

*To My Father*

*Pujya Munishree Chandrakant Sagarji.*

*Whatever blooms have  
blossomed forth are all from  
the seeds you planted.*

## *The Immortal Song*

- (1) *May the sacred stream of amity  
flow forever in my heart.*

*May the universe prosper, such is  
my cherished desire.*

- (2) *May my heart sing with ecstasy at the sight of the virtuous,  
And may my life be an offering at their feet.*

- (3) *May my heart bleed at the sight of the wretched, the cruel,  
the irreligious,  
And may tears of compassion flow from my eyes.*

- (4) *May I always be there to show the path to the pathless  
wanderers of life,*

*Yet if they should not hearken to me, may I bide in patience.*

- (5) *May the spirit of goodwill enter all our hearts, May we  
all sing in chorus the immortal song of human concord.*

—Chitrabhanu

# LOTUS BLOOM

CHITRABHANU

(Munishree Chandraprabhsagarji)

*Rendered from the Original Gujarati by*

BALCHANDRA PARIKH

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*By the same Author*

FOUNTAIN OF INSPIRATION  
BONDAGE AND FREEDOM  
TO THE CITIZENS OF TO-MORROW  
ROSARY OF PEARLS

*Soon to follow*

THE OCEAN AND THE WAVE  
BEACON LIGHT

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## GUIDING-STAR

The sacred stream of compassion  
Eternally flows in my heart,  
Ever rings the sentiment:  
Blessed be the fate  
Of the entire universe . . . .

It was the beclouded night of dismay. Dreary was the path. There was no friend, no colleague. None was beside to hold the beacon-lamp of hope through that darksome night. Providence was exhorting me to move apace, a lone way-farer. Whatever the destination, unwavering was this resolve: to move ahead, never to flinch!

Penetrating that beleaguered lonesome path, a hallowed voice rang through an arch spanning two thousand years and more:

Soul is the friend  
And soul alone the foe of soul!

That Voice became the guiding-star of my struggling soul. . . . . Under the sustaining bulwark of that Guiding-Star, I started pacing along the deserted road. Ah! See the miracle! A hundred roses sprang up all over the desolate path fraught with thorns! My mind—my consciousness

bloomed forth with the aroma of those roses in an atmosphere surcharged with compassion!

Realising that the aroma that has been sustenance of my life, might well prove to be the provision of all in the voyage of their existence, I make bold to usher this fountain-spring of *Lotus Bloom* to flow on through eternal space.

With Blessings,  
CHITRABHANU

15th August, 1955

## FOREWORD

The religious reader with an eye for spiritual brightness may discover in this book a string of Chitrabhanu wisdom-pearls. As a rule ordinary works of art have a beginning, a middle, and an end, but the *Lotus Bloom* is substance rather than form, and it may be read and enjoyed backwards as well as forwards!

At the top of page four the author of the *Lotus Bloom* reminds us that modern man is wasting his energy and intelligence in a violent rush to improve the world instead of himself, ignoring the eternal truth that self-improvement rather than improvement of exterior furniture and fixtures, is the road to the crest of all human greatness. Since everybody is in reality a spiritual being, animated, sustained, and renewed from the spirit within, only on a high level of the inner spirit will you and I and the rest of the world-family, find happiness and peace.

We are living in a new age that is getting newer every day: new clothes, new food, new shelter, new art, new music, new dances, new means of transportation and communication, new leaders, new deals, new frontiers, new allies—everything newer by the minute, including a lot of new questions such as: How to feed the starving millions from East to West? What should be done about the popula-

tion explosion? How to integrate the black and the white? When, if ever, is it right to wage war? Who is the real enemy? Why should man be in such a hurry to reach the moon, when he already has the vast wasteland of the unenlightened human mind?

To match the new age, we need a new improved form of man capable of answering the new questions that are now baffling the brains of present-day society. Obviously nobody on earth can make something out of nothing. Where is man going to find the right kind of building material for self-improvement? It seems to me he can find it only within himself. Self-knowledge is the key to self-improvement. All form grows out of its own true inner nature, just as the *Lotus Bloom* by Muni Shri Chitrabhanu Maharaj has shaped itself from the mysterious law that lies hidden in the seed of life.

WOODLAND KAHLER  
Marquis of St. Innocent  
President of the I.V.U.

Barcelona,  
Spain.

## AROMA OF THE LOTUS BLOOM

Very few people possess the art of expressing the profound elemental truths of life in vivid pearls of thought. Wherefore great seers wedded to the world's beneficence, have continually sought to illumine the path of human happiness on our earth by imaging the imperceptible, ineffable stirrings in their hearts in a concrete form by way of anecdotes, illustrations and characters easily intelligible even to laymen. Engaged in the pursuit of *Truth* benign and perceiving its imprint on the stream of human consciousness as something imperishable, immutable, beyond the Tide of Time and aquiver with the breath of everlasting bliss, all saints and sages have proclaimed this *Truth* as *Beauty* embodied, employing only a different designation for the purpose. But they envisaged simultaneously as well a third dimension of these twin projections of Universal Reality in the living image of human wellbeing, human beneficence. This Transcendent *Truth* he alone can imbibe who visualizes it in its triple reality.

Thus it is that thinkers, philosophers and savants endorse and consecrate only that element out of this infinite world of Creation which imparts perennial joy to man and is beneficent all the while, even as they exhort all creatures to honour it and it alone above everything else in life.

Munishree Chandraprabhsagarji (Chitrabhanu), having produced a whole galaxy of poetic images in philosophic thought, has proffered us in this work the superb elixir of blessed *Truth*. Some lines from the poet Kalapi attain their due fulfilment here:

In one sweep a hundred scrolls  
Disappear from the mind.

Could one pin a glance on this exalted *Truth* in the full  
candour of his being, then

The boundary-line of universe  
Breaks down that instant!

Thus doth Eternal Truth impinge on the core of existence even as regards a layman in every affair and dealing of his life in the form of innumerable shades of *Beauty* enveloping him.

To anyone picking up this book in any mood whatever, it is bound to provide a delightful stroll in the lofty world of Thought. The author's delineations of fellowship and love, of attachment and friendship are exceptionally lucid. He no longer ignores the elemental order of this world, but only evinces implicitly beneath the primary urge for higher refinement in man. . . . A work of this category can never be wearisome to anybody.

When offered as a gift of love or award, the present work, I am sure, will invariably prove a pleasant souvenir to a friend or kin forever. Through it Chitrabhanu has delivered his inspiring message to mankind that under the benign arch of Knowledge, Self-Sacrifice and Dedication the human consciousness, ideas and propensities can well be uplifted to the noblest peaks of *Beauty*!

RAVISHANKAR RAVAL



LOTUS BLOOM



## *Faith*

Faith is the greatest force in life. The plant of endeavour bears fruit, only when nourished with the living waters of faith.

## *Discovery*

History tells us the world has not, as yet, found a craftsman capable of producing a curtain that could veil the foul deeds of men till eternity. So tricky are the bounds of time and space that they must needs disclose evil, tearing through the curtain contrived by even the most skilful craftsman of this world!

## *Love and Forbearance*

Remember this much, my friends! The world never advances through controversy and cavil. Bitter and wearisome one must make one's existence thereby. If you would transform this earth into a sweet and lovely thing, then expand the spirit of forbearance and love in your life.

## *Efflorescence*

In order to emerge above the surface of the water, the lotus must abandon the company of the mire beneath. Even so, a dedicated savant longing for emancipation of his being, must needs come out of the quagmire of infatuating attachment. How can the two things ever go to-gether: To remain bogged down in the vale of infatuation and seek at the same time for the blossoming of your being?

## *Probe*

To-day's defeat may be turned into a landmark of tomorrow's victory, if the cause of defeat is seriously probed into!

## *Learning*

Learning bedecked with modesty is alone true learning. What is the use of that learning that does not engender humility? And nothing would be lost, if learning divorced from humility were to be dubbed as sheer obscurantism.

## *Lofty Goal*

When man has no lofty goal in life, he dissipates his energy in sensuous living. And through an excess of such voluptuous living, the humanity deep within him is turned into naked bestiality. Then degeneration and defilement display their brutish pride through every nook and corner of this world!

## *Beauty*

Loveliness that must rely on the appeal to external senses for its apprehension, is not beauty, but the forlorn ghost of desire and passion. Beauty, serene and immaculate, abides in the tranquil ecstasy of man's perfected consciousness—the consummate ecstasy that must be felt and visualized in the quietude of being when external senses are drowned in deep slumber!

## *Actions*

Actions have a dual character: elevated and mean. Abject are the deeds perpetrated under an implicit craving of their fruitage. Ennobling, however, are actions inspired by an urge for fulfilment, untarnished by any craving for their fruition whatever!

## *Wastage*

If the wastage of energy and intelligence entailed through the mad passion for improving the whole world without improving one's own self were to be canalized along the path of self-improvement, first and foremost, man should reach the crest of greatness and peace would prevail on this earth.

## *Fissures*

As we find innumerable fissures in the muddy base of a lake drained dry of its waters, so is a religion denuded of its human element prone to countless factions and fissures in its decadent body.

## *Par Excellence*

Hard, indeed, is the job of transfusing the spirit of religion into the reality of everyday life; but then, he alone is the man par excellence, who can interweave religion into the texture of everyday existence!

## *Direction*

When you are overcome with pride, better think that there are innumerable persons existing on this earth who are far advanced and of a superior calibre compared to yourself. And when you feel humbled, you may think as well, that there is a vast multitude of people living at this moment who are far more backward and lower than yourself. This mode of thinking will melt your pride, as it must equally eradicate your sense of humiliation.

## *Criterion of Advance*

Truly enlightened is that man who, having observed a fellow-being slip down the vale of perdition, paces along his way with all conceivable care. Similarly, mellowed is that person who, having himself once crashed into the self-same valley, paces next time full cautiously over the track. But utterly insensate must be that fellow who would continue to rush headlong through sheer excitement, despite his having toppled down that valley times without number!

## *Harangue*

Too often a man proved senile in discharging his duties, displays his strength in haranguing others about their own!

## *Contentment*

A common citizen of the modern times can attain means of luxury infinitely superior to those that were beyond the reach of the great Emperor Akbar in the Middle Ages. But, then, the peace that was enshrined in the heart of the common citizen of that age has far receded beyond the grip of even the most affluent aristocrat of to-day. Peace after all doth not stem from the paraphernalia of luxury and comfort, but from the contentment of one's mind.

## *Possession Regulated*

One who has taken the vow of regulated possession in his life, can alone find happiness and peace on this earth. Circumscribing the range of earthly possession by itself implies the regulation of our natural propensity to store up wealth. One adopting such voluntary regulation, not only renders his own life happy; but others, too, coming into contact with him are likely to undergo the least exploitation on account of him.

## *The Peak of Religion*

To reach the peak of religion, you will have to mount the steep stairs of self-restraint and compassion, of austerity and human service. Then alone can the summit of religion be confidently scaled!

## *Opportunity*

Don't sit idle, awaiting an opportunity to descend upon you if you have an implicit faith in the final validity of your view. Opportunity cannot come your way so easily; you have to create an opportunity for yourself. Even a slight opportunity can turn into a promising one, if your vision is imbued with a probity of purpose. Many an important figure waiting for opportunities to descend upon him, has passed away, wailing and moaning from this world without performing a single eminent act in all his career. Heroic souls are those who carry out their appointed tasks with enthusiasm, regarding each moment of their life as an opportunity in itself. Such gallant hosts will embrace death itself with a smile on their face, having illumined each instant of their life with radiance bright.

## *The Balloon of Life*

Our life has come to be like a child's balloon. It expands when the air of affluence is blown into it, but utterly shrinks when that air gushes out of its body. To remove this vacuum, pump into it the air of learning and culture, and strong shall it abide even in the absence of prosperity!

## *Malign Trinity*

Lust, licentiousness and discord constitute together a malignant trio thwarting, nay, impeding the triumphal march of the individual, the community, the country and the race!

## *Truth*

Unpleasant truth, rather than pleasant untruth would prove to be a sustaining pillar, equally wholesome, equally delightful to both the orator and the audience!

## *Prime Endeavour*

As the destiny of the present has been moulded from the endeavour of the past, even so, will the destiny of the future be invariably ordained out of the endeavour of the present. Wherefore it behoves an earnest seeker of self-fulfilment to apply himself indefatigably unto the grand endeavour of the present, brushing aside all impotent talk of fatality.

## *The Dynamic Spirit*

The dynamic genius implies a magnetic life-force that can transform defeat into victory. One who is endowed with such dynamism, can smile with a glow of triumph on his face even when surrounded by defeat!

