: *God is the Breath of all breaths; Nay, the very breath of all life.* Since living breath is nearer to God than anything else, if we but meditate on the flow of our breath, following its rhythmic flow, it will lead us towards the *Spirit*, like an invisible but sure path. However, it is not so easy to follow the breath. It needs trained concentration. The moment one determines to fix one's mind on its flow, the unruly mind runs astray. So one must be very careful, clinging mentally to the breath as if it were a luminous thread.

By concentrating on it, thus, will all the strength of one's heart and soul, surely the very breath, lead one higher and higher towards the subtle, pure regions that are beyond the conception of the mortal mind or intellect. Then alone, one suddenly comes to realize and consciously feel how one is fed and nourished by the Spirit of God.

Statements like the above can never be thoroughly understood by merely reading the scriptures and enjoying regularly three full meals a day, whether one is hungry or not, at fixed hours! Truth is always simple, plain and natural if we could only take the trouble of understanding and assimilating It, paying the proper price. May we all be nourished by the Spirit of God and let the flaming Truth ever vibrate and radiate from us always!

Returning to my fast, I may say, that I still continue to enjoy it surrounded by the Spirit of God, not merely surrounded but also filled, pervaded and permeated by His Spirit and Love. Sometimes the tongue has a taste of bitterness. It means that there is still foreign matter within and I, therefore, need to fast longer, feasting on the all-sustaining Spirit of God.

Everyday I go out on the terrace, climbing up the turreted steps to bathe myself in God's sunshine enjoying the life-giving cool breeze. There are nearly twenty steps and I get neither tired nor exhausted, going up and down every day.

Even if I feel any sign of exhaustion, a cold, splashing natural bath refreshes and invigorates me. As it is winter time, the sensation I feel when I pour the first vessel of water on my body is rather creepy and shivery, but the rest of the bath after that first shock is a real delight.

CONSERVING ENERGY:

In these days of fasting and earnestly consecrated life, I feel that I should not contact anyone but be alone entirely with God, the Indweller of my heart. Hence I do not allow even the little *brahmachari*, the boy who attends to me so lovingly, to assist me in my bath or any other rite, lest the Inner Silence and intense vibrant communion be disturbed.

During the early days of previous fasts, I was prone to feel quite tired, exhausted and lifeless. During the conquest fast, however, I feel so strangely strong, healthy and delightfully rested, even in spite of my constant work. Verily, the Spirit of God is feeding and taking care of me, and my soul bears witness to His Boundless Grace and Love!

Another lesser reason why I am strong and rested is that I am not consuming energy by speaking during this fast, as I did in the previous less successful fasts. It does save and conserve vital energy when one refrains from speech. This is an exercise to be practised often with benefit in one's life.

PRECEPTS TO BE PRACTISED:

There will be very little practical use in merely appreciating what I experience and write here. It will do you much good *to realize* from your own personal experience what I relate here. Then alone will you have genuine satisfaction.

Begin to fast a day, perhaps once a week or once a fortnight or at least one full day in a month and also to observe silence. Be aloof on that fasting day from the mundane duties of the outer world. Try to be alone with God, at least on the days of fasting. Thus you will personally realize the marvellous effects of true fasting in your spiritual life.

Verily, as we have been promised by the prophets of God, we can indeed live on the Spirit of God, which is the real spiritual food for a human being created in His Image.

May God bless you all with the richest blessings of His Heavenly Manna!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XIX

FAITH, OUR LIFE'S SUSTENANCE

*Let us eat and drink of Nature's Infinite Feast
Of beauty, light and sun and air,
And thrill with rapture at the wonders rare,
Sprung from His Word in West and East.
Alive with Love of God and Freed,
Upon His Mighty Word we feed, and grow —
No longer evil Karma reap and sow,
But eat the Spirit Fruits of golden seeds,
Planted with Patience, Peace and Loving Deeds.*

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH IN PRAYER:

"And whatsoever you desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive It, and ye shall have It," are the words of Lord Jesus. This statement contains the whole secret of the fulfilment of prayer. Faith is everything in prayer. Without belief, you cannot accomplish anything, as incense cannot ascend high without the fire that lights it. And prayer is called the Incense of the Most High.

WHAT PRAYER IS:

Prayer is not begging, but it is demanding what we need and rightly deserve. If we do not deserve what we pray for, there is little use in praying. There are certain Eternal Laws that cannot be overthrown; they must be fulfilled. So, if we desire, we are certainly blessed with the fulfilment of our desires. It is the Karmic Law.

It has been said that begging prayers are never answered and commanding prayers from inner authority are readily granted. How sublime and uplifting are those beautiful lines on prayer.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

Uttered or inexpressed,

The motion of a hidden fire

That trembles in the breast.

Such prayers are, no doubt, granted even before they are expressed in words.

It is a great truth, which we should understand and assimilate, that we already have with us for that which we are praying. This bids us to realize that what we need to do is only to open our eyes and discover for ourselves all the latent faculties that lie hidden within us.

THE TWO FACTORS OF PRAYER OR MEDITATION:

In prayer or meditation, there are two factors to understand: Does God come to us because of our prayers and meditations from some imaginary heaven above, or is He already within us? Wherever we may be, since He is Omnipresent and One without a second, He is always within us. So we need not expect Him to come soon from any far-off heaven or plane in the blue skies. He is not confined to temples or churches, books or teachers, however holy they may be. He is the Indweller of every heart not only expressing in human hearts but even blooming in the heart of the frailest garden flower or sea-anemone.

We can feel God's presence more intensely in the free open country where Nature is expressing Him in all its sublimity than in the congested manmade artificial cities, temples and churches. All that one needs is an open, pure and childlike heart for communion with God either in the stillness of the heart or in the lovely world where Nature is unsullied and undisturbed by the meddlesome hand of man.

THE VALUE OF TRUTH AS TRUTH:

Instead of expecting anything to fall from heaven as a result of prayers and meditations, it is better to know Truth as Truth and to realize the same in stillness. It has been always with us and within us and it is merely a matter for us to realize Its abiding Presence, and recognize and take a firm hold of Truth, our Birthright. What is within us can be easily manifested sooner or later, for it is then no longer a struggle in darkness but a revelation in light. The closed bud of consciousness contains the full-blown beauty of the red damask rose of God-realization.

WEARINESS FROM LABOR AND THE REVITALIZATION OF MOTHER NATURE:

Of all the days from the beginning of my fast, this day has been a very busy and wearisome one for I had to speak, or rather converse in writing for several long hours with friends in connection with the activities of the Ashram and the publication of our PEACE in the future. I was so tired that I could not do anything else and I had to forego taking daily eliminative treatment.

As a result of constant writing, my right shoulder pained at the joint. I rubbed it with a little oil and fomented it, but not with any good results. A little refreshing rest only will do the needful restoring. In the meantime, whenever I feel this painful fatigue, I strive to recognize His Presence even in the very pain, for pain is indeed the warning call of our Mother Nature to us. And it is best not only to heed her cry but to go to her for healing, revitalization and sweet restoration. As for sleep, the balm supreme, it is strange that these days I do not require sleep. I really sleep only three or four hours at the most. So I try to meditate, losing myself in the Most High as long as possible, and then instead of wasting time, I

rise and write some of my messages fresh with the atmosphere of those nameless Realms of Bliss. As I am writing now, it is the midnight hour, a sacred period full of uplifting vibrations.

LET ME DRINK DEEPLY OF THE NECTAR FROM THE BOWL OF THE SUN OF SUNS.

