Chapter XIV

The Supermind as Creator

All things are self-deployings of the Divine Knowledge.

Vishnu Purana.¹

A PRINCIPLE of active Will and Knowledge superior to Mind and creatrix of the worlds is then the intermediary power and state of being between that self-possession of the One and this flux of the Many. This principle is not entirely alien to us; it does not belong solely and incomunicably to a Being who is entirely other than ourselves or to a state of existence from which we are mysteriously projected into birth, but also rejected and unable to return. If it seems to us to be seated on heights far above us, yet are they the heights of our own being and accessible to our tread. We can not only infer and glimpse that Truth, but we are capable of realising it. We may by a progressive expanding or a sudden luminous self-transcendence mount up to these summits in unforgettable moments or dwell on them during hours or days of greatest superhuman experience. When we descend again, there are doors of communication which we can keep always open or reopen even though they should constantly shut. But to dwell there permanently on this last and highest summit of the created and creative being is in the end the supreme ideal for our evolving human consciousness when it seeks not self-annulment but self-perfection. For, as we have seen, this is the original Idea and the final harmony and truth to which our gradual self-expression in the world returns and which it is meant to achieve.

Still, we may doubt whether it is possible, now or at all, to give any account of this state to the human intellect or to utilise

¹ II. 12. 39.
in any communicable and organisable way its divine workings for the elevation of our human knowledge and action. The doubt does not arise solely from the rarity or dubiety of any known phenomena that would betray a human working of this divine faculty, or from the remoteness which separates this action from the experience and verifiable knowledge of ordinary humanity; it is strongly suggested also by the apparent contradiction in both essence and operation between human mentality and the divine Supermind.

And certainly, if this consciousness had no relation at all to mind nor anywhere any identity with the mental being, it would be quite impossible to give any account of it to our human notions. Or, if it were in its nature only vision in knowledge and not at all dynamic power of knowledge, we could hope to attain by its contact a beatific state of mental illumination, but not a greater light and power for the works of the world. But since this consciousness is creatrix of the world, it must be not only state of knowledge, but power of knowledge, and not only a Will to light and vision, but a Will to power and works. And since Mind too is created out of it, Mind must be a development by limitation out of this primal faculty and this mediatory act of the supreme Consciousness and must therefore be capable of resolving itself back into it through a reverse development by expansion. For always Mind must be identical with Supermind in essence and conceal in itself the potentiality of Supermind, however different or even contrary it may have become in its actual forms and settled modes of operation. It may not then be an irrational or unprofitable attempt to strive by the method of comparison and contrast towards some idea of the Supermind from the standpoint and in the terms of our intellectual knowledge. The idea, the terms may well be inadequate and yet still serve as a finger of light pointing us onward on a way which to some distance at least we may tread. Moreover it is possible for Mind to rise beyond itself into certain heights or planes of consciousness which receive into themselves some modified light or power of the supramental consciousness and know that by an illumination, intuition or a direct contact or experience,
although to live in it and see and act from it is a victory that has not yet been made humanly possible.

And first we may pause a moment and ask ourselves whether no light can be found from the past which will guide us towards these ill-explored domains. We need a name, and we need a starting-point. For we have called this state of consciousness the Supermind; but the word is ambiguous since it may be taken in the sense of mind itself supereminent and lifted above ordinary mentality but not radically changed, or on the contrary it may bear the sense of all that is beyond mind and therefore assume a too extensive comprehensiveness which would bring in even the Ineffable itself. A subsidiary description is required which will more accurately limit its significance.

It is the cryptic verses of the Veda that help us here; for they contain, though concealed, the gospel of the divine and immortal Supermind and through the veil some illumining flashes come to us. We can see through these utterances the conception of this Supermind as a vastness beyond the ordinary firmaments of our consciousness in which truth of being is luminously one with all that expresses it and assures inevitably truth of vision, formulation, arrangement, word, act and movement and therefore truth also of result of movement, result of action and expression, infallible ordinance or law. Vast all-comprehensiveness; luminous truth and harmony of being in that vastness and not a vague chaos or self-lost obscurity; truth of law and act and knowledge expressive of that harmonious truth of being: these seem to be the essential terms of the Vedic description. The Gods, who in their highest secret entity are powers of this Supermind, born of it, seated in it as in their proper home, are in their knowledge “truth-conscious” and in their action possessed of the “seer-will”. Their conscious-force turned towards works and creation is possessed and guided by a perfect and direct knowledge of the thing to be done and its essence and its law,—a knowledge which determines a wholly effective will-power that does not deviate or falter in its process or in its result, but expresses and fulfils spontaneously and inevitably in the act that which has been seen in the vision. Light is here one with Force, the
vibrations of knowledge with the rhythm of the will and both are one, perfectly and without seeking, groping or effort, with the assured result. The divine Nature has a double power, a spontaneous self-formulation and self-arrangement which wells naturally out of the essence of the thing manifested and expresses its original truth, and a self-force of light inherent in the thing itself and the source of its spontaneous and inevitable self-arrangement.

