

Fichte and Descartes

OM
TAT SAT

VEDANTA LIGHT

FROM

SHRI DADAJI MAHARAJ

BY

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FUNDAMENTALS² OF MANAVA YOGA.

INTRODUCTION.

IN the year 1898, Shri Dadaji Maharaj lived in a small town and used to instruct the Manava Yogis on the bank of the river Ramgunga. His pupils asked his permission to build a temple of Shiva at the place, but there was a Moslem mosque close by, and Dadaji advised the pupils first to ask the Moslem brothers if they would allow him to hold Sat Sangs there at the rainy weather. The Moslems agreed, having full faith in the teachings of Manava Yoga; but some of the Rajputs thought it unbecoming for their Master to teach in a Moslem mosque when they could afford to build a temple. So the temple was built, and Dadaji invited the Moslems to the consecration ceremony. It was proposed to call it Shri Dadaji ka Shivala, but he objected to this and named the temple Anandashwar. A room was set apart for the Moslems who wanted to use it for meditation.

Anandashwar, a very modest building, still stands on the bank of the Ramgunga, near Moradabad,³ and a free kitchen was once maintained for the poor. It was at this place that the following teachings were given by Shri Dadaji Maharaj, and many of the sat-sangs were blessed with the presence of the high Manava Yogis. The time was evening, when the dusk fell over the river.

SAT SANG NO. 1.

Question: What is man, and what is God?

Answer: Man is a triple alliance of matter, soul and spirit. His physical body is made of matter; his soul is what is called psychic life – including the mind, the emotions and the ego. The real part of man is Spirit, which is eternal, immortal, all-pervasive, deathless and birthless. Spirit is limitless and one. The psychic life of man is a manifestation of the Spirit through the medium of the soul. God is another name for Spirit. When it is considered apart from its relations to human body or soul, it is called God. It alone is real, It is all in all, It is all bliss, and being infinite cannot be expressed in words, nor can It be thought of by the mind. No finite object can express infinity.

*Q.*⁴ What is the world, and what is man's mission here?

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INTRODUCTION

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SAT SANG NO. 1

A. The world, nay, the whole cosmos is a partial manifestation of God. What the rays of the sun are to the sun, what brilliance is to the diamond, the world is to God. God, being consciousness absolute, is not exhausted by the cosmos. This, periodically, comes out of Him and then goes back to Him. It is not real but has only an appearance. The colours of a rainbow are not real but the sun which creates them is real; so the beauties of the world, as well as the imperfections, are not real, but God behind them is real.

The only object of the ego of man, the seat of the I, is to realise its identity with God. It is in this school of the world to learn this one lesson: to forget its limitations and actively to realise its oneness with all.

Love, beauty, and the sense of pleasure, are meant to open the eyes of man to the fact that within his bosom is God, Who is the seat of all love, all beauty and all bliss; and that indulgence in the outer pleasures will not quench his thirst.

So,⁵ when the pleasures of the world are enjoyed, the delights which are experienced are part of the bliss of God and come out of the inner being of man himself. Being deluded, man thinks the pleasure comes from the indulgence of the passions. Then illness, exhaustion, mental weakness, faithlessness of friends and the like overpower him. Thus does he realise the hollowness of these pleasures. Blessed are those who can learn the lesson without suffering. Some day or other every man has to learn the lesson that indulgence in the physical pleasures to an inordinate degree leads to greater and still greater suffering.

Q. Do you preach absolute renunciation?

A. No, you should live and legitimately enjoy the pleasures of the world with a view to rising above them. From grosser to more refined, from physical to emotional you must go.

OM

AIDS TO REALISATION.

Our goal must be that serenity of the mind in which fear and duality are unknown, which once realised abides for ever, which enriches life⁶ with the gifts of perfect mental

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SAT SANG NO. 1

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poise, serenity and knowledge that all is One, combined with desire for unselfish service. Let this be our only resolution and let all efforts go towards the realisation of it.

It is neither difficult nor painful to realise this. Spiritual help and protection will be given if you make sincere and persistent efforts.