As dawns, days and peaceful nights pass away, my heart is full of grateful love to Divinity, for my general health is good. At any rate I must be more careful in the future, in the remaining ten days, not to over-exert myself and expend too much force. I must rest much, drinking deeply the Nectar held in the great bowl of the Sun of suns. I am striving my utmost to keep up that ceaseless, life-giving flow of Consciousness with every breath. How hard it is! Still it is the only way, for therein, there is no separation from the Lord of Love, the Indweller of our hearts, the very Breath of our breaths, the fathomless Ocean of *Shakti* or *Pranic* Energy.

May Glory be to That and Peace be unto all Creation!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XX

GOD — THE PERENNIAL SOURCE-FONT

*Source-font, O Nectar of sanctified souls,
Life-Waters which all Eternity rolls,
World thirst is drowned in Thy luminous flow,
Knowledge and Bliss from Thy calm depths do glow
Hid in the Heart of the Infinite One.
O'er every heart let Thy cool splendour run.*

God is the ever out-flowing Source-font of Peace, Power and Plenty. His Peace is pervading everywhere; His Power is penetrating everything; His Blessings are bountiful, enriching every one that attunes himself to His Infinite Presence.

In spite of such abundance of His Blessings in every form, we can see everywhere in East and West, on the faces of the people, as they walk in the streets or as they meet in the congregations and fairs, nothing but sadness, sickness, helplessness and poverty of Spirit.

WATERS OF LIFE:

How sad and pathetic it is that whilst staying or living near by the ever-rushing perennial springs of Living Waters of Truth, people are dying of thirst. We suffer needlessly. We make ourselves miserable without the least cause. It is the perverted imagination that is making a fiery Hades of a fair heaven!

The Kingdom of Heaven is near at hand, yet no one seems to recognize and enjoy the heavenly Peace, which is the true heritage of every individual. Instead of realizing the Kingdom of Heaven, or Profound Peace, it is sad to see people realizing only poverty, suffering and sickness and other negative states.

Living in abundance, people are dying of starvation because the Light is hidden and the Truth is ignored. If only we could make our Religion a little more practical, seeking within, the God of our hearts, Who is our life's *Good Shepherd* and Who sees that those who follow Him are free from all distress or want, physically, mentally or spiritually! Instead of placing our trust in Him, and holding to simple Truth or Reality, we place our trust in complexities of names and forms and naturally, the result is heart-rending pain, suffering and disappointment.

SILENT RECOGNITION:

It is time for all of us to turn to the Source and to draw from Him whatever we need. Unfortunately, it is so very difficult for us to go to the Source, for all the time, we live only on the surface. Whether it is easy or difficult, the solution for all our perplexing problems is only in going to the Source or entering into the Silence, and claiming our true Birthright, where there will be neither desire nor suffering.

THE RIGHT LAW :

It is an irrevocable law that what we expect we get, for our thoughts lead to materialize things. If we expect and dread poverty, it will follow our very foot steps. If we expect sickness, it will wait on us. If we are afraid, fear will follow us like our shadow. If we are worried, pain will fill our beings.

We ourselves are the creators of all life's sorrows and vicissitudes. No one is to blame for our suffering except ourselves. Since we are the persons that have placed these heavy burdens and yokes on our own shoulders, we ourselves have to shake them off by our own persevering effort and strength of will. We must be redeemers of ourselves. No one from outside can save us. Hence,

it has been said, everyone is his own saviour.

How blessed it is to behold and always recognize in the world, Peace, Poise and Power at the gushing Source, where God's Love is ceaselessly outpouring for one and all, like the Himalayan torrents, where ecstatic Yogis make their calm abodes! Oh! let us stand by Him, ever living and breathing His Perfection and Endless Peace!

AT THE FONT :

Even if we are in the foundering abysmal depths of poverty and pain, let us refuse to dwell on want, sickness or suffering and thus transcend them. How life giving are the words of the great soul, Abraham Lincoln:

*Out of the depths fresh strength,
Out of the darkness new light,
Even in the gloom, we are on the way.*

With such a challenge to negative conditions, let us go on and up to Victory! Ah, yes! we are always on the Way, even in the passing gloom, for we are His children and He is leading us towards the gateway of his Glory and Divine Perfection. Let us have the strength to follow Him only.

As we read this message, let us concentrate our minds in memory of this day to recognize always, in every moment of our lives, God's Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience, and let us draw from His Infinite Source all that we need to meet the demands of our sane, simple and natural lives of God-consciousness and Bliss!

May Peace be unto all !

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXI

ATTAINMENT BY PERSISTENT EFFORT

Take me like a candle-stick

Make my heart a burning-wick.

May the knowledge of Thy Love,

Shine below, around, above!

Let me slowly melt in Thee,

Love-consumed, forever Free.

NEED FOR PERSEVERANCE :

To realize God, to attain complete mastery over the mind, to fix it on THAT and think of nothing besides, is not the work of a day or even of one birth. It takes many lives to reach evolved perfection, to attain the immeasurable Heights. One needs the patience and perseverance of adamant quality and a strong iron will to check the restless mind until it is perfectly controlled.

PARABLE OF A BIRD :

The thought of patience and perseverance brings back to my mind the beautiful story of the little bird *Tittibha*. It was a very little bird that laid its eggs in the sands by the shore of the great ocean. But every time it laid its eggs, the ocean used to wash them into its bosom. The tiny bird pleaded with the ocean several times not to take its eggs, but all in vain. At last, the bird became angry with the ocean and said, "Look here! if you take my eggs this time, I will dry up all the waters in you, so be careful." Of course the ocean laughed aloud with its many waves.

The story further tells us that the tiny bird laid its eggs again, and as usual the ocean washed them into itself. So the bird, true to its threat, began to empty the ocean, taking one drop after another with its tiny beak. For a time, the other birds laughed at the foolish idea of the little bird, but as time passed on, seeing its patience and

persistence, all the birds of the air came to its aid, sympathising with its righteous cause. Hearing of this lawful warfare of the birds, the king of birds also came to help the little ones. Seeing all these millions of birds trying to empty its waters, the sea at last began to quiver and shiver and offering an apology, it surrendered back to the little bird all its eggs and made a truce to keep away from the little nest on the shore forever after.

No doubt this is merely an Eastern tale, but what a wonderful lesson it has to teach us all, on patience, persistence and perseverance—a little bird trying to empty all the limitless waters of the ocean with its tiny beak! The story is worth remembering and the tiny bird should be our teacher, to teach us the power of patience and perseverance.

ROOTING OUT DESIRE:

How difficult and hard it is to destroy or annihilate all the seething ocean of impressions—Vasanas not only of this birth but of millions of past births entirely out of our beings! Like the little bird, the Jiva, the Individual, has to pick out one desire after another with the beak of his daily *Sadhana*, or practice, as also every kind of passion and weakness, and empty the same out of the system for the complete Peace and Freedom of the Soul.

THREE TRUTHS :

Vedanta, the end of knowledge, gives the Highest Truth in a most clarified and vivid way, and teaches us the easiest and most direct way of overcoming the mind and, thus, teaching the goal of human birth. The following are the three states that are to be practised not one by one, but simultaneously, to attain emancipation.

1. GNOSIS OR WISDOM :

One should be established not with the knowledge of the

things of the world or other mundane sciences, but with the knowledge of one's own Self. One must live always with the awareness that Truth is One without a second, and that nothing else exists besides That— for That alone is the Interpenetrating Eternal Truth.