## *Golden Means*

To quench the fire of wrath, seek the shelter of equanimity. To pierce the rock of conceit, entertain the aid of humility. To cut through the thicket of illusion, employ the arms of candour. To bridge the gulf of cupidity, invite the counsel of contentment!

## *Light Abounding*

When light abounds, there is no room for darkness; as where darkness prevails, no room can be left for light. Similarly, where knowledge permeates, no room shall be left for passion; even as no scope shall be left for knowledge, where passion reigns supreme.

## *Artifice*

Ponder over this, my friends, with all the earnestness and equanimity at your command. You may strive your utmost to present a benign and attractive exterior; but of what avail will this spacious exterior prove, if your mind beneath be ugly and foul? You may succeed perchance in deceiving the world, in throwing dust in its eyes; but how could you contrive to inveigle your conscience, that ever-vigilant deity, the comrade of your eternal being? How would you manage to throw dust in his watchful eyes? Speak forth, my friends, speak! You will be stripped naked in the presence of your conscience. What, then, are you to do even as your eyes shall be besmeared with dust?

## *Silence*

Silence leads to a storage of vitality. Through silence dissipated energy is focussed on to a centre again. And with energy canalized, speech attains a unique power. Silence thus provides an unfailing instrument to render one's speech more dynamic. He who has regulated his speech through silence, whenever he chooses to speak, finds an ineffable joy in his speech, in the words he utters, in the thoughts he expresses. One who never has had any experience of silence, cannot probably comprehend this secret; but he who has been cultivating silence must realise the impact of this truth. Wherefore, to those would-be orators among the younger generation of to-day, I should commend the cultivation of silence as a bewitching instrument of the art of elocution!

## *Man versus Brute*

The cardinal difference between man and brute lies only in this: To act by compulsion under the fear of punishment is the hall-mark of a brute, whereas to act under the uplifting urge for duty self-ordained, is the primary characteristic of man.

### *The Essential Attribute*

Through a union of profound thinking, spotless character and acute will-power, man can swing the whole universe to serve at his feet.

### *Soul Besmirched*

Cleanse your being with the sacred water flowing from the founts of saintly orations. Even as you strive to keep your countenance and figure clean, so maintain in the same breath the ingrained purity of your being. Far more perilous is a soul besmirched than a physique weltering in filth could ever be.

### *Fear of Sin*

Fear of sin alone saves man from slipping down the abyss of sin-infested deeds. Without this elemental fear of sin, neither can you make any advance along the hallowed path of virtue, nor assure a halt from the heinous path of vice.

## *Words of the Apostles*

As the stars of the firmament provide the only solace available to a lone and hapless wayfarer 'midst the dreary darkness of a sombre night, even so, when the vault of this mundane existence is bedimmed all around with thick fogs of ignorance, the one solace ready at hand to a dedicated spirit is to be found in those gleaming sparks of prophetic utterances of the apostles which radiate from the depths of their conscious self-realization.

## *Insular Propensity*

Be it a country or a race, be it an individual or a community, its decline irrevocably sets in from the moment it succumbs to an insular attitude of intolerance of others' views.

## *Tide of Time*

Would you not muse over this at daybreak every morning? How many hours do you while away each day in eating and sleeping, in bustle and business? And over against these, how many are spent in elevating thought, in ennobling action, in sincere prayer?

## *Blessed Vision*

As the flame of a lamp flickering far away in the distance instils fresh hope and courage into the soul of a dejected traveller who has lost his way in a dark and dreary wood, even so, doth Thy Blessed Vision impart, My Lord, new hope and sustenance unto me in my sore journey along this path of the infinite. My Lord ! I implore Thee in all humility to vouchsafe Thy hallowed vision to continue to shed its lustre forever over my lonely track.

## *The Joy of Listening*

Do you really feel the same ineffable joy in listening to the inspired utterances of the great sages as you must invariably feel in apprehending the sweet symphony flowing from the lips of a young and beauteous maiden? The right answer to the riddle of a man's propensity depends on the response he yields to this query.

## *Mind versus Lucre*

Those who aver that the inflow of wealth begets a stable mind, whereas its exit makes for a nervous mind understand no doubt what is the secret of Lucre,\* but fail to comprehend the quintessence of the mental being. The mind can never grow stable, unless there be a sense of contentment behind, notwithstanding the innundation of all the wealth of this world at one's door. If, however, self-contentment is assured, there can be no fear of the mind growing unsettled, even though all that wealth might vanish in a trice. This potential distinction between wealth affluent and mind contented, deserves serious reflection on all hands.

## *Child-Mind*

The child-mind is like a mirror crystal clear, that must inevitably project the reflexion of your good or evil thoughts, speech or demeanour. Parents should reform themselves for the well-being of their children, if for nothing else. And those who do not, commit indeed a social crime.

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\*The god of wealth.

## *Whirlwind of Humanity*

We simpletons might not understand the game of words going on in this world! In the name of the world's security the statesmen of this world plead for our loyalty to the claims of a humanitarian creed; and then in the name of the same humanitarian creed, they wage the most frightful and atrocious war in the world. Too often these talks of a humanistic cult sound hollow like an empty drum. They sound on both sides. With equal gusto they tune up both the notes: the note of non-violence and the note of annihilation! The echo responds to the player's tune—protector and devourer in the same breath!

## *The World's Esteem*

The world is like Janus, the double-faced god. Having acclaimed you as benign this moment, it will dub you perverse, the next. Study your life whenever the world calls you either benign or perverse. Explore what essentially you are: perverse or benign? If perverse, strive for self-improvement; if benign, woo sweet silence! After all, the verdict of one's conscience is far more valuable than the estimation of the whole world.

## *Mirror*

When the citizens of a state are morally weak, to demand that its government be morally strong, is nothing short of a display of sheer stupidity. This would be like calling for the reflexion in a mirror to be invariably graceful, when the human visage reflected therein is in itself ugly.

## *Deserts, not Birthright*

Freedom is not a self-devolving birthright, but a privilege earned by substantial deserts. If freedom were an inherent birthright, the child would have the freedom of his opinion, the profligate the freedom of his behaviour, the fool the freedom of his ideology, the querulous the freedom of his utterance, the purblind the freedom of unrestrained movement. But do they really get this? To what dreadful consequences might that lead, were it to be granted unto them? Wherefore, our seers commend constant reflection not so much on our rights and privileges, as on our innate desert.

## *Primary Urge*

The discourse of a preacher can take effective root only when the primary urge for self-development exists deep within a disciple's own being, be it even in an infinitesimal form. Then would that tiny seed of inner longing invariably sprout forth into a blossom.

## *The Mind*

Your mind is, indeed, your true paradise, even as your mind is, indeed, your real hell. The mind that has blossomed forth under the light of thoughts benign, effuses the beatitude of paradise; whereas, the mind that is imprisoned within the womb of heinous thoughts, engenders only the bleak agony of hell. Remember, therefore, your mind alone is the true begetter of what you signify by hell or heaven.

## *Abject of the Abject*

The man who bids good-bye to truth, disregarding the voice of his conscience in deference to the blind dictates of a caste or community, of a sect or a preceptor, is neither a sage nor a savant nor even a sycophant, but the most abject of all abject beings.

## *Ambrosia*

From profound silence aglow with the ecstatic communion of a soul surges up the pure ambrosia of inspiration. From meaningless chatter what can be expected but pallid buttermilk?

## *Fury*

Not knowing the ghastly consequences of fury many an ignorant soul would affect equanimity without, concealing the deeper rage within, in order to win just respect or riches. But the veiled fury, let them not forget, must sooner or later needs burst forth inevitably in an orgy of devilish frenzy, when the precise moment strikes!

## *Road to Victory*

Victory is assured to us along these twin tracks: Pulling together and conserving the vast, albeit scattered forces of our exalted past and forging anew fresh dynamic currents towards the creation of a golden future.

## *Voice from Within*

One am I, indivisible, the abode of joy eternal. . .  
a perennial fount of powers multiple is my soul.  
When our inner consciousness shall awaken to this  
central truth, when the voice of the spirit will call out  
from the depths of our being, then alone will the  
lassitude and fear ingrained within us vanish in a  
trice!

## *Stress of Circumstance*

There is quite a lot in this world which can never be  
acceptable on any account whatsoever; however, the  
conspiracy of circumstances too often seems to be  
compelling acceptance of what would be unaccept-  
able on the surface.

## *Emergence of Evil*

As the hidden seed lying within the womb of the  
earth, bursts forth to blossom into a full-fledged tree,  
so do the heinous acts of men perpetrated under-  
ground and embedded in secrecy, inevitably exhibit  
their ugly profile in its varied lineaments on the  
stage of this world. This phenomenon, the sages  
pronounce as the emergence of sin.

## *The Moment*

The idler has no value for a moment, nor for an hour; neither for a day, nor a month, nor a year—nor even for life entire. To a sensible person, however, a single moment is bound to come like a blessed grain of gold; for, after all, is not time money?

## *Humanism versus Barbarism*

Humanism is like a *malti* in full bloom which suffuses the air with its sweet perfume whereon the gracious honey-bees retreat to find repose. Barbarism, on the other hand, is like the filthy plant of garlic bedevilling the whole environment with its foul odour, where the sensitive honey-bees cannot abide for one single moment.

## *Simpleton*

Verily a fool is he who rejoices in his thought that he is deceiving the world, while in reality he has been deceiving none but himself!

## *Dedication*

As you dedicate yourself to an ideal of religious life, remember one thing: 'Stamping overhead is dragon Death!'—and you will be in a position to concentrate upon the cultivation of this religious ideal. Similarly, when you dedicate yourself to learning, reflect this wise: 'Triumphed have I over dragon Death!'—and with a dauntless spirit you will master all learning.

## *Puissance Rare*

Rare, infinitely rare in this world are apostles like Lord Mahavir\* who proclaim Truth in terms at once endearing and wholesome, captivating and beneficent!

## *Beguiler Beguiled*

That very moment a man is deceiving some other person, his crooked guile is debasing himself. The beguiler thus rejoices in the fruition of his guile, whereas his guile feels gratified, having smashed the beguiler down to that lowly depth. Identical, indeed, is the pleasure of both: of debasement in triumph and of triumph in debasement!

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\*Last of the Jain Apostles.

## *Tears*

Whenever did I ask you, my love, not to proffer me tears? What I asked you, indeed, was to proffer me not the unholy tears of manipulation, wrath or engrieved sorrow. If you must needs proffer me, I implore, tender me those sacred tears of love and remorse, of compassion and pathos!

## *Instant Fruitage*

Surely a morbid urge permeates our modern mind through and through. Out of every act must instantly blossom forth the desired fruitage! Owing to this insensate urge, man's gaze is invariably transfixed on fruitage, beneath which is smothered the sound image of the act essential. And consequently, no solid work is accomplished, nor any abiding fruitage ensured.

## *Penitence*

To err is human; but surely inhuman it is to shirk penitence incumbent on a lapse once committed.

### *Whose Fault?*

Where lies the fault of the righteous, if their communion engenders no delight in persons sunk knee-deep in sin? How can it be called Aurora's fault, if her advent inspire no such delight in a purblind owl, as must invariably move the heart of a tender lily?

### *Essential Perspective*

Proper fellowship, proper discourse and a conscience fully awake are the three essentials needed every hour, every moment, to restrain the straying mind in its propensity to pursue the path of moral degeneration. This primary truth the self-devoted votary must ever keep in mind.

### *Good-bye to Fear*

If, even for once, the worm of fear infected your being, all your latent powers might well be benumbed into passiveness. Wherefore, strike terror into the heart of fear — if for nothing else, for arousing your dormant faculties to their fullest potentiality. Be fearless! Be puissant!

## *The Peak and the Valley*

In this world, he alone can be called the true enchanter who, casting his magic spell, can subdue the ticklish mind set on the peak of exaltation one moment ago, only to drag him down the next instant into the vale of perdition!

## *Attachment*

Discreet attachment creates a feeling of gentle harmony even between the discordant elements of life. Wherefore, attachment no less needs discretion as an essential complementary. Attachment shorn of discretion is dangerous like liquor that lends a touch of blissfulness to intoxication, only to annihilate the intoxicated later on at his own hand.

## *Aspiration*

Aspiration liberated from its mundane impulse, while one with the noblest urge of the human spirit, can assuredly lead man along the highroad of progress and self-development in life.

## *Gleam of Splendour*

How should he evaluate laughter aright, who has shed no tears in life? How could he endure the gleam of splendour who has been nursed in darkness bleak?

## *Disposition*

As a rule, it is a difficult job to change one's native disposition. However, with intense dedication, even this difficult task becomes relatively easy of accomplishment. To realise this truth, you must indispensably watch the radiant flame of the spirit illuminating the lives of great savants who have reached the lofty peak of exaltation, mounting abreast undismayed by the vale of perdition.