The first thing to be cultivated is indifference (*vairagya*). This does not mean want of interest in the affairs of the world or of your family. It means that you do your best in the spirit of unselfish service, seeing that your inner heart is not affected by the desire to achieve favourable results. Do your best and let the rest go. Avoid hurry and worry and have boundless trust in yourself. Indifference creates a vacuum which is filled by the light of love in the course of time. Remember that love means the feeling of unity with all that is.

Remaining in the spirit of indifference, yet highly active in the unselfish discharge of your duties and practice of benevolence, you must cultivate courage. Do not be daunted by failures or want of expected results in your Yogic undertaking. Think daily of courage; evening⁷ and morning meditate upon it. Imagine that you are fighting with lions and tigers and subduing them with your internal power. Then imagine that you are amidst violent storms and come out undaunted. Court the seeming fears and conquer them.

The third enemy to be subdued is anger. Do not give way to temper under any circumstances. You lose your spiritual wealth each time that you give way to anger. When it begins to attack you it comes slowly. Nip it in the bud by a new understanding.

The last demon to be subdued is attachment. Do not be intimate with anybody. Do not try to know the secrets of anybody and do not have any to tell. As soon as you find that you are developing attachment for any person or thing, run away from it.

“It is better that our heart be a morsel in the mouth of a snake
Rather than let it get attached to any object or person.”

If you go into your meditating practices daily you will be helped to cultivate freedom. Let nobody be your master except your higher self. Do⁸ not yield to any mortal in your spiritual convictions. Husbands, wives, sons, friends, you have had in all your previous lives, as you have now. Your duty is to give them both material and spiritual service: but by giving up your own principles to please them, you show that you have not

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understood the meaning of spiritual life and the immortality of the soul. Love them in God.

SHANTI OR PEACE.

What is peace that we aspire to? Shri Dadaji Maharaj once gave the true meaning of Shanti, which is the same as that found in the experience of all other realised men and which is summarised as follows:

Peace does not mean inactivity. It does not mean shirking our daily duties and responsibilities. It does not mean silence or inability to stand the strife of the world. Those who cannot stand the ordinary irritation caused in daily life by opposition or commotion, have weak nerves and do not know the meaning of peace. To cultivate peace it is not necessary to run⁹ away from the world or its disturbing influences. We must remember that peace does not mean sloth.

Peace is in the nature of Atman (Self), and it has to be realised through service and renunciation in love. No lasting peace is possible before final Nirvana. Like the flickering light in the distant stars it comes and goes, but it abides perpetually when Truth has been realised in life. The temporary lull is not the peace of the spirit.

A Yogi must cultivate courage to face the realities of life and to withstand the shocks of opposition, disappointment and so-called misfortune. The habit of cultivating *sat guna*, through daily practice of meditation and devotion to Truth or God, is necessary. In all defeats and reverses there is an underlying current of Truth, the bliss of the realisation of the fact that the ultimate reality is not affected by outside disturbance and that all that comes and goes is from the Beloved and is useful for our spiritual growth. Every adverse event must be made a stepping-stone to Truth.

To have peace you must give peace to those with whom you are in contact. Do not show your¹⁰ temper to anybody under any circumstances, and treat all with composure, sincerity and cheerfulness. Stand firm on the rock of patience and all opposition will melt away, if your motive is right and good.

Look at the cow basking in the sun after a good feed of green and tender grass. How peaceful it looks! But you would not like to change your position in life with the cow. We do not want that kind of peace. Peace must be based on progress and on inner and outer harmony. To be like Egyptian mummies is no peace.

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SHANTI OR PEACE

Egoism is an impediment to peace. Shift your centre of consciousness from the little mind to Infinity. Realise that what is animating you is also giving energy and life to all. In God there is no duality. Then rest in peace, for what can disturb the whole?

If you cannot see peace in the battle of life itself, you have not understood the teachings of Shri Dadaji Maharaj. We live in love. Some love their little self and are filled with vanity; they think that everybody treads on their toes. The spiritual man loves Truth, ignores names and forms and rises above petty passions and self-importance.

To¹¹ control passions and desires, you have only to think daily, as often as you can, that they are not your real self.