2. DESTRUCTION OF VASANAS OR IMPRESSIONS :

This is truly uphill work, yet with the ceaseless flow of consciousness of Gnosis-pure knowledge, it becomes very easy. One should destroy all the *Vasanas* persistently, one by one. When the sun shines, naturally all clouds, however thick and dark they might be, are dispelled. So one should be firmly rooted in the Gnosis, or Wisdom of Self. Thus the *Vasanas* can be destroyed.

3. DISSOLUTION OF THE MIND :

In spite of Gnosis, or Knowledge, and the repeated attempts to destroy past impressions, the mind persists to assert itself again and again. With the co-operation of Gnosis and the earnest practice to faithfully destroy the *Vasanas*, the lower mind gradually dissolves itself, as even the fiery stick with which one starts to burn a corpse also finally reduces itself to ashes along with the corpse itself.

These thoughts are the concentrated essence of all scriptures. There is nothing beyond them to know. All that we need is to put them into practice to reach the Heights of Illumination, the *TAT TWAM ASI* state where 'I AM THAT' is realised.

May the loving readers kindly assimilate these meditative thoughts with which my mind is filled and saturated on the twenty-first day of the fast, is my prayer!

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXII

THE FOOD PROPOSITION

*Your silent alms unto the poor,
In heaven builds a treasure sure;
And every meal or cloak you share,
Is praise to God, as any prayer.*

HELPFUL ECONOMY :

A thought just came into my mind and I am unable at present to decide whether it is a selfish thought or selfless thought. It is as follows.

Since I did not eat all these twenty-two days, I feel that I have contributed something materially to the world. What I did not eat in these days was spared for my fellow-sisters and brothers in the world. Even one meal given up when it is not needed, might be helpful to someone else.

HABIT OF OVEREATING:

What a sad thing it is to see the helpless state of the world, wherein more than half the people in God's creation are slowly dying of starvation, while the other half are killing themselves by overeating and suffering daily the pangs of indigestion! In conjunction with this overeating, they also waste plenty of money in buying costly medicines for dyspepsia so that they can overeat again like the decadent Roman Epicures.

Are these the children of God, created in His own image? Are they aware of the starving millions, who are dying for want of a crust of dry bread? Yet, these gourmands are some of the noted

reformers, great politicians and agitators, trying to save the world.

If we analyse our lives, especially pondering upon our food problem, many of us will find that we eat more than we really need. Alas! it has become a habit to overeat. If we could only know that every time we overeat, we are depriving some poor, helpless, hungry soul of his daily bread and that we are both directly and indirectly the cause of death to the famishing poor, how careful we would be!

THE LAW OF MODERATION:

Sri Krishna in the Gita, the Song Celestial, says:

Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much, nor is it possible for him who eats too little. Yoga conduces to the destruction of misery in him who with moderate nourishment, moderate enjoyment and moderate attention to business takes moderate rest and keeps himself moderately awake.

Moderation has been the keynote of spiritual life as well as of material life. By practising the law of moderation, not only does one keep healthy and happy, but also leaves for others their rightful share.

WILFUL WASTE :

What an act of charity if all surplus food were to be given to the poor, hungry souls or animals, instead of daily emptying all costly preparations into garbage pails, unmindful of the poor hungry men and pitiable creatures faint and weak for a morsel passing just outside the door. Some thoughtful people are careful and my homage goes out to them.

In many rich families, a lavish quantity of food is cooked

and daily the servants thoughtlessly throw away the surplus food. If we could only collect and make the best use of all the rich food which is thus thrown away all over the world, especially from the homes of Princes and Millionaires, what a blessing it would be to feed millions of famishing mouths of innocent children, hungry people and animals!

WOEFUL WANT :

How few are they that feel for the starving and dying people and much less animals! Yet these unfortunate beings we see on every side, at every step, even as we walk in the streets. Poverty and starvation haunt one everywhere, beggars stretching their withered hands for a dole of paise or rice. But having eyes, we are blind. We do not feel or see. This is the way of the world !

Indeed Mother Earth has enough food for everybody, and no one need starve or die for want of food. The God that created us has created sufficient food also for us, but the food is not equally divided or shared in the right manner.

UNJUST ACCUMULATION :

While half the world is starving and dying, it is sad to see that some rich people are trying to amass more money, by veritably draining the lifeblood of the already hopelessly poor through merciless exploitation, even when already surfeited with riches. It hurts one to hear of certain Nawabs and rich people who are converting gold and silver into bricks and bars and storing them in underground rooms and cellars. They are indifferent and unmindful of the poverty and starvation of their subjects.

While God in the form of the sick and the poor is famishing

and fainting at their very doors for want of a little food and drink, they continue their orgies of waste and selfish hoarding.

Poor and naked, we came into the world and poor and naked we leave the world. We did not bring with us even a piece of thread, neither can we take with us even a broken needle. Then why this miserable life of heartless accumulation at the cost of the suffering and dying millions of our fellow-sisters and brothers? Bad Karma leads one towards the downward path of selfishness and destruction. When riches and powers are given to man, they are a very sacred trust and must be used only as such !

May God in His infinite mercy and compassion give us all the true understanding of Charity and Truth, inspiring us to share what we have with His poverty-stricken children, for in sharing anything with anyone of the least of His children, we are sharing it only with Him, the Indweller of our hearts, the original Owner and Giver of all good gifts!

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DIVINITY WITHIN

*In tender years, I often prayed :
My God! My God, where hast Thou stayed ?
I fain would touch Thy gleaming feet,
Enclosed by Lotus petals sweet.
Why art Thou far, Who art so dear?
Without Thee, life is void and drear.
Now, by the wonder of Thy Grace,
I feel the radiance of Thy Face,
Behind the last thin veil aglow,
More luminous than sun on snow.
Awareness like some holy spell,
Ripples electric through each cell,
And Peace like Sun on morning flowers
Englours life's swift golden hours,
And occult whispers of God's love
Fill all the earth and sky above.
I cry no longer : Where art Thou?
O! Omnipresence—Here and Now;
Without , within, Thou dwellest near,
One Life, inseparably dear!*

PRAYER IN EARLY DAYS :

There were times in my early days when I offered my prayer with tears of yearning and pleading with the Almighty for His Grace, somewhat in the following manner :

O Lord, not only days and weeks, but even months and years are passing by in vain. Why hast, Thou not yet come unto me? Have I not lived and waited for Thee all these years? How long am I still to wait for Thy Grace? Pray, bless me now with Thy Presence!

LATER PRAYERS :

As days rolled by and as I grew in spiritual experience, my trend of thought and prayer also changed and in later years, I offered my prayers thus :

O Lord, Thou art the Indwelling Presence of my heart. There is never a moment of time when Thou hast been separate or away from me, for Thou art pervading and permeating the very cells of my being. In all the states of my life —waking, dreaming, sleeping and super-consciousness, Thou art always watching and protecting me as a loving mother watches and cares for her babe.

Thou hast already come to me, for Thou art always with me. It is I that need come to Thee, for I forget and deny Thee, times out of number, everyday. What a great joy it is just to feel that Thou art the Heart of my heart, the Breath of my breath and the Soul of my soul. O! Bless me to recognize Thee, not now and then, but in each and every moment of my life, is all that I ask of Thee.

There is no use, groping in darkness, repeating lip prayers, all the while hiding the Light which is ever within us. Alas, the grossness of the senses! Man is ever prone to search without, instead of searching within himself. But, a time will come with a heavy price of sorrow and disappointment with all his searches, outer searches, for he is searching for God everywhere except within himself.