## *Heart-Burning*

Seldom is there so much heart-burning between those unevenly stationed in life as regards the meanness or magnanimity of one or the other side, as there is usually between those equally stationed in life. This naked truth is worth realising; this psychical principle deserves intimate study.

## *The Lamp Eternal*

Those benign souls whose hearts are aflame with the glorious splendour of beneficence, must alone wield irresistible power over this world, ever and anon, here and everywhere! Others who effuse but a momentary glamour, as of a lightning flash, themselves fade away into oblivion unrelieved!

## *Touchstone*

If you want to plumb the depth of the religious instinct in society and appraise the parallel inclination as regards the worship of the deity, then send off the temple priest on one month's leave and see what follows thereafter. When the time comes for the daily rituals to be performed by the votaries themselves, observe how earnest the worshippers really are in regard to the ceremonial services to be rendered.

## *Happiness*

Happiness is like a contrary creature. She rushes headlong towards those who never make a call upon her, whereas she would recoil farther and farther from one who woos her ardently!

## *Grandiose Death*

The wealthiest aristocrat of the world, as he lay on his deathbed, called out unto me: My friend! before I pass away, let me confide this much to you: If you must encounter death, encounter him indeed, but not in the manner of your friend. Encounter him with a smile on your face—a smile such as might spring up from some indefinable hope, a smile that would accompany undaunted enthusiasm, a smile that wells up from the joy of sweet reminiscences, cherished in one's bosom, a smile such as would flash from the recollection of some momentous scene enacted in one fateful instant of life. Such a death would be a myriad times more exalted and glorious than all the dazzling affluence of my multi-myriad wealth!

## *Penury versus Affluence*

Is your soul penurious or rich? If you feel distressed by the sight of happiness in others, your soul is undoubtedly penurious, even though you may be materially rich. But, on the other hand, if you feel gratified by the sight of affluence in others, rich indeed is your soul notwithstanding the penury conditioning your material existence.

## *Web of Illusion*

Man! O man! Remember that attachment is like an illusory web. It looks so lovely, but perilous is it in reality! How easy to weave it, but how difficult to unravel it! The spider weaves a web around him, but he cannot afterwards disentangle himself therefrom. The more he strives to step out of his self-woven web, the more he gets entangled in its meshes. Beware, therefore, thou, too, art not caught as well in thine self-engendered web of illusion born of attachment.

## *Pinch of Calamity*

When you are overwhelmed by distress, just ponder over this: 'May it not be perchance this calamity has descended upon me to set me along the right path of progress?' For, as the great seers aver, stumblings, too, are often conducive to a fresh awakening in life. In such a predicament, calamity might render this humble service to you by casting a hint: 'Brother mine! This calamity is nothing but the echo of one's self-perpetrated acts!'

## *Words without Action*

Far more praiseworthy is a person who translates just one attribute into the reality of life than his counterpart who delivers a thousand discourses on themes innumerable: even as he who offers nothing but hard bread is far more earnest at his job than the entertainer who throws out from the tip of his tongue a full menu of attractive sweets, but practically serves none!

## *O Woman!*

O Woman! Thou bestower of love, inspiration and delight! If thou shouldst proffer nothing save the wine of profligacy, who then shall vouchsafe the elixir of prowess?

## *Plaint*

You always keep in mind what others had spoken unto you, but do you really bear in mind what you had said unto others? If you can store that in your memory, not the slightest scope shall be left for your mouth to utter a single plaint as to what others had been hinting about you.

## *Freedom*

The freedom that goes to defile the luminous orb of human culture, must lead mankind to the abysmal depths of degeneration.

## *Penalty of Sin*

Sin doth not slap you on the face, it only degrades your reason—whereby your movement towards light is withheld, so that you dash into the vale of darkness!

## *Rise and Fall*

If heinous acts are perpetrated at our hands, we must understand that we have been heading towards life's sunset; whereas if glorious deeds are flowing from our hands, we might rejoice that we have been advancing towards life's sunrise!

## *Surging Foam*

What is the use of joy or sorrow as regards a phenomenon of affluence or penury, of happiness or misery which are like the surging foam on the sea of life, born of the conflict of the waves of phantasy and destined at last to be absorbed into the self-same surge once the conflict is over?

## *Self-Improvement*

Until a sense of refinement has permeated your being, your life, your demeanour, it cannot be transmitted outright into the souls of your tender little children. One who desires to improve his children, must first improve himself.

## *Reformer*

Move on to rescue somebody only after you have mastered the art of swimming, otherwise not only will you sink, but you will drown the hapless person too. Likewise, before you launch out to reform others, first reform yourself; otherwise you will pollute not only yourself; you will vitiate others as well.

## *Prosperity*

The flush of prosperity attained through disregard of probity, though momentarily gratifying to man at the start, invariably bids him farewell at the end after overwhelming him with stark disaster.

## *Remedy of Rancour*

If disciples showed reverence for their preceptors, and if preceptors evinced genial compassion for the disciples, could one find so much of mutual rancour as is witnessed to-day between the twain?

## *Vision Beatific*

I tread along under the serene vision that emanates from the beatitude of emancipated souls, even as this vision caresses the entire universe in its benign arms. Were we to carry out each action, keeping in view this eternal element of our being, could the sins of cupidity and untruth, of swindling and misappropriation, of lechery and violence flourish ever so much in this world of man?

## *Challenge*

Lord of my being! Having kindled my heart with the spark of a fervid longing to meet Thee face to face, Thou hast smothered it under the ashes of a callous neglect. Let me now see, how long Thou canst afford to keep me aflame and swirling in this wise!

## *Charity unto the Deserving*

As petty grass offered to a cow yields back rich milk, even so, a paltry gift bestowed on a worthy person, would yield excellent fruits in return!

## *Impediments*

Lust, licentiousness, sensuality and revelry—these four serve as dire impediments barring a fair apprehension of the dignity of the human spirit. Once these four obstacles are removed from the path, the exaltation of man's spirit can be adequately visualized.

## *Birth of Poetry*

True poetry is not just fine verse engineered by human effort, but a sacred stream of the creative being bubbling forth from the conflict of agony and dismay surging within the poet's heart.

## *Detective*

You may succeed perchance in concealing your secret sins from the view of the world; but how long could you keep them locked from the orbit of your own conscience—the consecrated lord of your own being?

## *Valour*

There is no valour in crushing the weak through brutal force; sheer violence it is, directed by blind passion. Valour abides in these twin things: in confessing with candour the lapse committed by one's self; and in bearing with a manly heart whatever consequences might stem from the lapse once committed.

## *Interchange*

I shall return poetry unto thee, if thou shouldst instil inspiration in me. I shall offer delight unto thee, if thou wouldst cheer my heart. I shall yield thee its quintessence, if thou shouldst proffer me ambrosia; but what, save sighs, could I offer thee, if thou shouldst accord sheer frustrations unto me? Speak, what wouldst thou offer me now?

## *Intoxicant*

To what mental enslavement is a man reduced by the habit of a stimulant! When a millionaire, or, for that matter, a great potentate succumbs to the evil habit of an intoxicant like tea or cigarette, wine or some such other thing, he would not feel ashamed in asking for it even of a man far beneath him. What lowlier abjectness or humiliation could ever be conceived than this?

## *Ideal Assessment*

If I should ever encounter a pilgrim on the path of life tired and racked by his journey over the thorny thickets of this world, I shall spread these blossoms of contemplation garnered from the lovely grove of my life across his path. The blossoms may be crushed under foot, but shall not their sweet fragrance bring unprecedented repose to the wayfarer after all? How, indeed, could the economists of the world, forever engrossed in the statistics of finance, rightly assess the worth of this profound gratification?

## *Time*

If you can rightly observe how every single hour has passed with you to-day, then, assuredly you will be in a position to visualize correctly how life will take its further course with you to-morrow. For the hour is after all embedded in the womb of Time and Life is embedded in the womb of the Hour!

## *Aspiration*

If I could become the elemental seed of some hallowed aspiration, I would be gladly entombed in a common plot of ground on this earth to blossom forth into an expansive tree which would offer the sweet fruitage of noble aspirations to the wayfarer of this world, bearing all the tribulations of heat and cold on its head.

## *Alas!*

My friends! Never utter that abject word—alas! If anything really impedes your higher progression, it is nothing but the utterance of this lowly word. Bugged up in the deep swamp of dismay, a man can never attain the lofty peak of glory. To bewail of life bygone is like dashing one's head over a deceased friend. Remember this: the sun of happiness keeps ever hidden behind the bleak clouds of disaster overwhelming man's life!

## *Ideal Beauty*

Life is the echo of our co-ordinated duties; thus it is that the kaleidoscope of life is ever changing in its hues. What endures in this world after all? Colour, beauty, pride, prosperity and might are all transitory. Beauty and loveliness in this life are evanescent like the tints of twilight. Ideal beauty is, however, the beauty of the spirit. Loveliness abides not in the image embodied, but in the spirit pervading. If that spirit is grand, the perennial quintessence of our being can be comprehended aright as bliss incarnate. One who can apprehend this reality shall never fall a prey to any enchantment of this world. He would find rare delight in the exaltation of his original being, in the free play of loveliness emanating from the transcendental being!

## *Progenitor*

Life is not darkness, but light. Her progenitor is not the pitch-dark night of winter, but the full-moon night of spring!

## *Sacred Alms*

O Lord of my being! On this consecrated morn I beg this sacred boon of Thee: Let me turn blind the moment I throw a sinful glance on beauty; let me turn deaf the moment I rush to listen to the blasphemy of others; let me turn dumb the moment I pronounce the blemishes of people; and let my arms be struck off, if ever I get involved in the misappropriation of property alien!

## *Twofold Distinction*

There is hardly any essential difference between the soul of man and the super-soul of God inasmuch as the elemental attributes are concerned, just as the gold that sells in the market and the gold that one finds in a mine are one and the same, as such. The difference lies only here: the market gold is refined, whereas the gold in the mine is crude. Even so, the celestial super-soul is free from the impress of action, whereas we, human beings, are infested by action and are hence polluted. Now we can be purified this very instant, provided we can proffer ourselves as oblations on the altar of the sacred fire aflame with the mighty spark of the transcendent being!

## *The Cauldron of Discontent*

The man who appears happy in the eyes of the world is seldom happy in reality, for this so-called happiness has become habitual until it has ceased to render any impact on his mind. The image of happiness is ever expanding before him and as this image continues to expand still farther, further increases the discontent at the core of his being. After all, this discontent is but a consuming fire. It scorches deep where it surges forth!

## *Illumined Perspective*

As a portrait drawn by a purblind artist can never be as impressive as the one produced by his counterpart with an infallible vision, even so can the outpouring of an amateur never bear the imprint of immaculate truth such as might be ushered in by a sage endued with the developed insight of an enlightened seer!

## *The Embodied Image*

Communion with the disembodied being, as much as an apprehension of it, cannot be attained before realizing a feeling of oneness with the spirit of the disembodied. As long as our impulsions have not been duly disenchanted, but are linked with form, there is not merely a positive need of the embodied image, there is, indeed, an implicit necessity of it.

## *Physician-Preceptor*

As you would consult a physician to heal the disease of your body, so you must approach your preceptor to heal the malaise of your soul. As you would follow a treatment prescribed by your doctor, even so, you may build up a life of exemplary conduct, placing implicit faith in the guidance of your preceptor. As you get physical relief by the treatment of your physician, you may equally attain spiritual composure under the direction of your preceptor. Far more valuable is spiritual equanimity, indeed, than sheer physical relief. Forget not that without the gift of spiritual repose, mere physical relief would be but transitory.

## *Worldly-Wise*

Ye worldly-wise, capable as you are of converting the benign fount of love immaculate into an infectious swamp of rancour with one accursed drop of suspicion, come not near me! Speak not unto me, nor confront me any further! For in order to become worldly-wise, I do not propose to learn of you the art of inverting this tender heart, so delicate like a blossom, into an image impenetrable like adamant.

## *Self-Improvement*

Such is the mass-mentality of the people that it would go on enumerating the shortcomings of others, but would hardly care to consider a single blemish of its own. We should, however, train our minds in such a way as to be attuned to a mode of thinking like this: 'He who has ventured to point out my blemishes is, indeed, my benefactor. How else should I have improved, had he not spotlighted my drawbacks?' We may not be able to improve the popular mind, but we can surely improve our own!

## *Poetry*

Poetry born out of an urge for the embodied expression of sensuous passion, expires before it has found the light of creation.

Poetry sprung from the agitation of a momentary impulse, expires as it sees the light of the day.

Only poetry that hath flowered under the regulating force of profound contemplation, takes perpetual life.

## *Desecration*

What greater desecration can ever be imagined than addressing as love what is but an attachment induced by lascivious passion?