Violence need not be applied to them, but a greater understanding. To look below the surface of name and form is to find peace. See peace in the storm and in the calm that follows it. So taught the great Zarthustra also. OM. Peace be with you.

OM TAT SAT.

THE VALUE OF SUFFERING.

“From Bliss all is born, in Bliss it stays.”

Upanishat.

It is commonly thought that to rise in spirituality we must suffer, we must court suffering, and live as long as we can in suffering. The early Christian saints were followers of this creed. It is said that Shakyamuni also taught the doctrine of suffering.

It must be made clear that this doctrine is wrong and has no foundation in the experience of the saints and sages. The nature of the soul is¹² bliss, and it lives in bliss. God is love, that is bliss. To worship suffering is to show bankruptcy of all spiritual experience. We are here to banish suffering from our own mind and from the world of living beings. Suffering is the result of duality and ignorance, and how can it be a companion of Truth, which is above duality?

Let us give our thoughts to bliss, scatter the flowers of bliss and bathe those who come in contact with us in our smiles of bliss. It is a sin to show our sufferings to others. Talk of bliss, think bliss and worship bliss.

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THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

The soul must not soil itself in the mud of sufferings or pleasures. It must remain above the two, unaffected by either of them, rising in bliss, which is the nature of the soul. Suffering neither necessarily purifies, nor does it elevate. It is indifference to suffering whilst in the midst of it that purifies, edifies. The same principle applies to pleasures also. We are wrong if we allow the pleasures of the senses to touch our inner being. Shallow is suffering and hollow is pleasure. The right attitude is to live in equanimity and the contemplation of bliss which is independent of our senses.

The¹³ Buddha was neither a pessimist nor an advocate of suffering. He transcended both and called this state Nirvana. Sacrifice of the false self must not be confounded with suffering. Service becomes unspiritual when it is taken as suffering. The only lesson that suffering teaches is that it passes and is shallow. Emerson says, "I grieve that grief can teach me nothing, nor carry me one step into real nature."

Let us not fear suffering. When it comes, as a consequence of the invitation sent to it by us in the past (though often unconsciously) let us treat it with indifference, and with the hospitality of bliss. Through our knowledge of Truth let us transform it into bliss.

You need not court suffering. As shadow follows substance so does suffering follow ignorance. The pleasures born of the contact of the senses with objects if taken as real turn into suffering. If meeting a friend is pleasure, parting with him will be pain.

To sympathise with those who suffer you need not weep with them. It is of no avail to lose your balance of feeling in the company of sufferers. Try to elevate them by giving them relief, and if possible from a distance.

Away¹⁴ with this time-honoured fallacy that suffering is essential to one's spiritual growth. Mental renunciation of pride, egotism, and self-importance will lead the soul to bliss but suffering for its own sake will do no good.

In ancient India Nirvana was first attained by kings in palaces. They imparted the "Royal Secret" to the monks, who reduced it into a forest creed. The sons of the forest-dwelling monks came to the palaces of kings to learn the science of Yoga. Ram and Krishna were not monks.

To be proud of simplicity of life, of renunciation, of self-inflicted poverty is as bad as to be proud of riches or beauty. Away with pride of any kind. Live in inner rest, in the contemplation of Truth and Beauty, and heed not whether sufferings come or pleasures.

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THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

Take every reasonable care of your body and your environment, to avoid disease and discomfort. The spiritual ideal is expressed in the following verses by the Indian sage,

“He alone deserves to be called a wise Pundit who keeps his mind in balance in gain, in loss, in heat and in cold, in pleasure and in pain.”

PRACTICAL¹⁵ DEDUCTIONS.

The following facts may be deduced from the teachings offered so far:

1. That I do not create visionaries who cut themselves away from the practical hard life of the world, and contemplate only God or Truth. The test of successful meditation is its application of daily life. In this respect the system of Manava Yoga is different from those systems which teach only other-worldliness, and ignore our life in society. The Holy Rishi Zarthustra was the first of the great sages who taught realisation of Truth in active practical life. He is the founder of Karma Yoga, the Yoga of action, and we are in this matter his followers.