There are subordinate, but important details. The Vedic seers seem to speak of two primary faculties of the “truth-conscious” soul; they are Sight and Hearing, by which is intended direct operations of an inherent Knowledge describable as truth-vision and truth-audition and reflected from far-off in our human mentality by the faculties of revelation and inspiration. Besides, a distinction seems to be made in the operations of the Supermind between knowledge by a comprehending and pervading consciousness which is very near to subjective knowledge by identity and knowledge by a projecting, confronting, apprehending consciousness which is the beginning of objective cognition. These are the Vedic clues. And we may accept from this ancient experience the subsidiary term “truth-consciousness” to delimit the connotation of the more elastic phrase, Supermind.

We see at once that such a consciousness, described by such characteristics, must be an intermediate formulation which refers back to a term above it and forward to another below it; we see at the same time that it is evidently the link and means by which the inferior develops out of the superior and should equally be the link and means by which it may develop back again towards its source. The term above is the unitarian or indivisible consciousness of pure Sachchidananda in which there are no separating distinctions; the term below is the analytic or dividing consciousness of Mind which can only know by separation and distinction and has at the most a vague and secondary apprehension of unity and infinity,—for, though it can synthetise its divisions, it cannot arrive at a true totality. Between them is this comprehensive and creative consciousness, by its
power of pervading and intimately comprehending knowledge
the child of that self-awareness by identity which is the poise
of the Brahman and by its power of projecting, confronting,
apprehending knowledge parent of that awareness by distinction
which is the process of the Mind.

Above, the formula of the One eternally stable and im-
mutable; below, the formula of the Many which, eternally
mutable, seeks but hardly finds in the flux of things a firm
and immutable standing-point; between, the seat of all trinities,
of all that is biune, of all that becomes Many-in-One and yet
remains One-in-Many because it was originally One that is
always potentially Many. This intermediary term is therefore
the beginning and end of all creation and arrangement, the
Alpha and the Omega, the starting-point of all differentiation,
the instrument of all unification, originate, executive and
consummative of all realised or realisable harmonies. It has the
knowledge of the One, but is able to draw out of the One its
hidden multitudes; it manifests the Many, but does not lose
itself in their differentiations. And shall we not say that its
very existence points back to Something beyond our supreme
perception of the ineffable Unity,—Something ineffable and
mentally inconceivable not because of its unity and indivisibility,
but because of its freedom from even these formulations of our
mind,—Something beyond both unity and multiplicity? That
would be the utter Absolute and Real which yet justifies to us
both our knowledge of God and our knowledge of the world.

But these terms are large and difficult to grasp; let us come
to precisions. We speak of the One as Sachchidananda; but in the
very description we posit three entities and unite them to arrive
at a trinity. We say “Existence, Consciousness, Bliss”; and then
we say, “they are one”. It is a process of the mind. But for the
unitarian consciousness such a process is inadmissible. Existence
is Consciousness and there can be no distinction between them;
Consciousness is Bliss and there can be no distinction between
them. And since there is not even this differentiation, there can
be no world. If that is the sole reality, then world is not and
never existed, can never have been conceived; for indivisible
consciousness is undividing consciousness and cannot originate division and differentiation. But this is a *reductio ad absurdum*; we cannot admit it unless we are content to base everything upon an impossible paradox and an unreconciled antithesis.

On the other hand, Mind can conceive with precision divisions as real; it can conceive a synthetic totality or the finite extending itself indefinitely; it can grasp aggregates of divided things and the samenesses underlying them; but the ultimate unity and absolute infinity are to its conscience of things abstract notions and unseizable quantities, not something that is real to its grasp, much less something that is alone real. Here is therefore the very opposite term to the unitarian consciousness; we have, confronting the essential and indivisible unity, an essential multiplicity which cannot arrive at unity without abolishing itself and in the very act confessing that it could never really have existed. Yet it was; for it is this that has found unity and abolished itself. And again we have a *reductio ad absurdum* repeating the violent paradox which seeks to convince thought by stunning it and the irreconciled and irreconcilable antithesis.