## *Attainment of Progress*

One who seeks advancement without spurring one's consciousness into action, may accomplish progress in the sphere of mundane prosperity, but verily not in the realm of spiritual munificence!

## *Woman's Enslavement*

In long addresses woman may well discredit the mastery exerted by man over her, but never will she emancipate herself from her mental subjection to man. If ever the female world could show itself capable of freeing itself from its subjection to sensuous appeal, then alone should it be possible for woman to liberate herself from the overlordship of man.

## *The Mirage of Bliss*

A person who aspires to sip the nectar of immutable ecstasy from the multi-coloured glass of voluptuous desire, lives surely in a kingdom of fools!

## *A Touching Illusion*

How obvious is the truth in our day-to-day life that the world which looks like a paradise of happiness and peace for the affluent, is nothing but a den of misery and dark travail for the poor!

### *Implicit Worth*

My friends, if you are already effusing the perfume of virtue from your inner being, you need not entreat the opinion of others about its sweetness. The very fragrance of your being will make them appreciate your worth. Do the blossoms ever beseech the honey-bees to extol their perfume?

### *Fragrance*

The value is not of the flower, but of the fragrance permeating it. What is after all the worth of a flower when its fragrance has faded away?

### *Donor*

Persons bequeathing paltry sums of money are acclaimed as donors in this world, whereas those who have dedicated their all unto a noble cause, remain unrecognized for ever!

## *Shades of Sparkle*

The smile that sparkles through a ring of tears is ever bewitching. How abject and pallid is surely the smile following on an outburst of mockery!

## *Misplaced Adoration*

When man ceases to be a man to turn into a demon, he honours and adores wealth in lieu of piety, prosperity in lieu of sanctity, sensuality in lieu of chastity and self-conceit in lieu of equanimity.

## *Thought versus Speech*

Keep pure the translucent stream of your innermost thoughts. Let it not be sullied by even a speck of impurity. For speech, after all, is the daughter of thought, born with the imprint of her progenitor on her forehead. If the parent is besmirched, how can the daughter remain unsullied?

## *Imitation*

Imitation always impinges upon a precious object to serve for its model. Whoever heard of the imitation of worthless things? Gold meets its imitation in rolled gold and pearls find their counterpart in the cultured product. Nobody imitates, however, the paltry dust. Likewise, religion being a precious conception, is profusely imitated. Wherefore, the seeker of religion must needs become a fine scrutinizer of the quintessence of religion!

## *All that is Good is Mine*

All that is old is good, all that is new is bad. This ideology is the outcome of an insular attitude. And similarly all that is new is splendid, all that is old is rotten—this mentality is a product of superficial apprehension! The ideology that must develop as a result of vast reading and deep thinking would move along some such lines: Of the twain, whichever is good, is mine!

## *Man Envenomed*

'The adder is poisonous, hence it is dangerous. Beware of it!'

To one pronouncing his warning in this wise you may suggest only this much to be added:

If man turns indifferent to humanity, he would prove far more dangerous albeit embalmed with honey. The envenomed snake stings out of ignorance, but the honey-sweet man, bereft of human touch, would bite with deliberate intent. The difference, if at all, is in the category of stinging. The consequence in respect of both is the same.

## *The Edge of Frustration*

Ah! How should I call thee, frustration of my life: In what terms should I address thee, indeed? With what affectionate words shall I greet thee, after all? You came to invoke my tears, but you have only made me smile. With beaming smiles you trod your track unto me, but you are bidding good-bye with tears streaming down your cheeks! Farewell! Farewell, Ah! Image of my life's undoing! Farewell once more unto thee! Even so, come some day, come straightway unto me, when you feel like shedding your tears again! The doors of my mind will ever be open to you!

## *Science*

Since the science of to-day has worked more for the annihilation of mankind than towards the service of humanity at large, it has come to signify in the present age not knowledge illumined, but knowledge inverted!

## *Quintessence*

Soul alone is the lover of the soul, as the soul alone is his beloved too! Do you know how to perceive your image in the mirror aright? If you can answer 'yes', then alone will you realise adequately the quintessence of this paramount truth!

## *The Mutability of Affluence*

Those who credit the lifelong immutability of their affluence—are they not acting like fools who take as everlasting the variegated play of tints fluttering over a sunset cloud?

## *The True Victor*

The conqueror of the battlefield is not the true victor. The victor is he who has attained victory over his sensual instincts. Easy enough it is to conquer the world, but hard, hard indeed, to master one's sensuous impulses.

## *Worth*

If half of man's time dissipated in evil doings were to be utilized in helpful deeds, how much beneficial would that be not only for himself, but for those as well, who might come into contact with him!

## *Poetic Creation*

The enraptured heart of the poet ever yearns to seize that eternal moment of poetic creation wherein is preserved unfaded and entire, the heaving surge of emotion in all its fervour!

## *Laughter and Lament*

Never underrate, even to a jot, the true significance of lament in comparison with the piquancy of laughter. In life, a moment's lament may be very often far more significant than a whole aeon's laughter. The core of life undone by laughter born of indifference, may well be reclaimed by a drop of tear swelling from the lament of remorse. How infinitely more meaningful from this point of view is lament compared with laughter!

## *Eagle-Eye*

One who would correctly assess from the facial expression of a person the shade of opinion the latter might be holding in respect of the former, is a man among men, a man gifted with an eagle-eye!

## *World Topsy-Turvy*

A person may be lowly, but his merits be distinguished; on the other hand, the attributes may be lowly, while their owner be dignified in appearance. If you go out in search of such cases, you will find innumerable instances thereof in this topsy-turvy world of ours!

## *Sanctity*

Just as an elephant untamed struggles against its chain with uneasiness and would run off to the woods, even so, a sage untamed cannot long endure the strain of sanctity and seeks an escape into the wild thickets of self-deception.

## *The Rapturous Vision*

As the heart of a lover dances in delight at the sight of his beloved's portrait, so doth the heart of a votary dance in rapture, viewing the image of his beloved lord!

## *Eccentricity of Times*

What a perverse irony of times! There was a day when ascetics used to pity the voluptuaries. Today it is the voluptuaries who pity the ascetics!

## *Reflex*

To spurt out wrath against fury is like allowing ourselves to be turned into wilful lunatics, while encountering a genuine lunatic.

## *Votary versus Leader*

One who speaks less and works more—he is indeed the votary! One who speaks more and works less—he is surely the leader! This would just signify that larger would be his performance whose tongue is still; whereas, conversely, meagre would be his performance whose tongue wags a great deal!

## *The Word of Love*

Pure is the *word*, transcendent like our Lord! Pure and transcendent, too, is *love*. Were these twin streams of thought to commingle and flow undivided in the mainstream of life, how pure and sublime would ring the word of *love* in the heart of man!

## *Villainy*

The eyesight is like a gentleman, darkness like a villain; hence we witness the latter invariably obstructing the eyesight in its vision, even though the eye on its part has given no cause for it to darkness.

## *Love's Nectar-Sting*

The first embrace of love is like the taste of ambrosia, but its final sting is like the envenomed bite of a deadly snake! One who cannot absorb the venom of that sting, cannot attain love, but will be overwhelmed by bestiality!

## *Caution*

Whether it be an outburst of fury, or an overspreading dome of pride; whether it be a whirlwind of illusion or a bottomless abyss of avarice—whatever that may be, it is nothing but the macabre dance of the spectre of illusion transfigured into a ghost of passion. Beware, therefore, O Soul! Beware!

## *Flow of Experience*

Far more valuable are common precepts forged on the anvil of experience than epic sagas which are the products of phantasy!

## *Way to Immortality*

Child of the heroic host! You are not marked for death; for immortality are you destined!

Render a noble account of life to enter into the region of deathlessness! Bring the repose of human compassion unto a world swirling in its demoniac dance of ruthlessness! Shower the nectar of benign love and universal compunction over the adamant heart of man! Extend the white light of purity along the track of this bedevilled earth from the centre of your life, so as to illumine the future pace of humanity. Suffuse the perfume of faith in the heart of this cynical world! Ensure the genuine freedom of an exalted purpose to the race of man cramped down in its bog of eternal subjection to self-interest! This is the one way, infallible and matchless, to secure immortality for the life of mortal-beings!

## *Forsworn*

Lo ! How couldst thou forget that day when thy body was infested with so many maladies and lying in bed, thou wast murmuring: 'Save me, O Lord ! Save me ! On recovery shall I dedicate myself to Thine contemplation ! I shall lead a life of benefaction, devote myself to piety, cultivate righteousness, spend my days in noble living and high thinking ?' And to-day, having recovered at last, hast thou forgotten that prayer altogether ? Can any greater perfidy than this be ever conceived ? Remember one thing : Nature, too, inexorably chastizes a person who perpetrates such a shamefaced mockery of truth—truth, the quintessence of the Divine Being !

## *Self-Immolation*

A man who immolates his life for the well-being of others, does not, in truth, excruciate himself through self-immolation, but creates thereby a living paradise on this earth !

## *Discretion*

Looking at the hues of twilight, recall to your mind the changing colours of existence. Perceiving the withered blossoms, reflect upon the phenomenon of death ranging beyond the immediate prospect of present life!

## *Function Accredited*

Wherever your glance may fall, bid your eyes explore the pith of profoundest truth! Entreat your ears to imbibe a fruitful lesson from whatever words they may listen to! Beseech your speech to flourish the grace of truth through whatever utterance flows from your tongue. And implore your physique to suffuse the sweet aroma of humble service wherever it might happen to make its appearance!

## *Honour to Undeserving*

As I saw people paying their regards to persons undeserving and as I equally noted people maligning those worthy of regard, my suffering heart could contain itself no longer, and burst its bounds in compassionate tears!

## *Essence of Love*

You are asking me: what is the distinctive attribute of love? Then note this: the spectacle of varied emotions surcharged with anguish that flushes the eyes of a female deer, as she advances ahead to be immolated at the hands of a hunter, shielding her fresh-born kid behind her—the picture of this mystery-laden emotion be hailed as love!

## *Amateurish*

He said: 'Urged by an innocent spirit, for sheer pleasure I committed this lapse. The sin implicit, I am sure, cannot besmirch my soul.'

'Urged by an innocent spirit,' I returned, 'You have not gulped down venom for sheer pleasure: Wherefore you are thus left to answer to my charge!'

## *Scorching through Scorched*

One whose life has been turned into dust, would wreck to pieces the lives of many a kindred soul. If you would rescue the many, rescue one such shipwrecked soul! Else, one such scorched being would scorch a large array of kindred human beings!

## *Experience*

You are imploring me to narrate the experiences scattered over the track of my existence, and in the light of the inspiration imbibed, you desire to solve the riddles of your life? Then wait for an instant. . . . Let me disclose to you just one brief experience out of a thousand I have scored: 'You need not learn about the specific experience of somebody, about the distinguished faculty of another, about the peculiar attribute of the third.' To ensure steadfast progression along the pall of existence, lo! there range those twin tracks of implicit self-contenance and an awakened spirit!

## *Rose-Perfume*

Spotless character is like the perfume of a rose. If you possess it, it will suffuse its fragrance among people dwelling in your vicinity, as it will equally delight your soul.

## *Love versus Attachment*

Love is the bond of that disinterested relationship born of an inner sense of collective happiness of creatures in life universal; whereas attachment is the bond of that self-centred relationship projected from the notion of insular happiness in the life of an individual. The resplendent beams of love bring to full blossom the embedded lotus-bud even in the heart of an opponent, while the dark shafts of attachment shrink off the full-blossomed flower, as it caresses man's heart. Hence, love has been acclaimed as light, and attachment denounced as darkness!

## *The Freedom of the Imbecile*

No wonder if the freedom acquired by a decadent people turns out to be the cause of their own annihilation, even as a potential drug administered to an imbecile can prove to be the cause of his own undoing like a scimitar placed into the hands of a senseless ape.

### *The Needle and the Scissors*

Both are made of steel: of steel are made the scissors and of steel is made the needle too. But while the scissors cut one piece in twain, the needle joins the twain into one. Wherefore, the dressmaker keeps the needle in his cap, while guarding the scissors underfoot!

### *A Display of Ignorance*

Many a person seeking to display the art of oration, ends only by proving that he is a mere novice in the craft of elocution.

### *Potency of Remorse*

Tell me if a single sage hath attained elevation without shedding the tears of remorse!

## *Wailing Flower*

'Wherefore do you weep, ye beauteous flower, at this crucial hour of your parting?' I asked the fading blossom, as it sobbed.

'Friend!' replied the blossom, 'It was not ordained unto me to have the good fortune of being set upon the crown of our Lord; but neither was it given to me to acclaim the sweet opportunity of being crushed under the feet of some enlightened person! Facing this juncture consequently, when I was to depart at last from this earth, without having ever been employed in the service of a noble cause, I was touched with emotion, and tears gushed out of my tender eyes.