2. We must love action, struggle, and must daily push onward in virtue, truth, and appreciation of beauty. We must raise a crusade against sloth and idle thought. We must practice renunciation in action through Love.

3. It is our duty to look after the physical body, and to give our full attention to our duties towards our relations, society and humanity; but we must not forget that we are not the physical¹⁶ body. It is also our great duty to train our minds by the study of good thoughts and right knowledge; to feed our emotions by the practice of virtue and to realise Truth or God through daily meditation in calm solitude. Each function is equally important. Our progress must be harmonious on all those planes. The great sin which India committed was that she neglected to see God in matter and made her progress only on the spiritual plane. She is paying for this great sin to-day. If you limit God you become infidel. See Him in matter as well as in Spirit. This is what I teach and what is true *dharma*.

4. Our goal is neither comfort nor happiness. Spiritual bliss is neither the one nor the other. A system of *dharma* (ethics) built on comfort or happiness alone is fit for a herd of cattle only. Our goal is the cultivation of Truth, Virtue, and appreciation of Beauty in all forms with a view to obtaining complete freedom. You must be a soldier fighting for freedom on all planes for all, through Truth, Virtue and Beauty. Anything that helps you in this fight is good; anything that makes you feel weak, lonely or cowardly, is non-righteousness.

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5. Fear¹⁷ is the only foe to fear. Have endless ambition to acquire freedom through Truth, Beauty and Virtue. Never think of duality and never harbour feelings of separation. Be strong; and do not make friends with luxury, publicity and vulgarity. Over and above all remember that thou art the Infinite Brahma, ever perfect, immortal and all pervasive. Meditate on this Truth and demonstrate it in daily life.

LIFE AND DEATH.

There is a thing called Death, if by it we mean a temporary change in the medium which expresses life. If we mean annihilation of life, or absence of survival, then there is no such thing as Death.

That the physical life can be prolonged is a fact. Nobody dies unless he accepts his physical death as a fact and lives in ignorance of the great spiritual laws which govern our physical existence. Manu has clearly said that it is for want of *Brhama-charya* (life in Brhama, the Infinite) and abandonment of the study of Truth that death comes to sages.

When¹⁸ infinite Atman is conditioned by the casual stuff it projects its shadow through it and this shadow of Atman is called life.

A developed form of the same, relatively speaking, is individual consciousness. Death is the withdrawal of this shadow owing to unfitness of the body. From Atman life comes; and to Atman it returns. It feeds on love and it progresses through right living. This process is called *Asha* by the great Zarthustra. The soul or *jiva* is in the body to discover the perfection of Atman through *Asha*. The flame is burning in the temple to reflect itself.

What a wonderful mystery, and what bliss is behind it!

The law of life is progress; constant progress in morals in spiritual upliftment and in pursuit of Truth and Beauty. If this is neglected then there is death in life.

That day has been passed in a tomb in which no progress has been made in the realisation of Truth through sacrifice. We live in good thoughts, good deeds and in the unfoldment of Truth within. Life must not be measured by years, but by deeds and by the progress made. Space¹⁹ is filled with life. There are about you many living beings

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in the form of spirits all the time. They are seeking to befriend you; but you will attract the beings of the same kind as you are yourself.

If you are treading the path of *Asha*, then there are pilgrims invisible who are with you. If you are a slave to passions and physical comforts, then that kind of being is about you. Some day you will see them, and verify my statements. Live in Life, Truth, Beauty and Probity.

HAVE I FAILED?

Often when the pressure of external circumstances is strong and the goal hidden in the thick mist of distance and suspicion, the heart cries in agony, "I have failed in this life; I have achieved nothing worth while."

As in war, one is not defeated unless he acknowledges defeat and asks for an armistice, so in life one is not defeated until one acknowledges defeat and leaves himself at the mercy of the blind forces of matter, through a want of proper understanding of the current of life. What is defeat?²⁰ It is an admission of bankruptcy in physical, mental and spiritual resources, and loss of hope in the guiding forces of life.

