

of the material or food sheath and the nervous system or vital vehicle.¹

If, then, this inferior equilibrium is the basis and first means of the higher movements which the universal Power contemplates and if it constitutes the vehicle in which the Divine here seeks to reveal Itself, if the Indian saying is true that the body is the instrument provided for the fulfilment of the right law of our nature, then any final recoil from the physical life must be a turning away from the completeness of the divine Wisdom and a renunciation of its aim in earthly manifestation. Such a refusal may be, owing to some secret law of their development, the right attitude for certain individuals, but never the aim intended for mankind. It can be, therefore, no integral Yoga which ignores the body or makes its annulment or its rejection indispensable to a perfect spirituality. Rather, the perfecting of the body also should be the last triumph of the Spirit and to make the bodily life also divine must be God's final seal upon His work in the universe. The obstacle which the physical presents to the spiritual is no argument for the rejection of the physical; for in the unseen providence of things our greatest difficulties are our best opportunities. A supreme difficulty is Nature's indication to us of a supreme conquest to be won and an ultimate problem to be solved; it is not a warning of an inextricable snare to be shunned or of an enemy too strong for us from whom we must flee.

Equally, the vital and nervous energies in us are there for a great utility; they too demand the divine realisation of their possibilities in our ultimate fulfilment. The great part assigned to this element in the universal scheme is powerfully emphasised by the catholic wisdom of the Upanishads. "As the spokes of a wheel in its nave, so in the Life-Energy is all established, the triple knowledge and the Sacrifice and the power of the strong and the purity of the wise. Under the control of the Life-Energy is all this that is established in the triple heaven."² It is therefore no integral Yoga that kills these vital energies, forces them into a nerveless quiescence or roots them out as the source

¹ *annaḥkoṣa* and *prāṇakoṣa*.

² Prasna Upanishad II. 6 and 13.