## *Incongruence*

When I viewed this spectacle, I was truly dumb-founded: Elevated was man's stature, but so insular was his mind! Prolix was his tongue, but how puny his performance! High, indeed, was his prestige, but how dwarfish was his being!

## *Forewarning*

If the way science is being harnessed to-day at centres like Hiroshima were to be perpetuated in future as well, should there not eventually arise a situation characterized by a definite shortage of consumers themselves in lieu of the prevailing shortage of consumer-goods being experienced so widely at the moment?

## *The Idiot and the Pedagogue*

As when a person is unlettered, he cannot apprehend the trend of his own talk, even so, when a speaker is a pedagogue, he cannot comprehend the gist of his own address! For, while the unlettered is always in the dark as to what he is driving at, the pedagogue cannot gauge precisely as to whether his audience fully grasps the meaning of his communication. Hence it is no wonder, if the world so often dubs the pedagogue an idiot and deems the idiot a wizard in the fashion of a genius who is eccentric!

## *Destination*

As I was sitting on the seashore, I caught sight of a boat swinging on the cradle of the infinite expanse of the water. Bounding to and fro, without any destination, it recalled to my mind's eye the predicament of man's life. Was not human life verily like a ship on the ocean? As doom inexorably awaits the ship that lifts its anchor and launches out across the vast ocean without prefixing its scheduled port, destruction is likewise preordained irrevocably for him who embarks on his voyage of human existence across the sea of life without predetermining upon the motivation of his venture.

## *The Meaning of Rejection*

It is in the fitness of things that thou shouldst not accept me, as such. 'Surely thou wouldst accept me, if hallowed I returned!'—with this benign hope looming large before me, I may at least gain an opportunity for self-purification. And once this consecration is accomplished, where shall exist this endless rift between thee and me?

## *Eternal Childhood*

Whenever did I suggest that maturity had no attraction for me or that the burden of declining age had become unbearable in my view? I should equally welcome both: Hail unto you, ye splendid maturity, as hail unto you, ye prudent fruitage! What I would, indeed, aver is only this: Never may I lose my eternal childhood!—the glorious childhood that knows no distinction between the rich and the poor, that cherisheth no umbrage against an evil-doer, that casts not away its rapturous smile immaculate like a blossom, that tinges not the heart's communion with the hues of illusion, that knows no other tongue than the one tongue of affection—Never may I lose this luscious childhood even at the last breath of my existence. Far more precious unto me is this perpetual childhood than all the dazzling crowns of empires!

## *Love's Vision*

Love does not vouchsafe the beauteous vision of his serene image on one who offers not his all at the hallowed feet of love.

## *Stagnation or Continence?*

Continence is like a lucid stream keeping both imagination and emotion ever-fresh, ever-blossoming. If the creepers of emotion, and the saplings of imagination are dried up by continence, take it that it is no continence, but a stagnant thing dressed up in the attractive garb of continence.

Can there be any wonder if the flames of conflict flare up when the static is worshipped under the name of continence?

## *Consummation*

If a person is capable and consummate in his own sphere, he is likely to be capable and consummate in any other correlated sphere of this world. If we can instil the sweet melody of perfection into the primary mission of our life, its rhythm will peal all through and overspread every nook and corner with its sweetness!

## *Rain-Cloud*

On a bewitching night of monsoon, I pleaded with a rain-cloud:

‘Ay! Wherefore are you thundering so much? Rain a bit slowly.’

In a grave voice, the rain-cloud answered:

‘Ye man! Having been sucked dry for your sake, we are just cautioning you, as you have still not absorbed our way. Sucking up the utterly saltish waters of the sea, we are spraying in return the sweet showers of monsoon, whereas, you sipping our delicious rain-drops, are exuding only the bitter pills of odium. I have accordingly come to adjure you to exude the sweet breath of divine ambrosia, swallowing deep the bitter pills of venom!

## *Enlightened Foe*

To form no foe is best; but having once made a foe who is enlightened, what is wrong after all in living cautiously with him rather than befriending a sheer dullard?

## *Atom*

Since the object looks so tiny, it carries no worth in your eyes at all? Just cast a glance here! This small spark of fire has transformed a whole town into a heap of ashes. This little mosquito has harassed the huge figure of that elephant to utter helplessness! This tiny little hole dragged down the mighty ship to the bottom of the sea in a trance of death! This small seed mellowing into a banyan-tree has shot a rift into the depth of this wall strong as steel! This little atom-bomb has shaken the whole world into tremors! And yet the tiny object carries no worth in your eyes at all? Then you will hardly apprehend the core of the dynamic being that looks like an atom amongst atoms, like an orb amongst orbs!

## *Bulwark*

The world moves on, depending on the bulwarks furnished by those who silently execute their duties, not by those who go on receiving addresses of honour. It is by the mute sacrifices of the former that the world is sustained!

## *Humanity*

Humanity? Here it is: Having given half of his loaf to his hungry neighbour, isn't that fellow crunching the rest with contentment? Humanity lies enthroned on his heart peacefully.

Monstrosity? Here, too, it is: With what an awry glance does that fellow look, eager to pounce, as it were, upon the loaf of that destitute, while carrying two loaves of his own in his two hands! Monstrosity glitters in his greedy eyes!

## *Fruit without Seed*

Man would have happiness ordained by religion, but he is not prepared to practise religion. Man wisheth not misery ordained by sin, but he would not abjure sin. In this predicament how could he attain happiness, how could he eschew misery? Man wants to enjoy the bloom of the rose, while spreading only a sheet of thorns!

## *Unchaste*

An unchaste person is compared to an odious cur infested with germs and rotting deeper and deeper with infection. Nobody would allow such a person, as indeed such a cur to enter his courtyard; and if he does enter unknown, none would seat him beside himself with any feeling of amity.

## *Pitfall*

When an urge to promote the display of duties done and services rendered gathers strength in the mind of a votary, all the work accomplished till then is sucked dry of its grace and it marks the first step to his decline. Our sense of duty must be awake in each act of life. It is, indeed, extremely difficult to cross over the lonely track of duty where all around is blowing the whirlwind of pride and self-acclamation. Only some exceptional mastermind can withstand its onset!

## *Revolution*

The revolution has set in. Humanity is being transformed from its roots. Is it revolution to move apace, swiftly apace, rushing headlong to a form of civilised monstrosity, casting the age-old humanity to the winds? Ostensibly, man seems to have progressed two steps further to-day, but in reality he has fallen four steps behind. Hence it is that while in one spot you witness mountains of grains, in another the forlorn human being is being crushed unto death for want of any nourishment whatsoever. . . . Ah! the revolution!

## *Distress and Pleasure*

Some encounters in life are fairly prolonged, but our heart shudders at their recollection, whereas, others have been brief, very brief indeed, yet their pleasant reminiscences fill our life with delight!

## *Sentiment*

Sentiment plays a very important role in the life of every individual. Hence sages look not so much at the material deeds of men, as at the subtle sentiments operating beneath the deeds. The act may be the same, but, if the sentiment behind differs, the consequence must needs be contradictory too. The cat seizes the rat with the self-same teeth she catches hold of her kitten. But the difference between the two is commensurate with the difference marking the distance between hell and heaven. Whereas in one reigns the urge for destruction, in the other prevails the urge for protection!

## *Life's Glory*

Friend! Where is the need of affluence, if love is chaste? What is the worth of money, when life is invaluable? Where the need of regulations, when continence is unsullied? And where, indeed, the need of the convent, when the mind is consecrated?

## *Probe Within*

O Man! Whom are you seeking for, without? Step in. He whom you are condemning as the spectre of sin and are eschewing as such, sits hidden within the left-hand cabin of your temple-shrine; whereas he whom you are adoring as the soul of beneficence and whose intimacy you are longing for, lies asleep within the right-hand chamber of your inner shrine. Ring out, therefore, the gong of affection! He whom you are seeking for, will flash forth straightway in your presence!

## *The Ascetic : The Layman*

To feed oneself in the interests of renunciation should be the ideal of the ascetic. To feed himself having already renounced something, should be the perspective for the layman. If the ascetic and the layman live keeping this prospect in the centre of their being, asceticism will become the watershed of learning and the layman's way the hermitage of service. Then, the eternal battle between the essential and the insignificant will die down of itself!

## *Breach of Faith*

When one oath of man is broken, a thousand sentiments, a thousand aspirations, a thousand lives are shattered to pieces. How many hamlets are drowned in the resulting floods when a great dam is breached!

## *Ungratified Desires*

When a voluptuous desire remains ungratified and is not satiated any way, a person despairing of life and pursuing the path of self-abstinence, may attain a high status in society by virtue of his abstinence; but that lacerated, repressed, sensuous desire is only biding its time, and at a convenient moment in future shoots forth blossoming and with an intense attachment seizes hold of its prey. From that moment the sovereignty of voluptuous desire reigns supreme over the person who has proved himself incapable of resisting its onset. Ungratified sensuous desire is verily the root-cause of the deep malaise eating at the heart of society to-day!

## *Not Humiliated*

Ah! My fate! Whenever did I plead with you not to make me penurious? I reiterate even now: 'Render me penurious, utterly penurious, if so you must.' What I have to plead for is only this: 'Let me not be so humiliated that I lose my spiritual probity!'

## *Beware!*

Do not tread the path, O wayfarer! presuming that the way will be easy and comfortable. The traveller who treads so presuming, will have to halt when confronted with heat and thorns. Assuming, therefore, that the way may be beleaguered by both, if you pace ahead with fortitude, you will encounter peace and rest, joy and repose!

## *Votary of Continence*

Woman worships her deity, consecrating the radiant spirit of continence in her deity. The resplendent flame serenely burning on the temple-tray of woman is only an emblem of that spirit of continence. So when woman offers her homage to her deity, she renders not that homage unto her deity, but unto the spirit of continence embodied. It would be, accordingly, both more becoming and honourable to woman to call her the worshipper of continence rather than the adorer of the deity, as she renders her obeisance with benign faith at the feet of the presiding spirit of continence!

## *Mind's Pace*

Man who can touch the orb of the moon with the tip of his finger and delve into the bottom of the sea with the heels of his feet, may comprehend perchance all the elements of the universe, but not the pace of his mind!

## *The Hues of Comradeship*

If the filthy water of drainage flows into the stream of the Ganges, it is transformed into *Gangajala*—the holy water of the Ganges. But the self-same holy water, if it passed into a gutter, would be designated as filthy water of the drainage. Similarly, an evil person, if he conjoined with the better sort, would gradually stand accredited as a noble person; whereas a noble person colluding with a vicious fellow, will be dubbed a veritable rogue! Ye! Mark the strange hues of comradeship!

## *The Glory of Non-Violence*

There is nothing in the world so powerful as non-violence. What prowess abides in this little word—*Ahimsa*—non-violence—that all the fine sentiments of the world must spring therefrom? The entire world is erected on the basework of non-violence. Love is born of it, universal compassion must flow from it, the urge for the world's upliftment is imaged in it! Ah! the glory of non-violence!

## *The Aroma of Peace*

When the sandal-stick meets the fire, the atmosphere becomes surcharged with the perfume effused thereby. Similarly, when speech is made one with behaviour, the fragrance of peace would emanate therefrom!

## *Life's Quintessence*

If you crush the sugarcane, it will set aflow a stream of sweet juice. If you rub the sandal-wood, it will treat you with a banquet of cool perfume. If you throw a stone at a bough, it will yield you sweet fruit. If you burn the incense, it will set off fumes and fumes of sweet aroma. If you provoke in your ignorance a noble person, he will return you only forgiveness wrought with compassion.

What but life's quintessence will the noble-hearted return against disservice done?

## *While Departing*

Do you want to depart? Well, then depart. But since you have come down, depart with glee. You can't shirk departing, can you? Well, but when departing, why not leave behind the fragrance of affection and service, of magnanimity and fair-dealing instead of the vicious odour of self-interest, so that we may shed as well some genuine tears on the sacred memory of that sweet aroma?

## *Incomprehensible*

One whose wrath has flared up from righteous indignation, whose pride is the product of humility, whose attachment has grown out of self-abnegation, whose gain is the child of contentment—such a person can turn this desert of our arid existence into a bower of living paradise. It is somewhat difficult to comprehend this truth. It seems self-contradictory, may not be perfectly intelligible to a layman. But one who can comprehend it, is undoubtedly a sage!