THE HIDDEN DIVINITY :

This reminds me of the beautiful story of how the gods once

stole the Divinity in man and wanted to hide It somewhere he could never find It. They thought of hiding It on the mountain tops, but they feared that ingenious man would surely scale the heights; then they thought of burying It under the ground, but they said that he would also certainly dig the earth in search of gold. Then they thought of hiding It in the depths of the sea, but again they pondered that he would dive into the sea in search of pearls. At last they came to the conclusion that it would be far better to hide it within man's heart alone, for that would be the last place where he would go to seek his lost Divinity. Hence, it is no wonder that man searches for God everywhere except within himself.

PARABLE OF THE MUSK DEER :

This story also reminds one of the sad plight of the fabled musk deer that ran over hills and dales in search of the fragrant, illusive musk, having that musk within itself. In its outer search, at last, its heart was pierced against a rock and it died with a bleeding heart. While dying, when it licked its own heart's blood, lo! the musk for which it had wandered far and wide, was found only within itself. But alas! it was too late. Man is emulating exactly this story of seeking without for That which is ever abiding within.

FASTING EXPERIENCES:

As these chapters of my diary are on fasting, I think that I will now revert to telling something about it.

Everyday, I take delight in doing the usual routine of Ashram work and I, also, greatly enjoy a short stroll in the Ashram grounds now and then, communing with the tender plants and sweet flowers.

It is astonishing that after these many days of abstinence

from food, there is still elimination of much waste matter despite twenty-three days of absolute fasting. If this is the case, I believe that one must fast a longer period to have perfect bodily purification.

Free of waste materials, my body needs little restorative sleep now. I am unable to sleep more than three hours at night. I lie awake whole nights, communing with the Indweller of my heart. It is glorious to be alone with that Still Presence! Sometimes I try to express my thoughts in the form of a message. Last night, I arose from deep sleep and wrote an essay of which the subject is 'Peace.'

Thus, by God's blessings, I am fulfilling slowly, the self-allotted fasting days and I am steadily reaching the end of my goal, enjoying the best of health and joyous spiritual feasts each day.

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

FASTING EXPERIENCES

As these chapters of my story are on fasting, I think that I will now revert to telling something about it.

Everyday, I take delight in doing the usual routine of Ashram work and I, also, greatly enjoy a short stroll in the Ashram grounds now and then communing with the tender plants and sweet flowers. It is refreshing that after these many days of abstinence

CHAPTER XXIV

LOVE — GOD'S SILENT FORCE

*Wrapt in the golden garment of God's Love,
Wise as the serpent, guileless as the dove,
The Man Complete, loves as is right and meet
All lands, where rest his pilgrim feet.
He senses the deep kinship of each race and tongue,
The Brotherhood of beings from One Maker sprung.
At worship in his heart's vast shrine,
He banishes all thought of mine or thine,
Perfected Man keeps each day, festive holy,
Adoring in all beings God's Force solely.
In Wise Silence though withdrawn, he's ne'r lonely or alone,
But companioned by Archangels from God's throne.*

LIVE AS LOVE:

Love performs miracles, for love is no other than God, the greatest Force in the Universe.

The Spiritual Motto, DO NOT MERELY LOVE but LIVE AS LOVE, has the greatest significance and meaning for the Truth seeker. A man of the world loves a few friends and hates or dislikes other folks. A man of God loves all. In his dictionary, the words like 'hatred' or 'dislike' do not exist. He is ALL LOVE, for he is an embodiment of Love, which is Universal and Eternal.

Man should learn, whether it is to-day or tomorrow, to live as Love for the Peace of his own immortal soul as well as for that

of the universe. For, in Love alone lies the infallible panacea for all ills and delusions of life.

When a man lives as Love, he includes all beings and excludes none, for Love is all-embracing universal and One without a second!

What the sad world needs is more of that Love. No more of separate sects and creeds, not lectures and eloquent talks, but a little bit of selfless Love that expects not the least reward, but just loves because it cannot help loving. The love which is content to live as Love because its own intrinsic nature is to do so, is the only true Love. Those who are emblems of Love are perfect images of God. With Love, all things are possible. Verily it is said: WHERE THERE IS LOVE, THERE IS GOD!

When we love our work, it is no longer a drudgery, but pleasure. When we love a person, he is no longer a burden to us, but a spiritual companion walking hand in hand towards the throne of God. When we have that Infinite Love, we can experience that even the so-called poisonous or venomous insects, reptiles and fierce wild beasts become harmless and friendly. How God expresses and manifests Himself in a million forms in all the Kingdoms of Life to teach us the great and limitless Law of Love! It is a true saying that when everything fails, it is Love alone that wins.

Even fasting is possible only when there is the inspiration of Love. If Love were to be absent, this fasting would merely be a starvation. With Love of God, one can fast indefinitely. May our thoughts, words and deeds be filled and saturated with the divine fervour of unselfish Love!

GOD, THE SUSTAINER :

The other day, in the early hours of the dawn, I went up to the terrace to enjoy the fresh glory and beauty of the rising sun. The trees were all sparkling with dew. They were drinking the fresh dew, God-given nectar, gratefully and silently. They were watered regularly on alternate days when the trees were young and newly planted. When they became large, we gave up watering them as they did not require any nourishment from us, for their roots were so deep now, penetrating into the heart of the Mother Earth directly.

I look at the beautiful hills, blue in the distance and think that their tangled forests also flourish without food. I look up into the vast sky, into the soul of stars and they too do not need food. The cool breeze and the sunshine and the moisture in the earth are all helping the trees to grow and yield fruits for the use of man. When these creations are so well taken care of by God, from the tender lives of the field to the mighty planets, why should man alone worry himself to death day and night over the food question?

How beautiful are the blades of grass and the lilies in the field! As said in the Bible, when the Lord is taking such care of all these sub-human things, does He not also take even better care of man whom He created in His own image? Alas, the faithlessness of man! Instead of trusting in God, he trusts in his own little mortal mind and the result is confusion and distress! All Scriptures declare that the God who created man, also created food to sustain him.

What we need to take care of is not food and raiment but the remembrance and recognition of God, the Giver of all our blessings! If we do His work, trusting him like little children, he will supply our wants, looking after all our needs and affairs.

DIP DOWN YOUR BUCKETS:

His Love is surrounding us on every side, at all times but we are blind, dying of thirst like a certain crew on a ship which was journeying on the ocean. Their water supply was low, so in their fear of drought, they saw another ship and signalled frantically for help, begging for a little water with which to save their lives. The answer they received was: "Dip down your buckets." But they thought in ignorance that it was salt water; still when they followed the signalled instructions of the other ship, lo! it was indeed sweet water that could abundantly quench their thirst. It seemed there was a large swift river there, flowing into the ocean with such great force that it filled the sea with its sweet water for several miles. The crew of the first vessel being ignorant of the fact was almost dying of thirst, while there was sweet water near at hand.

Such is the life of the ignorant everywhere in the world. God is above, below within and without. Instead of dipping our buckets down into the Ocean of Glory, we are famishing of thirst, looking about frantically for a little drop of water. It is time for all of us to recognize God's Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience and be sanctified by dipping our buckets down, even now, to drink and bathe in His sacred Love, ever-flowing like a sweet river of immortal life in the midst of the ocean of existence.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXV

SELF-RELIANCE

*Truth is not ever fathomless and strange,
And yet eludes of mortal mind the range,
Unreasoning striving fails to solve
That Source, wherein all else dissolves.
The first step is, to will the beautiful and good;
Thus merged in Love, God too is understood.*

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION :

Self-reliance has always been my favourite theme and thought. Self-reliance does not mean reliance on the little self, but on the Higher Self. Self-reliance is complete self surrender to God or Truth. Self-reliance and God-consciousness are not two, they blend into one.