Mind is a creative force and there is no limit to its powers. It can create a heaven out of a hell and evolve order out of chaos. So there can be no such thing as defeat in the mind. As the sun is often obscured by heavy clouds and thick mist so is the mind frequently veiled by doubts, suspicions and want of imagination; but they are all temporary conditions and a little urge given to it by singing OM, OM, OM, and filling the "great within" with the light of love and benevolence, banishes unnatural pessimism.

The soul of man is all Power, all Knowledge, all Bliss, above the limitations of time and space. As there is no darkness in the sun so there is no defeat in the soul. Like the blue sky, limitless and eternal, the soul in each of us is perfect. There can be no defeat in the soul. It is therefore clear that defeat lives only in the imagination and is not real.

PRAYER.

As our physical bodies need daily food, and our souls daily exercise in ethical principles – *Dharma* – coupled²¹ with love of Beauty, so does the spirit within man need daily prayer, or it feels blank and gets out of touch with Reality (God). What is prayer?

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PRAYER

God, the timeless, transcendental-immanent, and all pervasive spirit, is the sole reality in man as well as in the universe. It is above duality and is secondless. The spirit of man in the form of pure consciousness, above reason and intuition, is a conditioned form of God. In reality it is not conditioned but it appears so. To go beyond the illusion of duality and find vital conscious unity with God, is the sole end of man's aspirations, efforts and movements. This is what Shakya Muni Buddha called Nirvana. This blessed state, being beyond thought and feeling, cannot be described. It is pure love. Man's love of Beauty, Truth and Virtue is love of God, a desire to unite with Him. Prayer is the effort of man to raise his mind, heart and will to the timeless realm of God. It is the urge of the streamlet of Ego to find union with the ocean of God. It must flow on and on through hills and dales, rushing over rocks, breaking all impediments, through fields full of smiling flowers and dark woods, to find unity with the sea.

(a) Prayer²² with some persons takes the form of singing the praises of God, considered as a person. The mind dwells on His attributes of Love, Mercy, Compassion, and, forgetting the limitations of the body in the ecstasy of Love, grows in Love and expands in consciousness. But if the man at this stage limits his God, and considers him to be the God of his own individual religion, clan or race only, then he is creating fresh limitation and hindering his own spiritual growth. Every incident in life must teach the soul some spiritual lesson. That man has not understood the meaning of prayer at all who limits God to a particular religion or place. Asking for individual favours is no prayer. When one sits down to pray the object must be to forget all worldly affairs and to fill the heart with God-consciousness, or, in a lesser degree, with attributes like Love, Compassion, Purity, Power and Beauty.

Concentration *per se* is not a great or wonderful thing. The aim of concentration is to prepare the mind for prayer.

(b) Prayer must be dynamic. When the mind is able to lose itself in a personal God and feels spiritual exaltation, then the second step is to imagine²³ God as being present everywhere. To live in His presence, to let the mind and heart breathe his fragrance, is a higher form of prayer. "Cover all with God, all the universe and its contents; be active, but calm."

Now, after spending some time in prayer, the aspirant tries to live in the presence of God during the day. The impersonal God, the First Cause, the Substance, the Substratum of all, lives in his memory day after day. He does not see any sin or sorrow, he blames none, he condemns none, he covers all with the Beloved.

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“With the eye of the heart see nothing but Friend
Whatever thou see'st, know it to be His manifestation.”

(c) In the third stage of prayer, when the heart has been purified, the devotee sees God. What is meant by the purity of the heart? It means that all phenomena are realised as hollow, as mere illusion, as a shadow of the great substance, God. Here the devotee sits calm, and by a careful self-analysis realises that he is neither the body nor the mind, but God, and God only. Now his prayer is: “I am Infinite, I²⁴ am God, I am all. *Shiva hum*, I am Om.” He realises his self to be immortal, infinite and perfection. The dew-drop has slipped into the sea. He sees freedom in his own self and in others. This becomes a perpetual prayer. As the wave cannot go beyond the river, so do his mind and feeling, whatever their state, live in eternal Truth, consciousness absolute. Shri Dadaji used to pray:

“Give us all Thy love: lead us all to Thy knowledge, O my Beloved Krishna.” There must not be an “I” in the prayer. It must be for all.

KARMA OF ACTION.

One cannot remain a single moment without acting.