The difficulty, in its lower term, disappears if we realise that Mind is only a preparatory form of our consciousness. Mind is an instrument of analysis and synthesis, but not of essential knowledge. Its function is to cut out something vaguely from the unknown Thing in itself and call this measurement or delimitation of it the whole, and again toanalyse the whole into its parts which it regards as separate mental objects. It is only the parts and accidents that the Mind can see definitely and, after its own fashion, know. Of the whole its only definite idea is an assemblage of parts or a totality of properties and accidents. The whole not seen as a part of something else or in its own parts, properties and accidents is to the mind no more than a vague perception; only when it is analysed and put by itself as a separate constituted object, a totality in a larger totality, can Mind say to itself, “This now I know.” And really it does not know. It knows only its own analysis of the object and the idea it has formed of it by a synthesis of the separate parts and properties that it has seen. There its characteristic power, its sure function ceases, and
if we would have a greater, a profounder and a real knowledge, — a knowledge and not an intense but formless sentiment such as comes sometimes to certain deep but inarticulate parts of our mentality, — Mind has to make room for another consciousness which will fulfil Mind by transcending it or reverse and so rectify its operations after leaping beyond it: the summit of mental knowledge is only a vaulting-board from which that leap can be taken. The utmost mission of Mind is to train our obscure consciousness which has emerged out of the dark prison of Matter, to enlighten its blind instincts, random intuitions, vague perceptions till it shall become capable of this greater light and this higher ascension. Mind is a passage, not a culmination.

On the other hand, the unitarian consciousness or indivisible Unity cannot be that impossible entity, a thing without contents out of which all contents have issued and into which they disappear and become annihilated. It must be an original self-concentration in which all is contained but in another manner than in this temporal and spatial manifestation. That which has thus concentrated itself, is the utterly ineffable and inconceivable Existence which the Nihilist images to his mind as the negative Void of all that we know and are but the Transcendentalist with equal reason may image to his mind as the positive but indistinguishable Reality of all that we know and are. “In the beginning,” says the Vedanta, “was the one Existence without a second,” but before and after the beginning, now, for ever and beyond Time is that which we cannot describe even as the One, even when we say that nothing but That is. What we can be aware of is, first, its original self-concentration which we endeavour to realise as the indivisible One; secondly, the diffusion and apparent disintegration of all that was concentrated in its unity which is the Mind’s conception of the universe; and thirdly, its firm self-extension in the Truth-consciousness which contains and upholds the diffusion and prevents it from being a real disintegration, maintains unity in utmost diversity and stability in utmost mutability, insists on harmony in the appearance of an all-pervading strife and collision, keeps eternal cosmos where Mind would arrive only at a chaos eternally attempting
to form itself. This is the Supermind, the Truth-consciousness, the Real-Idea which knows itself and all that it becomes.

Supermind is the vast self-extension of the Brahman that contains and develops. By the Idea it develops the triune principle of existence, consciousness and bliss out of their indivisible unity. It differentiates them, but it does not divide. It establishes a Trinity, not arriving like the Mind from the three to the One, but manifesting the three out of the One — for it manifests and develops — and yet maintaining them in the unity — for it knows and contains. By the differentiation it is able to bring forward one or other of them as the effective Deity which contains the others involved or explicit in itself and this process it makes the foundation of all other differentiations. And it acts by the same operation on all the principles and possibilities which it evolves out of this all-constituent trinity. It possesses the power of development, of evolution, of making explicit, and that power carries with it the other power of involution, of envelopment, of making implicit. In a sense, the whole of creation may be said to be a movement between two involutions, Spirit in which all is involved and out of which all evolves downward to the other pole of Matter, Matter in which also all is involved and out of which all evolves upward to the other pole of Spirit.