On the twenty-fifth day of the fast, the members of the Ashram at last prevailed upon me and brought a doctor to give me a physical examination as is customary when people undergo long fasts. The doctor is a good friend of the Ashram and apart from his medical profession, he is a spiritual soul and a great devotee of our Mission. Even today I stood firmly for Self-reliance and did not allow the doctor to touch me, even to examine my pulse or heartbeat. He was satisfied with his observation when I told him in writing, as gently as possible, not to waste my time and his own on needless physical examination as I was feeling quite strong and healthy. He left me expressing awe and admiration for this proof of the subjugation of mind over matter. May glory be unto Him, the Giver of all strength, the great Sustainer of the Universe!

When God is present in every cell of one's being, penetrating

the very pores of the body, what is there to examine? If there is anything to be examined it is one's mind that is to be examined, analyzed. One should tell oneself severely, wherein and how one is forgetting the Indwelling Presence. The Higher Self is the best authority and this examination must be done by introspection by oneself and not by others. One must heal oneself after a correct and penetrating self-analysis. Indeed one should be his own physician and teacher.

BE TRUE TO YOUR INNER SELF :

Sages have repeatedly told us that the whole essence of all religion can be given out in one word, viz., *Self-reliance*. If you cannot rely on the Self which is abiding and shining in your being as the Heart of your heart, Mind of your mind, and Soul of your soul, how can you rely on anything else? If you cannot be true to the Indweller of your heart, how can you be true to any of your outer friends and relations? It has been often said, if you can be true to God, your Inner Self, all will be well.

In vain is all reliance on the outer teachers, on our trusted disciples, nearest relations and dearest friends, faithful and loving though they may be. All reliance on outer forms, sooner or later, results only in sorrow and disappointment, as the external world is ever-changing in its relativity to things. It is time for us to learn to stand on our own feet, to rely on our God-head, the Eternal and the Infallible.

No more outer reliance on the God who is confined to churches or temples, to creeds or colours, to names or forms to heavens or other spheres. It is high time that we should keep to our centre within, ever relying on the God of our innermost heart, of which this body is the tabernacle or temple.

Even in the ordinary affairs of our daily lives, if any efficient work is to be done to our entire satisfaction, we are often compelled to do it ourselves, without entrusting it to someone else.

Often we know from our personal experience that even in the ordinary things of every day life when duties are neglected and even when we repeatedly request others to do them, we find that by finally taking hold of them ourselves, it is surprising how in very little time, we are able to accomplish them to our full satisfaction, thus, setting a silent example which makes a deeper impression than mere words.

THE STORY OF BIRDS :

A highly instructive story is given in the Scriptures of the East, regarding the blessedness of Self-reliance. It seems that once two birds were living with their nestlings in the wheat field of a certain farmer. The parent birds used to go every morning and evening in search of food and used to return with food for their young ones after searching here and there in field and stream.

One evening, when the parent birds returned, the young ones were very much excited and told their parents that they overheard the farmer saying that he would cut the crops the next day with the help of his friends. But the elder birds laughed and said, "Do not worry. His friends never would come to help him cut his crops." And so it truly happened. When the parent birds returned after an excursion next evening, the nestlings were all upset and said that the farmer requested his relatives to cut the crops on the morrow. Again the parent-birds said that the relatives too would not help the farmer.

The next day the little birds said that the farmer again had said that he would ask his children to help him cut the crop. Even

then the wise birds laughed and said that they were still safe, and need not move from that field as neither of his children would help him in gathering the harvest. On the following day, the little birds said that they heard the farmer resolutely saying to himself that he would rely on none hereafter and would gather in his own harvest without the help of anyone. Then indeed the parent birds looked grave and worried and made a move immediately from that field to another field with their baby-birds. And surely, on the very next day, the farmer was busy cutting the crop and gathering in his own harvest. He was relying on himself alone and not on the uncertain promises of others. May glory be to Self-reliance and may it become the Lamp of Wisdom to all beings!

GLORY OF SELF-RELIANCE:

What a simple but beautiful illustration this little fable is to portray the glory of Self-reliance! No comment on the above is needed, for it is so plain. When a man relies on his own self, how strong and efficient he feels! He feels the Presence of God, or the Divinity, right in the present moment of asserting It. God is no longer separate or away from him. He and God are not two, but One. He enjoys God-consciousness no longer in the uncertain future but right now in the present, even as he moves, breathes and works, for he is centered in the Self.

May we all be blessed with the Divine strength and the glory of Self-Reliance and attain that state, where beyond these words, there is Peace Profound!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXVI

SEEK YE FIRST HIS KINGDOM

All earthly gain is like the chaff of rice

Which fateful winds can whirl away.

Earth-ties and joys have numbered day.

Where then is solace, staff or stay?

What Goal's in this Mayavic Play?

To find that Precious Pearl of Price,

And Kingdom, ours for Aye and Aye?

SEEKING THE WRONG KINGDOM :

“SEEK YE FIRST HIS KINGDOM AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND ALL THINGS SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO YOU” are the sublime words of the Prince of Peace. More than half the people in the world call themselves the followers of Lord Christ, but how many among this half of the people of God's creation are truly seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness? As one studies and observes the anxious faces and restless manner of most of these people, do you find any of these busy, worried people seeking the Kingdom of Heaven? Alas! We must answer in the negative. It is so obvious that they are seeking every earthly and earthly thing before seeking the things pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Yes, they say for the sake of formality or consolation to their souls that they seek the Kingdom of Heaven when they visit temples and churches on Sundays, Saturdays or other festive days. They do perhaps try to seek the Kingdom of Heaven when they visit these Holy places and when they are in the company of spiritual

souls. They try sometimes to find the Kingdom of heaven in their spare moments too. This is not often, however, for if they have a spare moment, they try to utilize it in some other way, in the worship of Mammon or in mundane attractions.

Thus, they put everything else first, hoping that the Kingdom of Heaven will follow by itself sooner or later when they chance to remember. If we analyse our lives critically, we are astonished to find all our time, every minute of it, dedicated to outer pursuits of a worldly kind, really the Kingdom of Satan! What is the goal of all this outer seeking of name, fame and Mammon worship?

WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN :

Again, we listen to the clarion voice of Lord Christ. It may be only a cry in the wilderness, but He is still here repeating patiently for the last twenty centuries : WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN, IF HE GAINS THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSES HIS OWN SOUL? But, heedless of His sweet and tender words of warning, most of the people are trying to gain the whole world, meanwhile losing their own precious soul and everything that really is changeless, lovely and eternal.

Where are the mighty emperors like Napoleon, Caesar and Alexander, who once ruled the wide world? They sought the Kingdom of Mammon, denying the Kingdom of Heaven and God's righteousness. Mighty as they were in their own time, their names are half forgotten, and their earthly glory and thrones are gone with them into the dust.

Contemplate on Christ, Krishna and Buddha, who sought wisely the Kingdom of Heaven and God's righteousness. Although their physical forms passed away from this plane many centuries ago, they are living with ever increasing glory, in the hearts of

millions of people as the ideal incarnations of Peace and Blessedness. Such is the glory of spiritual life and the fruit of seeking Truth before everything else!