It is our Karma which is the cause of bondage and it is Karma which aids the *jiva* in liberation. Karma is not the direct cause of liberation or Nirvana. It becomes binding when it is performed with the object of attaining selfish results. It binds more strongly when it is done with the motive of harming others. The chief object of karma is the purification of the *antakarma* (the²⁵ psychic nature of man). When this purification has been obtained then attainment of true knowledge, which alone leads to Nirvana, becomes natural.

According to the three gunas, *Sat* (light), *raj* (activity) and *tamas* (sloth), our karma is also of three kinds. The karma which means sloth, ignorance, anger, passion, greed and the like, drags the *jiva* downward to darker regions. The action of *raj* (activity), that itch of progress and speed based on desires and pleasures, joys of the flesh that come and go, name, fame and power, does not permit any upward progress of the *jiva*. The karma based on *sat* (light), which springs from devotion to Truth and higher motives of philanthropy, based on art, devotion, right meditation, worship of God within, study of Truth, philosophy and charity, leads the *jiva* to higher regions. It may go to the regions of devas, and enjoy the fruits of these good actions. Indra, the chief of the gods attained to that exalted position by sheer sacrifice.

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Some who have done such good deeds are born as princes, in rich and luxurious atmosphere, some as good Brahmans, others in the family of pious men.

Every²⁶ action, whether of thought, word or deed, leaves a slight impression on the inner nature of man and is called *sanskar*. It is the aggregate of these that determines one's character and temperament. Liberation is possible only while in the body of man. Even devas have to be born as man before they obtain final liberation. The body of man is therefore most important, as it is only in this that spiritual progress is possible.

We make our own fate. Our future is wholly in our own hands. What we sow we must reap. In childhood we are subject to *tamas* and our character is dominated by it. As we grow up we must by nature go to *raja*. In youth we are ordinarily subject to passions and fond of pleasure. Ambition, greed, thirst for joy possess us; but blessed are those who subdue the influence of *raj* by *sat*; that is, in their youth cultivate discrimination and apply themselves to philanthropy, philosophy, quest after wisdom. If higher traits of character are not cultivated in youth it often proves too late to achieve; but it is never too late to begin.

A hard struggle has to be made against *raj* and *tam*, in which devotion, holy readings, and the society²⁷ of the pious help much. Self-examination several times a day and keeping great ideals before the eyes is also helpful. Remembrance of the name of God is really useful. In this way, when *tam* and *raj* are subdued, and the mind turns to Truth and God, one must begin the study of philosophy, doing good and unselfish actions to others at the same time.

It is useless to retire from the world. In this respect we all follow the holy Zarthustra, who was the first to announce the path of action. To run away from the world is cowardice. The fire of *Gnana* (realisation of Truth), which banishes all feelings of duality and separation, burns up our karmas and brings on that state of consciousness which is called Nirvana, in which there is no duality or ignorance and in which peace reigns for ever.

In this state the soul knows that it alone exists; and that it is one with absolute Reality. This is the state of perfection and this is obtainable before the death of the physical body. It is not obtained after death, but right here, or actually in the lifetime of the Yogi. Perfection after death is a mere speculation on the validity of which we cannot rely.

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KARMA OF ACTION

The²⁸ karmas that are performed for the good of others without attachment to the fruits thereof, do not bind. This is the secret of the philosophy of Karma. That is a really good Karma in which the consciousness of the little self is absent. When a hero is in the thick of the fight undertaken unselfishly as a duty, when the ego consciousness is absent, it is as good as *dhyana* in *samadhi*. To allow oneself to be the instrument in the hands of Ishwara (God), and efface one's own personality, is the karma Yoga. No profession is mean, no action is bad, if it is undertaken as duty in the true spirit of unselfishness.

The mind of a karma Yogi must remain in equilibrium. This balance of consciousness is called *Samta*, and must be cultivated at all cost. As a tortoise withdraws its hands and feet at the time of danger, so does a Yogi withdraw all his senses into his inner self. To him nothing is low and nothing high. He acts for the freedom of all. He is called a Mahatma.

"Hammer on! Hammer on!" is the cry of Yoga.

OM.