## *Thoughts*

Just as no space is left to accommodate fine precious articles in a chest overstocked all through with worthless material, and if at all accommodated with duress, even the valuable article is bound to be lost in that conglomeration—likewise, good thoughts have no space left for them in the cabinet of our brain when overcrowded with vicious notions. And if some good thought is seen lurking somewhere by chance, it cannot but get enmeshed amidst that mass of perverse notions. That is why discrimination needs to be applied in the case of one's repercussions to thoughts!

## *Great*

One who appreciates benevolence somebody had rendered unto him is a noble being. But immensely noble is he who renders benevolence to a person unknown. But against them both, one who showers benevolence over a person who has only done him an evil turn, is not merely noble, immensely noble, but immeasurably great!

## *The Gateway of Faith*

Reason! O Reason! You have kept the window of logic open in your palace, but the doors of faith are all locked. Your beloved consort has arrived at your door, honouring your invitation, but the gates are all closed. How can he enter within? Reason! O Reason! Throw open the gates of faith straightway, or else, the great Apostle shall return from without!

## *The Ecstasy of Spirit*

Renounce everything else, my friend! but not, indeed, the bliss of your soul. Abdicate all that you have, if need be, for the sake of this bliss of your soul, but maintain anyway the ecstasy of spirit. For that ecstasy is the one alchemy that can transmute life into immortality. One who would miss the bliss of the soul, may perchance attain to all the precious things of this world; but even so, what would he have attained in reality? What would be the worth of a flower once its fragrance has faded away?

### *Adequacy*

Tell me, brother! Is it a genuine deity who is enthroned on the pedestal of your being? Why are you thus wooing the votaries? Do you think that the votaries would hold back from swarming at prayer time, if the deity enshrined in the temple of your being were a genuine deity? Doth the blossom ever go out to invite the firefly?

### *Man of Learning*

Learning will pander to no one. He who barter his learning, pandering to someone, is not a genuine man of learning!

### *Intuition Mellowed*

If your senses remain calm, unprovoked anyhow, even when confronted with secret temptations, know that your intuition has really mellowed.

## *The Master Spirit*

Men are of three sorts. It is the circumstances that mould the first sort. Such persons drift along the current of circumstances.

The second sort of men cannot enter a battle against circumstances, nor would they drift along the current of circumstances. So, they eschew the onset of circumstances and devote themselves to their ideal, going into seclusion.

The third sort of men are not moulded by circumstances, but verily mould the circumstances themselves. Mustering unflinching resistance when the occasion calls for, against the onslaught of circumstances, they win control of the circumstances and triumph over them. Such are the persons who alone can leave the abiding impress of their puissant spirit on time, on the world, on circumstances as well!

## *Springs of Success*

The lucid springs of success greet not one who digs a hundred trenches one arm deep, but one who digs one well a hundred arms deep!

## *One Question*

Alas! Ye beleaguered mind! I shall put only one question to you: From abstinence crossing over to dissipation, you will be free from the grip of abstinence no doubt, but will it be ever possible for you that way to deliver yourself from the dire and devastating fangs of Death awaiting only one step ahead?

## *Heaven and Hell*

We believe heaven and hell to be above the firmament and below the bottom of this earth respectively. What is wrong, if for some time we fancy these as abiding within our own conscience, within the cabinet of our mind, instead? Consider that when our conscience is entertaining some good thought, we are pacing in heaven. Similarly observe that when some evil thought is gripping our mind, we are ranging in a veritable hell. For, is it not after all the screen of good or evil thoughts overspreading our conscience that transports us to either heaven or hell?

## *Heart Adamantine*

Sing as many songs as you will before a rock, it will not get tired. Only the singer will be tired. Similar is the tale of a heart adamantine—uncompassionate, inappreciative.

## *Spectre of Seclusion*

Yes! Yes! Now I have learnt why you are afraid of seclusion. For, it is in seclusion that you recall your sins and tremble at their recollection. So, in order to forget your sins you mix with the bustle and bang your drums on worthless counts not to listen to their murmurings.

Pretty is this way, pretty, indeed, for you to block the voice of your conscience!

## *Blithe Spirit*

Some say, the dance of a peacock, the full-moon night of autumn, the spreading bank of the river, the verdant woods, the lofty peaks of the Himalayas, the cooings of the cuckoo, the blossoming dawn of the lovely Aurora, the smiling rose fresh-blown—all these delight man's soul. But my experience tells me that this is only a half-truth. If the mind is not blithe, all these beauteous objects strike a pang in the heart such as even the most sordid things of the world cannot impart!

## *Filth and Water*

Consider only this much when a righteous person feels like competing with a vicious mind:

Who will be the loser if there is a fight between filth and water? Only the water! What has filth to lose? Can filth ever be refined? The lucid water will have only to lose in that situation!

## *Affected Serenity*

Surely it is not good to be enraged. But rage that flares up like a flame of fire from a heap of grass, cooling down thereafter, is better than rage continually burning and consuming like a red-hot ember swirling in a cauldron of fire. Rain lashing in a down-pour is far more activating than a slow, continuous drizzle, as it clears the sky and cleanses the byeways. But a drizzle only darkens the firmament, making the lanes evermore muddy and filthy.

## *Whose Loss?*

O Man, looking at lovely objects with your lascivious eyes! Lovely objects will not become a jot unlvely thereby under the dint of your lascivious perception. Only your eyes and your mind shall become sordid that way. Greater will be your loss than of loveliness in that case. The sight that has lost its increase has forfeited its strength as well.

## *Twin-Life*

As the bird has two wings, so has man two lives. As the bird can range over the expanse of the sky with its twin wings, so can man with his twin-life cross the boundless ocean of existence. The twin-life of man implies his metaphysical being on the one hand and his material existence on the other. Thoughts emanating from the inner being constitute the metaphysical life, whereas actions spurting forth from the foreground of thoughts make for his material existence! Now, how can the material life of actions be healthy, if the metaphysical life of thoughts be rotten at the core? Thus it is that the great seers continually commend the cultivation of an ennobled life of the mind!

## *Manly Endeavour*

Means are for the soul, not indeed, the soul for the means. To cast off courageously those means which stand as impediments to the larger development of our being, calls for a manly endeavour, indeed!

## *Towards the Heights*

If you find leisure at times, ask your true friend—the soul—this one question:

‘What would you elect, my friend, between the twain—to move towards the heights turning into a beacon-light or plunge into the abyss under a pall of darkness?’

## *Speech*

Some people do not know these days how to speak even. To speak before the rich, assuming the posture of a cur, and of a wolf before the destitute—this is surely not the manner of man’s speech. Speech must be consistent. What is for the wealthy, must be for the destitute.

The speaker must observe that his speech be unfaltering and lucid, in every sentence reflecting the glow of an independent spirit flashing forth from his original mind. This alone could stand as the earnest expression of a speaker no less than as the refined mode of addressing!

## *Discrimination*

Material objects amassed here will not accompany us in the world beyond, whereas sins committed here are bound to pursue us in the other world. In this predicament to distinguish between what to amass and what to abandon entails a sense of discrimination.

## *Will-Power*

This is but a belief of fools: Someone shall secure my entry across the door of salvation through his tremendous, extraordinary capacity or else, by way of some supernatural miracle!

Inscribe these words on your being, if you are genuinely aspiring to attain salvation:

No one in the world is capable of ensuring salvation for you, until and unless a mighty will-power has flashed forth from your own being to attain to salvation!

## *Endurance*

I will not ask you how multitudinous are your miseries. I will only ask you: how much is your endurance?—How much your power of resistance against those miseries? For the night of distress cannot long endure before the rising sun of fortitude!

## *The World and the Cosmic Soul*

‘This world is unreal: *Brahma*—the Cosmic Soul is real.’—Many people have tethered this lofty aphorism to their arbitrary whims, without realizing the core of its meaning. *Brahma*—the Cosmic Soul implies a dynamic universe, whereas the world signifies man’s mind overflowing with alternate truths. The Cosmic Universe shot with dynamism is real, whereas the mental world giving rise to countless thoughts each moment is unreal. Wherefore it is that the philosophers adjure us to go ahead along the truthful path of the spirit—of the dynamic Being, regarding as false—unreal, the mental world which continually gives rise to insignificant elements!

## *Off the Roots*

Just as nails overgrown, if not clipped off at proper time, look shabby, drawing dirt into them and becoming conducive to infection, even so, if wealth amassed is not utilized, it degrades man in society engenders corruption, and leads to distress and disease. Besides, as an overgrown nail caught in something is lopped off at times from its root, so doth a hoarder of wealth sometimes lose his entire capital! And all that is left for him in essence, is nothing but distress dire!

## *Jealousy*

Two persons being of equal calibre, when one of them succeeds because of his adequacy, whereas the other fails owing to his inadequacy in some sphere,—if the latter in this juxtaposition rather than striving to discover his error, starts envying his opposite, his jealousy becomes only an emblem of his ingrained inadequacy, his innate inefficiency!

## *Thought and Action*

As a large banyan-tree is hidden in a tiny seed and as countless seeds are moreover embedded in the heart of that one seed, so, many a great deed lies hidden behind the least little thought of man and innumerable thoughts may be encased besides at the core of that one thought. From this viewpoint one movement of thought would seem to engender one pattern of action and one action would produce a whole chain of innumerable actions in the universe—like a pebble cast into a lake producing a full cycle!

## *Within : Without*

When the mind is light, imbued with harmony, fully developed, joy swells within, even though there might range the anguish of hell without: But if the mind is heavy, gruesome and self-circumscribed, the heart feels oppressed within, with the agony of hell, even though there might be the affluence of paradise prevailing without.

## *Love and Lasciviousness*

You are asking me the difference between love and Lasciviousness? Then mark this:

Love is disinterested, lasciviousness is selfish.

Love surpasses desire, lasciviousness is pinned down to it.

Love woos light, lasciviousness hails darkness.

Love has the eyes of a mother, lasciviousness of a vulture.

Love hails vastness, lasciviousness greets insularity.

Love enhances the pace, lasciviousness impedes it.

Love provokes self-abnegation, lasciviousness seeks self-gratification.

## *Contented*

Don't regard him as acquisitive who would acclaim the edifice as grand! Nor consider him as contented who would call a hut superb! Hail him alone as contented who deems contentment to be surpassing and discontent as abject!

## *Rising and Setting*

‘O Darling Sun of the Firmament spreading thine orb of splendour! Wilt thou show me what could be the reason of people worshipping thee at morn and hermits offering evening homage to thee?’

‘Ye Simpleton! Is it so difficult to understand? As I ascend the mount of Aurora every morning, so do I decline over the stretch of the twilight every evening. Moreover, the sparkling smile that I shed at the time of rising, the self-same smile do I spread at the time of setting. Rising and setting are identical to my mind! At the time of rising am I aware of the impending sunset and at the hour of decline, I carry full faith in the awaiting sunrise.

‘As I am not overflushed in rising, so am I unembarrassed in declining. To attain to this secret of my existence, sages worship me and hermits offer oblations at my feet.’

As I laughed at the blackness of the coal, the coal laughed, looking down upon my whiteness. I asked, 'Why did you laugh?'

'Brother! Why did you laugh?' he asked in return.

'Observing your darkness surpassing all darkness in the world!' I remarked.

'It was your extraneous whiteness that made me laugh,' it replied, 'If I have blackened myself, I have blackened by burning myself and imparting light unto the world. But ye human beings, blackening the world have rendered just yourselves extraneously white. And Brother! black we may be, but none the less, if there be anybody who can yield diamonds sparkling with divine lustre, it is we.

'If you are moved to laughter looking at those who impart light by burning themselves, may we not laugh at your extraneous whiteness?'

## *Track*

When I am pacing alone over an uneven track, the wondrous image of life that arises in my mind is inexpressible. It appears as though I were a lone traveller who, separated from all others treading that variegated path of life, was moving towards some far away land of light.

Love overspreads the vast, infinite, undivided, serene firmament and below stretches forth the placid, multi-coloured, hallowed and affectionate Mother Earth—No one else is there as colleague or companion over the path of life for me: Only that forlorn track passing through the wood gives rise to this sentiment in me.

The roads that are built with modern material may be attractive, but are they capable of producing a touch of sentiment? Is it possible to evoke through artificial elements a sentiment usually engendered by objects natural?

## *The Ecstasy of Self-Abnegation*

The earth was burning like fire. All around lay thorns. There was no track anywhere to move along. I wanted to go to the other side. I halted. But—but then, there flashed up a rose. It splashed streams of fragrance, of laughter; and pacing across my way it scattered its petals and spread them upon the earth. Below were thorns and above the scattered rose petals, soft and delicate. I moved on, pacing upon them.

Then came the night. As I lay in bed, environed by darkness, the wounds that had shot into the tender rose-petals, struck dire pangs into my breast and the laceration they had undergone inflamed my whole being; on the other hand, the rose-petals were laughing blissfully and, as if lying in an enamoured bed, were enjoying the coolness of the air all around.