Unfortunately, we give all our attention to the unreal, material tangible and solid-seeming names and forms and very little attention to the Reality, the purpose and very goal of our human birth. It is time even now, realising the importance of our precious birth, to shift the Centre of our Consciousness from the unreal to the Real, from the mortal to the Immortal, from the perishable name and form to the Imperishable Truth!

WHAT IS THAT THING BY KNOWING WHICH ALL ELSE IS KNOWN :

That thing by knowing which everything else is known is the central teaching of the Vedic Scriptures as well. But we are trying to know everything except THAT. We are cramming our brains and stuffing our intellects with all kinds of information of the long perished and perishable things of the earth, in the name of education, history, science, languages, literature, geography, arithmetic, geology, trigonometry, dramatics and a thousand other branches of our knowledge.

Even the brains of our young children are overstuffed and saturated with the teaching of these studies. I do not mean to say that these branches of learning should be utterly neglected, but they must be given secondary place and the Science of God or the Immortal Soul should be given the first and foremost place in the lives of both young and old.

Let our children from their babyhood be taught to seek first His Kingdom and righteousness, the foundation of all true Wisdom

so that all these lesser things shall be easily added. By first knowing That Truth, the Living Reality, all these sciences will be known. What shall it profit a man to learn a library full of these sciences, neglecting the Science of God, which concerns his own goal, soul and freedom and loses THAT! We can trace many examples where poor and illiterate souls who attained God-consciousness became endowed with mighty wisdom and grace from above and great gifts and powers that supersede that of the most learned of the Schools of outer knowledge.

May our first and foremost homage be to God, the Great Scientist of all Creation, and to seeking His Kingdom and Righteousness first so that all else will surely be added unto us.

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXVII

CENTERING IN GOD

The Karmic Wheel is turning fast.

Alas! How souls go whirling past,

But changing dismal bonds of earth —

For darker Vortex of Re-birth.

Yet at the Centre blissful, still

Dwell all who learned the Perfect Will.

There give me refuge, One with Thee.

Vast Axis of Eternity!

PRAYER OF INSEPARABLE UNITY :

In the stillness of the very silent moments of life, often I approach the Almighty, Who is no other than the Indweller of my heart, and feeling ecstatic Unity and Love with the entire universe, I promise Him thus with inner vows:

"O Lord! As I am feeling Thy Presence now, in all inspired intensity, let me continue to feel It thus forever. Let me not forget Thee even for a single moment, in the name of anything in the world. Thou art my life, my soul and my all in all! With Thee, I am complete! I need nothing else besides Thee, for in having Thee, Who art in all things, I am having everything! Oh! How blessed it is to live, work, breathe and float in this Divine State of ecstasy forever. O! Bless me with the Divine Strength ever to stand by Thee, centering myself in Thee always, recognizing nothing but Thee, is all that I ask of Thee."

THE SPIRIT IS WILLING, THE FLESH WEAK :

Those precious and rare moments of Unity with God or Truth are beyond description with mere lifeless words, but somehow in spite of the repeated promises to stand by Him and never to forget or deny Him in the name of anything, something happens, and some seemingly momentous things require our attention and capture our minds. The Indwelling Presence is then ignored and forgotten, at least for the time being.

Alas! the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; whether the flesh is weak or powerful, it will indeed be strengthened by the strong assertion of the Spirit, each time we find that we have forgotten the Truth. Try and try until success is assured. That is the only simple and natural way to obtain success, whether it is in the activities of daily life, or in reaching the unlimited Heights of Illumination.

A lover of God may seemingly forget that Living Presence for the time being while mentally lost in activity. He approaches Him again and again. Each time he forgets Him, he feels penitent on again approaching Him. But, where else is the refuge for a devotee except at His feet? He may wander all over the world, but when the time comes, he must return to Him alone, the Source of one's very being.

BIRD ON THE MAST SIMILE :

This reminds one of a beautiful illustration of how a little bird was sitting on the mast of a ship. There was no other ship in sight. The vessel was speeding over the limitless ocean of deep waters, and the vast, blue sky hung above. The bird got tired of sitting on the mast and flew off with the intention of resting

somewhere else. But where else can it rest in the middle of the ocean? Getting tired, it returned to its old resting place. Thus it repeated the same process again and again, until it realized that it was useless to leave the mast anymore, since there was no other safe or resting place besides that mast, which by clinging to it finally bore it to a safe haven.

SOUL'S JOY AND PEACE WITHIN :

Similarly, a time will come in the life of all seekers of God when they shall realize that it is useless to wander hither and thither and that their soul's joy and peace lies only within them, with the Indweller of their hearts. Then the mind wanders no longer. Until then, the process of wandering here and there continues. The greatest consolation remains, however much we may unconsciously forget and deny God. He is always waiting for us with outstretched arms, like the Biblical Father who greeted the return of the Prodigal Son. He understands us, for He is the silent Witness of all our thoughts, words and deeds. Someday there will be neither coming nor going, neither wandering nor returning, for then God and man will not be two but one. This will be the goal of all existence.

FASTING EXPERIENCES :

As the blessed days of fasting are shortly coming to an end, I ought to write more about the physical effects of the fast and less on the philosophy on my spiritual thoughts. From the first day to the last, it is a joy to state that I am getting stronger day by day. Still I take pleasure in doing my daily work of correspondence, essay writing, etc. A little daily exercise in the sunshine and often a stroll in the grounds of the Ashram help to pass the days pleasantly. The sunny morning hours of sitting on the roof, and at eventide,

the gazing at the stars and the silent communion with Nature are filled with blessings — physical, mental and spiritual.

Despite twenty-seven days of absolute fasting, I wonder at all the foreign matter still being eliminated from this entire organism and it almost makes one think that it cannot be the accumulation of merely this birth. If the gross foreign matter is so persistent, imagine how deep-rooted all the subtle matter, all the impressions (*Vasanas*), the accumulations of time that belong not only to this birth, but to many past births must be. Verily, fasting cures and expels not only the gross foreign matter from our tissues, but even the mental and subtle impurities of the mind! *It is an unrivalled specific cure for all weaknesses and incurable diseases.* It brings them to climax and then dissolves them.

CHRIST'S FORTY DAYS FAST:

Feeling quite strong, I think that it would be wonderful if I could continue fasting ten days more until December 25, which will be Christmas Day, the birthday of Lord Christ. But as I have a call to go to America soon, friends are advising me to be satisfied with this thirty days of fasting at present, and to prepare for the long sea voyage ahead. I will be looking forward again to my fast of forty days at some other opportune period, for it is blessed to fast like the blessed Christ for forty days, spending one's time in prayer and meditation.

May we strive to walk in the sacred footsteps of Christ, Krihsna, Buddha and other Saviours of Humanity, is my prayer!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LORD IS CALLING

*O! Earnest soul, respond, rejoice,
Thy Lord calls in His Silent Voice,
The Deep calls sweetly unto deep!
O! Waves of Living Glory sweep
Both name and form away, away,
As flecks of froth in Surya's ray.*

THREE DAYS TO REALIZE GOD :

Sri Ramakrishna said that in this Iron Age, a man can fully realise God even in three days. Keeping this wonderful promise in mind, it is a joyous reflection that I have still three more blessed days of silence and fasting and may hope to reach the Heights.

