

self has been conquered by the (higher) self, but to him who is not in possession of his (higher) self, the (lower) self is as if an enemy and it acts as an enemy.” When one has conquered one’s self and attained to the calm of a perfect self-mastery and self-possession, then is the supreme self in a man founded and poised even in his outwardly conscious human being, *samāhita*. In other words, to master the lower self by the higher, the natural self by the spiritual is the way of man’s perfection and liberation.

Here then is a very great qualification of the determinism of Nature, a precise limitation of its meaning and scope. How the passage from subjection to mastery works out is best seen if we observe the working of the *gunas* in the scale of Nature from the bottom to the top. At the bottom are the existences in which the principle of *tamas* is supreme, the beings who have not yet attained to the light of self-consciousness and are utterly driven by the current of Nature. There is a will even in the atom, but we see clearly enough that it is not free will, because it is mechanical and the atom does not possess the will, but is possessed by it. Here the *buddhi*, the element of intelligence and will in Prakriti, is actually and plainly what the Sankhya asserts it to be, *jaḍa*, a mechanical, even an unconscious principle in which the light of the conscious Soul has not at all struggled to the surface: the atom is not conscious of an intelligent will; *tamas*, the inert and ignorant principle, has its grip on it, contains *rajas*, conceals *sattva* within itself and holds a high holiday of mastery, Nature compelling this form of existence to act with a stupendous force indeed, but as a mechanical instrument, *yantrārūḍham māyayā*. Next, in the plant the principle of *rajas* has struggled to the surface, with its power of life, with its capacity of the nervous reactions which in us are recognisable as pleasure and suffering, but *sattva* is quite involved, has not yet emerged to awaken the light of a conscious intelligent will; all is still mechanical, subconscious or half-conscious, *tamas* stronger than *rajas*, both gaolers of the imprisoned *sattva*.

In the animal, though *tamas* is still strong, though we may still describe him as belonging to the tamasic creation, *tāmasa sarga*, yet *rajas* prevails much more against *tamas*, brings with