Between us two, there had been an interchange of anguish, as it were. The thorns pricked the flower, but it was I who bled; sunshine poured upon the flower, but I felt the heat! Ah! how wondrous this ineffable ecstasy of self-abnegation!

## *The Master-Sculptor*

A man wrought a grand dream concentrating all the energy of his life on it. To accomplish that glorious dream, the sculptor of the dream world lost sleep, lost joy, lost pleasure and affluence. That lofty, rapturous dream was accomplished at length at the cost of such invaluable things. But when the glorious dream was accomplished at last, the oil in his lamp was exhausted. Alas! The Master-Sculptor who had wrought that majestic dream withdrew himself from the groves and woodlands of this world, folding up his game of life. The artist par excellence who had lacerated his being in order to mould that dream into reality, remained no longer to enjoy the unprecedented bliss of the dream world he had created. The nurturer of that plant of benign Aspiration could not himself taste its sweet fruitage!

How noble, though tragic, this grand pageant of self-dedication!

My Lord! It seems you are fond of only such spectacles!

## *The Secret of My Life*

Never do I put forth the futile effort to transport the world of phantasy meant for delight down to the plane of reality, since phantasy imparts me greater delight and sanctity than what reality could give. The high-ranging spirit of phantasy withers away in an effort to render it like a reflex of reality.

Similarly I do not carry what is bare reality unto the dream world of phantasy, for reality turns hollow from concrete that way. So the two worlds of phantasy and reality are separate to my mind. Each is sovereign in its own realm.

Thus the bird of my being has two wings—one of phantasy, the other of reality. It is through phantasy that I can range across the vast firmament and it is through reality that I can pace upon this hallowed earth!

This, indeed, is the one secret of my life

## *Ruins*

You call these merely fallen ruins and wrecked edifices, but I view them as a page in the grand history of our forefathers.

The heroic saga that permeates these ruins, the beauty that imbues these stones, the puissance that glows through the particles of dust here, the exalted chronicles of the past that are inscribed on these walls, and the ideal of creation, as of self-abnegation that surcharges the environment here—all these we can experience even to-day. Of course, a sympathetic outlook is what is needed to feel one with them all. But one whose mind's lamp is extinguished, will find only darkness here and discern nothing but the spectral shadows ranging across that darkness.

## *The Discourse of Tears*

I listened to many a discourse relating to morality from that celebrated preacher, but those lofty discourses had no effect on me.

Why did those discourses fail to impress me? I felt very sad about it and tears of deep distress flowed from my eyes.

But my amazement knew no bounds when the streaming tears accosted me: 'Friend! *Why* are you weeping? Who doth need to weep—yourself or that renowned preacher?'

'O benign tears who cleanse our sins!' I asked in humility, 'Why should the preacher weep?'

With an ironic smile the tears replied: 'He is preaching about morality, enthroned on the pedestal of immorality! He is talking about the perfume of the rose, sprinkling around the essence of garlic! Having kindled the fire of dissension, he is now pleading for the cool air of friendliness and unity.'

And then that last streaming tear was verily transformed into a genuine pearl.

## *Embarrassment*

If you really wanted to smile, why did you smile looking down upon my face? Why did you bewitch me with your smile, leaving so many others aside? Well, my Lord! Since you have enthralled me, now explain to me the significance of that smile.

Your smile surely cannot be without some meaning! I suspect, this sweet smile of yours might carry some subtle irony in it! Speak, my Lord! Speak anon! My mind feels uneasy, since it cannot solve the riddle of this ironical smile. And as you speak not, I am prompted to spell out what you might be implying through that smile, as thus:

‘This mad fellow has caught hold of an illusory dream, standing away from what is concrete reality.’

If this is but the meaning of your ironical smile, then why not speak out: ‘You silly crank! If you want to cross the sea, catch hold of the ship, leaving aside the straw!’

—But you do not say anything at all, absorbed in the complacency of your detachment. Lord! This is highly embarrassing!

## *Logic*

Logic! Controversy! Ah! Profusely cultivated! So much logical-minded have we become to-day that let alone the world's faith in mankind, our faith in our own selves has been shaken! How profoundly logical are we indeed!

## *The Crank*

A crank told me: 'How insane is this world! It does not heed what I say, nor act as I do. Surely, the world is insane!'

When I heard this utterance of the crank, I felt: Every human being in this world regards all as cranks, barring himself! Then who is really wise—one who calls the world insane or the world which calls the crank insane!

## *Mental Dedication*

Men who expound the juxtaposition of continence in congruence with the pattern of food taken, subordinating the element of mental dedication in the procedure, may have come to grips with the exterior of continence, but not its inner secret. Sufficiently illuminating in this matter are the instances of the sage Vishvamitra and the sage Parashar living on roots and water and fruits insignificant. A sensual urge such as would not grip even once a year a lion feeding on rich food, might in one day frequently seize a pigeon as a rule living on things paltry ! So, in the pursuit of continence it is the element of psychic alignment which is not a whit less, probably more, important than the physical limitations of food and drink.

## *Greatness*

Search for the greatness of life not in the palace of an aristocrat, but in the heap of ashes left of some unknown being scattered over a desolate funeral ground.

## *The Visionary of Life*

Many are so foolish that, knowing nothing about life, yet pose as though they knew everything. But rare, very rare indeed, are those great visionary sages of life, who knowing much, too much of life, yet conduct themselves as though they knew nothing!

## *Heart*

Were it but a heart of molten emotion, it could be soaked with showers of love. But here is a heart carved out of adamant—which water in the world would be capable of softening it?

## *Epic Saga*

Life itself is a grand epic. Unseen is its delineation, silent is its symphony. We cannot depict it, we cannot decipher it either, for we do not possess the sympathetic insight needed. Peace and joy shall be ours, if we read the great saga of the world's life with an instinct compassionate!

## *The Affluence of Sensuous Delight*

Yesterday's rosy flower in full bloom looks pale and withered to-day. Those thirsty eyes that never felt tired yesterday in quenching their thirst for the flower's loveliness would not even glance at the self-same flower to-day. How evanescent is this affluence of sensuous delight!

## *Self-Deception*

With tears in the eyes, with a smile on the face; with a pang in the heart, with a rapture in words—such is man's way of carrying on his life these days. Ah! This is the great defeat of nature! Can there be any defeat so lowly as the grand defeat of nature herself? This is as if the moonlight were showering darkness!

## *Pandering*

Pandering, employed to appease a person is like acid poured in sweet milk. A man is not boosted up thereby; he is only blown off to pieces!

## *Truth*

Who likes not gold? All love it, but none would be forthcoming to catch hold of a red-hot gold-bar heated in blazing fire. Hence, while truth appeals to all, nobody would hail it, if proffered in a glass of odium. If you would present truth, proffer it then, in a cup of sweet relish. The glory of truth will not be attenuated thereby; it will rather be intensified all the more!

### *Food without Salt*

Charity, penance, chastity and faith are unfailing instruments for the moulding of human life. If you would characterize charity, penance and chastity as the raw material of nourishment, I should designate faith as the salt. Can food ever be tasteful without salt? How then, can charity, penance and chastity be conducive to salvation without faith?

### *The Glory of Truth*

Truth has been hailed as light and untruth dubbed darkness, because if a truthful person were to give out by inadvertence what was in reality untrue, it would be indubitably credited by people as truth, whereas if a liar were to pronounce occasionally what was in itself a great truth, his pronouncement would be maligned as sheer untruth by the people.

## *Fusion*

Just as a steam-engine begins to move apace through a combination of fire and water, even so doth a soul accomplish its objective through a fusion of the flames of penance and the nectar of placidity.

## *Boundary-Line of Speech*

Do speak, my friends, if you know, indeed, how to speak. If your heart feels that it has a fresh message to give to the world, then surely speak, even if you would not be speaking otherwise. But if you feel that your speech is going to make only enemies in the world, do not speak, even if you would. Maybe, by remaining mute you would not be accelerating the well-being of humanity; but equally no harm shall be done at least to mankind at your hands by doing so.

## *Dedication*

I am penurious, my Lord ! I am not capable of endowing a temple for the creatures of this world. I have not so much money. If, therefore, I turn this forlorn heart of a destitute into a genuine shrine, would you not render me the favour to step into the temple?

Fount of Mercy ! There is no holy water to be found anywhere in this region, and what little there is, is besmirched with the love of applause. Wherefore, if bathing in the benign springs of contemplation, I reach your proximity, shall I not be deemed purified?

Ocean of Bliss ! Blossoms are to be had only in a woodland, whereas at the moment I am dwelling in a desert. If, therefore, I come with empty hands, bearing merely the florets of my aspiration, will you not acknowledge this flower-worship?

Resort of the Destitute ! How can a destitute afford any oblations? If, therefore, I proffer the quintessence of this my paltry life as oblation at your hallowed feet, will you not kindly look upon it with an eye of commiseration?

O Lord of Compassion ! How can there be a genuine rosary, when there is not a single bead existing? Ah ! I shall carry out to-day my contemplation of Thy

Image on the rosary of my rising and falling breath,  
making a veritable rosary of my being. Will you not  
then grace this contemplation rendered without a  
rosary with your sweet smile?

Lord! The tale of agony rising from the breast of  
humanity has turned my idyll into a song of pathos.  
Will you not accept that tragic song washed with  
human tears as a hymn benign?

Speak, my Lord, speak! You have been hailed as  
merciful, as lord of the forlorn and the destitute.  
Will you not, then, accept lordship over this cast-  
away with the touch of your benign grace?

## *Death*

Death! O beloved Death! Loftier than the lofty is your grandeur—ineffable, one and indivisible with the soul!

Out of a lowly human being you create a superman and turn a superman into a lowly creature of the dust. Ah! Such is your grandeur!

He who is afraid of you, a mighty man though he be, turns into a petty clod of this earth, whereas, he who caresses you with a smiling face aglow with light, even though an humble creature, is transfigured into a superman.

Dear Death! I am moving along, with my heart awaiting your love-tryst, for I know there are now not many such trysts in store for us after this one tryst and—perhaps one more—with you which shall render me immortal, transport me unto the celestial orb of cosmic splendour, plunge me into the ocean of infinite bliss!

The very utterance of your name may send tremors perchance, penetrating the heart of a man inhabiting a grand edifice overflowing with plenitude; for he has to shift from a mansion to a tiny hut, from light into oblivion. But not for me the same!

I have to cross over from my little cabin to the celestial orb beaming with infinite splendour, from darkness unto light, from ignorance toward intuition. Accordingly, when your approaching footsteps are heard in the temple of my inner being, I am flushed with an irrepressible urge such as of youth!

My darling Death! You are my ship. I wish to meet my friends sitting yonder on the opposite shore. Who but you shall ferry me there?

It was in Pavapuri you caressed Lord Mahavir, didn't you? Embracing his cosmic soul, you rendered him immortal, didn't you?

Say something, my darling, speak! Where and when will you caress me likewise!

How blissful will be that rare, enraptured moment, my darling!

## *The Song of Immortality*

Friends! I want to tell you something:

I am going. I have received an invitation from my friends and I am departing anon.

Having read that invitation beckoning me with the luminous flash of a sparkling smile, my fervid heart refuses to stay here any longer. I must depart. How can I continue to stay on here, leaving my heart yonder?

So my friends! At the time of my departure, sing gentle tunes, dance with glee, sprinkle the showers of affection, pour forth the song of immortality in your dulcet voice and blow the trumpets of eternal rapture!

As the kite plying through the whole firmament returns as the evening declines to her young, even so am I treading to meet my beloved comrades.

Buoyant is my departure and chastened my inner being by hallowed deeds. Benign is my path! That path, people in their ignorance may deem unhallowed, but in reality it is not unhallowed. Implicitly benign it is, on the contrary!

Over this self-same path I have covered a short journey with the *Āgamas*\*—the Sacred Testament—as my guide and the rest of it I am now finally treading. Hence, inspired by a serene faith, I am asking you to strike tender tunes with a benign voice at the hour of my departure, for benign is my path and benign the souls that have trod this path.

O my wayfaring friends of the Infinite! Sing forth such a sublime song of eternity that listening to its grand symphony, the world would totally abjure the fear of death and recognizing the immortal behind the garb of decease, would celebrate the grand festival of death with an enthusiasm unprecedented!

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\*Scriptural Books of the Jain Religion.

## *Respite*

Ah! my Master! I ask nothing of you. I want nothing. Having witnessed the pageantry of your royal court, I have no desire to own anything else.

Whatever of the highest worth you have got, you may distribute among mankind. Ah! distribute even that which would come to my share. I do not desire anything. Let me not ask anything of you!

I have come to plead for only one thing. Allow me to tune one lyric of mine in your royal court.