By the end of the fast, it would be sublime to have touched His feet, to have seen the Vision and have felt unmistakably and consciously the Presence of the Great Beloved. Every sign of fear, worry, expectation and desire must be rooted out of the system. Oh! to be just like a carefree bird, singing songs of freedom deep within, to be like a simple sweet smelling flower, giving fragrance to one and all, irrespective of differences of color, caste or creed! One longs to become again like a little child new born in God's love.

If a long fast does not help one to rise above obstacles, such as fear and worry, then what is the use of fasting? The thought is supreme to make the best use of every moment of one's time, especially during the last days of spiritual fasting and silent days, bringing a feeling of fulfilment.

WORSHIP OF THE SUN EMBLEM :

This chapter is being written in the early hours of the morning, facing the rising sun with his luminous rays—millions of life-giving rays. How helpful it is to meditate every day on the SUN, the Light of the world, especially when His Symbol comes out of the horizon and retires again in the evening. The Sun is the dim reflection of the Great SUN of suns and a worthy Symbol of His glory and splendour. It is no wonder that the Easterners pay so much attention and reverence to the Gayatri Mantra, the *Mantra* of the Hindus', a sacred chant with which millions all over India daily worship the Sun. Let me repeat the essence of it now for the readers to assimilate: *I meditate on the glory of that Great Being, Who has created the Universe, and Who is the Light of the Universe. May He enlighten me!*

CALLING ON THE LORD :

In the Bible, we read that it is not everyone who repeats "Lord, Lord" who enters Heaven but he who doeth the will of the Father. How true are these words! We find millions calling on the lord, repeating His name, but very few people do God's will, walking in the footprints of His *Avatars*.

THE STORY OF OUTER WORSHIPPER:

Many of these people who are calling on the Lord do not follow him.

If the Lord comes and asks them to follow Him, they are unprepared to leave everything behind. This thought brings to one's mind a pertinent story. It seems once there was a worshipper who visited a temple both day and night. Along with him, many other

devotees used to come into the temple, and after their worship or Puja, they would leave the temple. But the aforementioned particular devotee stayed and stayed behind for many long hours to the great annoyance of the Pujari, the one in charge of the temple inconveniencing him everyday.

The Pujari often requested the devotee to depart, saying that he had to close the doors of the temple and cook his food, etc. But our devotee said that he wanted to become One with God and could not live away or separate himself from God any longer. The Pujari, in his great perplexity and finding no other way, thought of a little strategy. He went behind the image of the temple, while the devotee was praying with eyes closed, saying, "O! Lord take me into Thyself. Make me One with Thee."

The Pujari, in a hoarse voice whispered from behind the image of God. "O my devotee, I am well pleased with thee and with thy devotion. Now I am going to take thee into Myself. Come nearer and merge and dissolve in me."

No sooner had our devotee heard these words than he began to quiver and shiver, and the story continues to relate that he took to his heels as fast as he could. From that day onwards, he never visited the temple again, and he dared not even come into the vicinity of the temple, lest the Lord should take him into Himself.

FOLLOW ME:

Although this illustration appears to be a mere story, it has a great lesson to teach all of us. If the Lord appears now on the scene before us and repeats the words: '*Follow Me*' are we ready to follow Him, leaving all our kith and kin, all our duties, obligations and responsibilities? This is a question that everyone

should ask and answer for himself, merging within in the silent moments of his life.

Whether we are prepared or not to listen to the call of the Lord to follow Him, the unfailing call comes to us. Then, one and all must surely follow it without making excuses. It is the call of departure from this finite life. When does it come? Who can tell? Maybe today or tomorrow. Remembering the words that "*Today man is, tomorrow he is not*," let us wake up now alone to that state of birthlessness and deathlessness, where death cannot touch us.

Above all, let us so prepare ourselves putting our houses in order that even if the call comes now in the twinkling of an eye, we might bid adieu to our temporary homes and be ready to enter the kingdom of Heaven any day, at any hour or moment !

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXIX

THE FUTILITY OF HOARDING

*'Tis Sacred Love, the Gold Divine,
That maketh countenance to shine,
And Priceless Pearl, a Godly-heart,
In heaven hath a worthy part;
But worldly goods and their amass,
Can ne'r the Golden Gateway pass.*

WORSHIP OF MAMMON :

Poor and naked we came into the world, and poor and naked we must leave the world. This is the fate of all from the humblest beggar to the proudest emperor. Yet, in practical life, nobody seems to believe in this irrefutable fact. If people do believe in this unalterable fact, why are they so restlessly busy day and night in amassing money and depositing it in the banks, iron safes, underground cellars etc. We even hear of some very rich Nawabs converting silver into solid bars, and gold into square bricks and hoarding them in secret vaults.

Can they take even an atom or a particle of this silver or gold with them? Did they bring, when they first came to the light of day, even a tiny bit of thread? Can they take with them, when the ultimate call comes, even a broken needle, not to speak of all their vast wealth? When such is the case, why sell our souls to amass this immense wealth or hoard it even more so while our fellow sisters and brothers are dying of starvation! Wealth is not intended for hoarding or accumulation, but for distribution and for the service and use of man. We are but stewards of all God's material or spiritual beneficences.

How pathetic it is that while we cannot count a single cent of money as our own, that we should work so hard day and night from morning till evening—all for the worship of Mammon! We are neglecting what is truly ours and what we can take with us at the time of demise. We are desiring and trying to amass what we cannot take with us. Alas! we have to leave all earthly goods behind us at the time of death.

FABLE OF THE FAT JACKAL :

This state recalls to my mind an interesting story of a Jackal. There was a vineyard full of grapes, but it was fenced on all sides with a close fencing of wire. A jackal wanted to feast on these grapes. He sat and sat by the side of the vineyard, gazing longingly at the juicy grapes and devising plans all the while, as to the ways and means of getting inside the vineyard at any cost.

The jackal was so fat and round that it could not creep through the fence. Being cunning by nature, at last it conceived the happy idea of fasting until it became thin enough to pass through the wire. At last it was able to enter inside and began to feast on the grapes until it became quite fat again. Then it wanted to come out, for it could not stay for a long while in the vineyard, lest it would be caught and killed by the owners. But it was so fat! What else could it do other than begin another fast to become lean again? It thus became lean again, passing through the fence conveniently, and came out safely.

NEEDLESS HOARDING :

Such is the state of man in the world. He is getting fat now with everything, beginning from cream-puffs to the accumulation of millions. He is restlessly engaged in making himself fat to his

entire capacity. But a time will come when he has to exit and make himself lean again, say good-bye to all his epicurean tastes, his hard earned cash and all his dear and near ones so that he might pass through the closed doors of the prison house of the world. The story of the jackal has a deep significance and contains a practical lesson to teach all people who have no time to pray or meditate or to serve God in any way and who are restlessly busy with the deluding activities of the changing world.

BREAKING THE FAST :

Now coming back to the fasting theme, I am continuing to feel very well, enjoying sun baths, air baths and cold water baths day after day. As the time for the termination of my fast is near at hand, I loathe to write that one of the prominent thoughts has been: "What shall I eat or drink when I break my fast?" We have been taught repeatedly with great emphasis that the most difficult point about the fast is how to break it. Hence, we must be careful of what we drink or eat at the time of breaking the fast.

Of course, we should take only most natural foods. For the first two or three days, we should take orange juice, tomato juice and the juice of any other sweet fruits. Later on, according to the period of the fast and the need of the individual that fasts, one can take light watery, vegetable soups. Coconut water also is very helpful and tasty. After long fasts, one should not eat coconut or any other nuts for a week at least. As one meditates on the Indwelling Presence, ever working, breathing, and living in it, one is inwardly directed as to what to eat and what not to eat. So one must obey or follow the voice of intuition.

BE COMPLETE AS THE FULL MOON:

As I watch my feet, hands, etc., I can see they are getting a

little thin, but my face is quite full in spite of the fast of nearly a full month. My mind is sharp, intellect is keen, and my step is quite steady and firm. I long sometimes to take short walks as it affords me great joy and recreation, and also inspiration to engage myself in some spiritual work, such as writing messages or replying with an encouraging note to the kind enquiries of the friends of our Ashram.

These are the moonlit days again. The new moon is increasing in size. Going up every night on the terrace, I look into its Soul. I too long to grow brighter and brighter and more complete day by day, as to share God's Love and Peace with all the world!

As the new moon is increasing in size every day and as it surely reaches its fullness in a fort-night, may we all grow with the moon and realize our fullness or completeness, is my prayer!

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

CHAPTER XXX

UNIVERSAL MEDITATIONS

*Lord, we are heart-tied at the thought
Of all the wonders Thou hast wrought,
For who can speak with tongue of man,
And duly praise Thy Perfect Plan?
Therefore, unfathomed as the sea,
Our silent homage flows to Thee!*

GLORIFYING GOD:

At the very commencement of this chapter, I want to glorify God and praise Him for all His blessings and for sustaining me with His Spirit all these thirty days without the least sign of hunger, thirst or any other symptom of weakness. When He is with us, who can be against us, and what can stand against us? May all homage and repeated salutations be unto Him, Who is within, without, above, below and on every side and Who is One without a second!

Now, in this last chapter, my soul longs to share practical and helpful thoughts that may make the daily lives of some individuals stronger, happier and more peaceful, provided these thoughts are assimilated and practised. Let me, therefore, share a number of meditations with all of you. Why a number of meditations? One kind of meditation alone will not suit every temperament and individual.

MEDITATION ON THE MYSTIC WORDS :

Meditation on the thought or picture of the Universal Word, the Sacred Syllable *AUM*, is the most natural and simple meditation for one and all. Watch the myriad rays around the Sanskrit letter *AUM*. Identify yourself with this symbolic Holy Word, feeling its

Light within and without. As you meditate, you take millions of its rays into yourself, and as you exhale, you give out or spread the rays of Life, Light and Love all over the world. Even as you chant the sacred syllable, you send forth potent healing streams of Divine Energy towards the whole of Humanity. As you chant and meditate, thus in the stillness, you realize the Highest state of Samadhi, the Infinite Peace, which is your Birthright.

If some people cannot identify themselves with 'Om' and meditate on it, they can meditate on any other symbol which is appealing and inspiring to them. It would be narrow-minded and bigotry to say that all people ought to meditate on 'Om' alone to realize God. No, in whatever way one meditates, be it on the Sun or on the Word or some symbol, one may finally reach the Goal, but the Word is a high and sacred thought to hold. *"In the beginning there was the word and the word was with God and the word was God."*

MEDITATION ON THE HOLY CROSS:

Now, let us take Holy Christ on the sacred Cross. You can meditate on either of them. How life-giving it is to ever feel the Presence of Christ in one's heart! It is helpful to meditate on the Holy Cross, also. The body itself represents the Cross. If one exercises a little of one's imagination, one readily may see in the two outstretched hands and the trunk with the head, a perfect cross. The heart center may be compared to the Soul of this human Cross. Now meditate on the Cross of Illumination, identifying yourself with Light, to realize the Kingdom of Heaven in the stillness of your heart.

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED LOTUS :

If some cannot meditate on the Holy Cross, they can meditate, especially the followers of Buddhism, on the meditative

Enlightened One or on the Sacred Lotus. How strong one feels to carry Buddha, the Enlightened, always in the sacred sanctuary of one's heart! How helpful it is to meditate on the *Holy Cross*, considering it as the Lotus of one's very heart! As one meditates in stillness, the lotus of one's own heart blooms up and one is finally blessed with Nirvana, the Highest State of Peace.

MEDITATION ON THE DIVINE CRESCENT :

The votaries of Mohammedanism can meditate on their own symbol, the Holy Crescent, which represents valour and strength. The crescent is illuminated with the divine fire, taking one and all into common brotherhood of man. Above the crescent, there is the self-shining star, eternally shining as the Sun of suns. It is glorious to meditate on this Light of lights, which is the Light of every heart, as well as of the Universe. As one continues to meditate on this Light in stillness, one tastes the ecstatic joy of Paradise, the ineffable Peace of the Universe.

MEDITATION ON PEACE :

Similarly, the followers of various sects, creeds, and of different religions, can worship their own God, meditating on their own particular symbols, and thus reach the goal of life. If there are a few souls who do not like to meditate on any symbol, they can simply meditate on Peace—the *Peace that passeth all understanding*—the Peace Universal, which is all embracing. It is the goal of humanity. As they meditate on Peace, bathing and surrounding themselves with Peace, they are saturated with Peace, and Peace radiates forth from every cell and pore of their bodies.

Whether we meditate on Peace, the Crescent, the Lotus, the Cross, or the Syllable *AUM*, or any other symbol, it is quite essential that we should have long and deep meditations to have satisfactory results.

MEDITATING FOUR TIMES DAILY :

It has been said that meditation should be practised four times in a day :

1. In the early hours of the dawn just before the sun comes over the horizon.
2. In the evening as the sun goes down into the horizon.
3. In the middle of the night when everyone is asleep and when a death-like silence pervades.
4. In the midday, also, to feel and realize God even in the noonday splendour when life is teeming.

If one cannot meditate thus four times in a day, one should meditate at least thrice or even twice in the morning and in the evening. If one cannot meditate even for thirty minutes out of twenty-four hours, dedicating one's life to God such a life can never be called human. It is a disgrace to man and he is a mere burden to Mother Earth. The sooner such a one converts himself, the better it is for himself and for the world.

Meditation should be resorted to four times day, but gradually as one advances, it culminates in a ceaseless flow of never ending meditation, for real meditation cannot be confined to time or an hour, to a place or a symbol. One must feel the Presence of God at all times and under all conditions in a state of perpetual adoration.

BENEFITS OF KEEPING A SPIRITUAL DIARY :

If one takes the trouble of keeping a spiritual diary, it helps a great deal, especially in the beginning when the aspirant is making steady progress. In the diary, five points are to be noted down every night before retiring to sleep.

Hints :

1. One should wake up with God-thought, making a determination that he will make the day a better day every way, by feeling the Presence within oneself and in others.
2. One should have morning meditation in steady postures, and should note down the time, progress and experience gained in the diary.
3. One should have another meditation in the evening and note the results as in the morning,
4. One should carry a continuous consciousness of God in spite of outer duties and responsibilities. One must try to express God in all thoughts, words and deeds.
5. Before sleeping, one should self-examine the whole day's events and try to sleep in God and to wake up in Him again, for another bright day of Service and Love.

These are simple hints, but if followed they will give astonishing results.

Dear Loving Reader, although my heart craves to put out and write all that I have within myself for your benefit, I will not make this chapter long. Accept my loving thanks and gratitude for you alone with the Almighty, who is the Indweller of your heart, Who is awaiting to be recognized by you, *now* and *here*, the God of gods, the Guru of gurus!

May His richest blessings be upon you is the prayer of your brother, who loves you, wishing you Freedom and Illumination!

May Peace be unto all!

Om Tat Sat Om!