That lyric I will set to music, when no one else is left before you asking for something. I wish to tune that idyll before you, but not to have anything in return.

I shall tune my lyric only when those who plead for something have departed. I know I will have to wait till then. I shall wait. But I will not depart, my Lord! till I have tuned this lyric in your presence.

For this lyric has been moulded out of the basic material of my hallowed sentiments and wrought into delineation with the benign tears aflow from

my heart. Hence am I loitering around you, to and fro, like a madman to pour forth my song.

May I presume, my Master! you would listen to this lyric symphony of mine?

But my Lord! Call not this plea surcharged with emotional fervour a mere supplication; for as you know, the alternate designation for that supplication is nothing but death!

## *Darkness*

Darkness! My beloved darkness! The world may dislike you, poets may denigrate you, the wayfarers of the world may eschew your presence from far far away, but I love you with all my heart, with the plenitude of affection, indeed!

Who, save you, will recall unto me my forgotten Lord?

Under the bright screen of light my Lord looks so dwarfish to me—ah! sometimes entirely fading off the arena of this world when faced with the pageant and the prospect of a multitude of huge objects!

But it is not so with darkness. In darkness are submerged all the huge things of the world. And when darkness reigns without, with light beaming within, truly doth my Lord then appear in his exalted figure. From that darkness he emerges assuming a unique complexion—the visual image of love embodied before our very eyes!

Thus viewing my loved new-comer, I dance with rapture and as I rush forward to embrace him, he utters in a mute disembodied tone:

‘Ye! Wait there! The time is not yet for the embrace. There lies the curtain between thee and me. Putting up a strong effort, rend off that veil of *Karma*, and then, you are with me—I am with you like a flame merging into a flame.’

How can I forget you, O darkness! You, who have been conducive to such an enraptured dialogue with my Master?

O my beloved darkness! Even more invaluable than light itself are you at such moments!

The world may not acknowledge your worth; but whoever said that an object became invaluable only when its worth was recognized? Who goes to assess the worth of the sandal woods high-tufted over the Malay Mounts?

Can any one transform their quintessential beauty into its opposite, simply by non-recognition of their worth?

## *Fruition—the Fount*

I was treading through a large forest when my eyes, all of a sudden, caught sight of a big assemblage. Lo! an assemblage in the forest? A large conference consisting of the roots of the trees was in session and a banquet of free laughter and sardonic humour had been ranging all around.

‘O lovely roots!’ I asked the laughing roots, ‘How ironically are you mocking to-day, how sarcastically you are laughing to-day! Where lies the need for laughter with you?’

A dead silence pervaded through the assembly, following upon this question. One root, extremely old, replied:

‘Brother! We are laughing to-day at the ungraciousness and ignorance of mankind. If you laugh every-day, may we not laugh sometime? See! We are buried underground, scattered through the dust, encased in darkness; and yet have we shot into open air and light this healthy tree. When the tree bears fruit, sophisticated mankind hails the fruition and felicitates the tree; but forgets entirely the nurturer

of both. Alas! It keeps us ever unknown, in oblivion, nobody caring even to remember us.

So we are laughing to-day: See! The ungraciousness of these prudent people that recognize the fruitage yet never recall nor realize the fountain-spring operating behind!

Listening to this tale of the roots, I recalled those urbanized children of the unsophisticated villagers who were sucking the nectar of beatitude out of the dire sweat and tears of their toiling forefathers.

## *The Flowing Water*

The sun had started spreading his gentle rays over the wide expanse of Shuklatirth. The bank of the river looked desolate with no one there. The waters of the Narmada were flowing apace. It must be because of some urgency that they were flowing on so swiftly. But even as they hurried on, they whispered unto me a secret of their heart. With a vivid smile beaming like a star in the firmament, they uttered:

‘Man! You are static, we are dynamic.’

‘To so many deities you are attached; we are bound to only one Ocean.’

‘Your goal is uncertain; ours is fixed.’

‘You are enamoured of an individual, we are saturated in a community.’

‘You magnify the little drawbacks of others. We chasten even the big defaults of others by cleansing them off.’

‘The bright becomes sordid contacting you; the sordid becomes bright in contact with us.’

‘Go! Thou selfish being, go! No meeting ground can there ever exist between your thoughts and acts and utterances on one side and ours on the other. Hence, to eschew your contact we are moving apace towards the sea!’

## *The Vision of Beauty*

O soul athirst for beauty!

How will you sip beauty, if beauty abides not within  
your own being?

Can anyone apprehend in another what abides not  
within himself? If somebody exclaimed: 'Yes!  
I do,' could it be a true discernment of reality?

That way even the purblind would perceive darkness.  
But is darkness an image of reality worth perception  
—like a passion?

Then why not have your eyes embalmed with  
beauty? If your vision is saturated with beauty,  
the whole universe would then seem to you as one  
signal retreat of beauty—of beauty, grace, of love-  
liness infinite!

O thirsty soul eager to sip beauty!

Where would you, and where would you not sip  
the divine elixir of beauty?

Show me one spot where beauty abides not!

Somewhere it is the beauty of form, elsewhere of  
abundance;

Somewhere it is the beauty of exaltation, elsewhere  
of aspiration.

Somewhere it is the beauty of love, elsewhere the  
beauty of chastity;

Somewhere it is the beauty of prowess, elsewhere  
the beauty of genius;

Somewhere it is the beauty of art, elsewhere the  
beauty of phantasy;

Somewhere of molten sculpture, elsewhere of  
lyric song.

To seek beauty in limited areas of this universe  
overflowing with infinite beauty at every step,  
signifies but sheer inhibition against the pervading  
impact of beauty!

## *The Bankruptcy of Mankind*

It was evening time—about seven o'clock. Standing in the lobby of the convent, I was viewing the bewitching spectacle of twilight. The spell of nature had spread wondrously over the firmament. Hues were splashed in boundless abundance all over the canvas of the sky. Where was the lack of tints in the treasure-house of Nature? My heart danced in glee, viewing that grand interplay of twilight colours.

That very moment my eyes were struck by a strange spectacle. Unforgettable was, indeed, that spectacle!—One that would suck dry the delight of a conscientious human being. The bankruptcy of mankind, the cruel mockery of human destiny were reflected in that weird spectacle.

A house-maid having cleared the residue of a meal, threw four pieces of bread in the corner of her courtyard. Seeing this, the hungry dogs of the street pounced upon them—when a starving fellow, all of a sudden, rushed forth that moment. His stomach was ablaze with flames of hunger; impelled by hunger he was roving here and there like a vulture. He saw the dogs crunching those pieces of bread and rushing upon them like a raven, carried off in one swoop two

of those pieces with his tattered cap. Dirty and defiled were those pieces, half-chewn by the dogs. But before the dogs could pounce upon these, he placed them in his mouth and beaming with a smile, trudged along his way—as though he had been resuscitated! He was trudging along and behind were the barking dogs of the street, barking, barking, continually barking!

The dogs were barking unceasingly, so was the famished man laughing unstintedly!

The dogs were laughing at this stark bankruptcy of mankind; they were barking, viewing this cruel humiliation of man.

The starved man was laughing at this forlorn destitution of humanity, as it were, observing thus:

‘O accursed man! There is no place for thee today anywhere in this world. There may be resthouses for ailing animals, but no such retreat for thee!’

This, indeed, is laughing in barking; barking in laughing!

## *The Banyan Tree*

See here, not on the right-hand side, but on the left! How that large banyan-tree was beaming here only yesterday! What a tufted array of boughs it was spreading! How many birds were singing everywhere! And if you remember, we, too, frequently reposed there.

And to-day:

To-day there is neither that banyan-tree nor that cool shade of the boughs, not even those birds fluttering in glee all around!

Did any of us imagine yesterday that today this grand banyan-tree would be uprooted from the soil and this spreading tree heartening the wayfarers no less than the birds, would become merely a reminiscence of the past?

My friend! Consider this phenomenon. Ponder upon it somewhat. You feel buoyant at the happiness of to-day, you feel satisfied with the vision of your munificence; you dance in rapture, you are overcome with ecstasy. But my brother! Stop for a moment to muse over this. Is this bliss everlasting? Will this

magnificence endure forever? Will this multitude of means yield you abiding peace?

Ay! Why do you forget? So often after one step of beatitude, it is dire distress that is just awaiting us. One moment later, it embraces us unforeseen and nobody knows where disappears all that multitude of means the instant it caresses us.

That fatal moment the dreamworld of happiness will be seared unto ashes; the world of longings shall be nullified. The mounts of misery will descend upon you, the world of ecstasy shall evaporate. The pinnacles of hope will fade away and the night of calamity will envelop you all around. Your vision shall fail to penetrate, neither will you feel in a position to pace one step ahead owing to overspreading darkness everywhere. All friends pandering to you will disappear, all colleagues communing with you shall withdraw. Only misery, unbounded misery, notwithstanding all your fidgetting, will be your one companion that moment! Hence, cast one peaceful glance at this fallen banyan-tree! Flinging off this deadening spell of munificence, reflect one moment with a sense of composure!

The string whereon you have been dancing so long, is woven from raw cotton. It will not be long before it is snapped entirely. And then, with the string snapped, those who were exuberant in their clapping, when you stepped forth, will walk away with a pallid smile on their face. 'What a silly fop!' they will pronounce and commenting so, shall withdraw. But what of YOU? I tremble at the very thought of what your fate would be. Ye Wayfarer of the Infinite! Looking at this fallen banyan-tree, reflect upon life abiding!

## *The Carriage of Death*

Friends! The carriage of death is coming. The signal has been given. The gong is pealing. The earth is throbbing with the reverberations of its nearing approach.

It seems it is flying at speed, full speed. It will arrive in a moment or two and will swing off straight-way. It will not halt longer, despite our thousand efforts. The preordained halt will be over, and it will swing off the next instant into motion.

We, too, have to depart in this carriage—you have not missed this truth, I suppose, in the joy of your feasting? We have to depart in this self-same carriage. There is no escaping this reality. How could we decline this honoured invitation from nature? If we needs must depart, let us get ready for the departure.

I am not telling this unto those who are well equipped. Those who are already equipped, need feel no longer worried, no longer perturbed in the least. For them this journey will be comfortable and delightful. I am only arousing those colleagues who have been waiting in the guest-house with their baggage helter-skelter.

Friends! Having come for a little respite, a little recreation, why all this needless paraphernalia? Why all these wranglings moreover, with fellow-travellers? Why this false sophistication insisting on—‘This is my seat, that one is yours; you have very little baggage, I have a lot of it!’?

Ah! my friend! the less your baggage, the more comfortable will your journey be. Greater the anxiety of those who bear the greater burden. Wherefore, give up this senseless wrangling with the inmates of the rest-house.

However much you may wrangle about your seats and your privileges, you will have soon to leave this Guest-House behind. And having once parted, which particular seat will accompany which specific traveller?

Then, why not part forming friendly ties, so that if, sometime, we happen to encounter one another by chance, the hidden springs of affection might at least gush forth that moment on each other’s encounter?

Come, hurry up! There is but little time left. Giving up this wrangling, let us mitigate this useless burden.

When the train arrives unexpectedly, where shall we find the time for packing our baggage, for

meeting our friends, for quietly bidding farewell unto them? If we are not equipped beforehand, we shall have yet to depart any unexpected moment without meeting those friends, without instructing our nearest kin, without accepting any memorial gifts from our loved ones, without even taking the provision box. And need I press upon you how unbearable, how distressing, how utterly futile such an unforeseen departure would be?

No, no, my friends! You know everything. I have nothing to add. But you know as well, I am a talkative friend of yours and it is my habit to talk on continually. So am I giving out all this, otherwise I should have no more than this one humble suggestion to offer to you as a friend:

'Here are all the indications, my friends, hinting at the arrival of the grand carriage of death. And the earth, too, is trembling with the reverberations of its approach!

## *The Illumination of Distress*

Until to-day I believed that distress rendered a man impotent, perfidious to his cause, forlorn and humiliated; but this one occasion has changed my outlook. . . . Now do I realise that distress is turned into a venomous sting only when it has sprung from the soil of passion—and that sting unsettles the mind forthwith.

But if distress has grown out of some noble urge for a hallowed creation, one finds delight of a peculiar quality in its proximity, even though it be like a blazing fire. If fire gives warmth in cold, while purifying gold no less, the flames of distress, too, impart warmth to man's mind, purging it like gold, besides.

Such distress undoes false illusion, elects the true friend for us from amongst a whole circle surrounding us, reveals the benign and enlightened form of the Spirit and turns to an airy nothing the bewitching image of spurious hopes as a bygone nonentity.

If the splendour of the sun divulges the pure image of the universe, the irradiation of distress unveils the reality of life dynamic!

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