Thus the whole process of differentiation by the Real-Idea creative of the universe is a putting forward of principles, forces, forms which contain for the comprehending consciousness all the rest of existence within them and front the apprehending consciousness with all the rest of existence implicit behind them. Therefore all is in each as well as each in all. Therefore every seed of things implies in itself all the infinity of various possibilities, but is kept to one law of process and result by the Will, that is to say, by the Knowledge-Force of the Conscious-Being who is manifesting himself and who, sure of the Idea in himself, predetermines by it his own forms and movements. The seed is the Truth of its own being which this Self-Existence sees in itself, the resultant of that seed of self-vision is the Truth of self-action, the natural law of development, formation and functioning which follows inevitably upon the self-vision and keeps to the processes
involved in the original Truth. All Nature is simply, then, the
Seer-Will, the Knowledge-Force of the Conscious-Being at work
to evolve in force and form all the inevitable truth of the Idea
into which it has originally thrown itself.

This conception of the Idea points us to the essential contrast
between our mental consciousness and the Truth-consciousness.
We regard thought as a thing separate from existence, abstract,
unsubstantial, different from reality, something which appears
one knows not whence and detaches itself from objective reality
in order to observe, understand and judge it; for so it seems
and therefore is to our all-dividing, all-analysing mentality. The
first business of Mind is to render “discrete”, to make fissures
much more than to discern, and so it has made this paralysing
fissure between thought and reality. But in Supermind all being
is consciousness, all consciousness is of being, and the idea, a
pregnant vibration of consciousness, is equally a vibration of
being pregnant of itself; it is an initial coming out, in creative
self-knowledge, of that which lay concentrated in uncreative self-
awareness. It comes out as Idea that is a reality, and it is that
reality of the Idea which evolves itself, always by its own power
and consciousness of itself, always self-conscious, always self-
developing by the will inherent in the Idea, always self-realising
by the knowledge ingrained in its every impulsion. This is the
truth of all creation, of all evolution.

In Supermind being, consciousness of knowledge and con-
sciousness of will are not divided as they seem to be in our
mental operations; they are a trinity, one movement with three
effective aspects. Each has its own effect. Being gives the effect
of substance, consciousness the effect of knowledge, of the self-
guiding and shaping idea, of comprehension and apprehension;
will gives the effect of self-fulfilling force. But the idea is only
the light of the reality illumining itself; it is not mental thought
nor imagination, but effective self-awareness. It is Real-Idea.

In Supermind knowledge in the Idea is not divorced from
will in the Idea, but one with it — just as it is not different from
being or substance, but is one with the being, luminous power of
the substance. As the power of burning light is not different from
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The substance of the fire, so the power of the Idea is not different from the substance of the Being which works itself out in the Idea and its development. In our mentality all are different. We have an idea and a will according to the idea or an impulsion of will and an idea detaching itself from it; but we differentiate effectually the idea from the will and both from ourselves. I am; the idea is a mysterious abstraction that appears in me, the will is another mystery, a force nearer to concreteness, though not concrete, but always something that is not myself, something that I have or get or am seized with, but am not. I make a gulf also between my will, its means and the effect, for these I regard as concrete realities outside and other than myself. Therefore neither myself nor the idea nor the will in me are self-effective. The idea may fall away from me, the will may fail, the means may be lacking, I myself by any or all of these lacunae may remain unfulfilled.

But in the Supermind there is no such paralysing division, because knowledge is not self-divided, force is not self-divided, being is not self-divided as in the mind; they are neither broken in themselves, nor divorced from each other. For the Supermind is the Vast; it starts from unity, not division, it is primarily comprehensive, differentiation is only its secondary act. Therefore whatever be the truth of being expressed, the idea corresponds to it exactly, the will-force to the idea,—force being only power of the consciousness,—and the result to the will. Nor does the idea clash with other ideas, the will or force with other will or force as in man and his world; for there is one vast Consciousness which contains and relates all ideas in itself as its own ideas, one vast Will which contains and relates all energies in itself as its own energies. It holds back this, advances that other, but according to its own preconceiving Idea-Will.

This is the justification of the current religious notions of the omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence of the Divine Being. Far from being an irrational imagination they are perfectly rational and in no way contradict either the logic of a comprehensive philosophy or the indications of observation and experience. The error is to make an unbridgeable gulf between
God and man, Brahman and the world. That error elevates an actual and practical differentiation in being, consciousness and force into an essential division. But this aspect of the question we shall touch upon afterwards. At present we have arrived at an affirmation and some conception of the divine and creative Supermind in which all is one in being, consciousness, will and delight, yet with an infinite capacity of differentiation that deploys but does not destroy the unity, — in which Truth is the substance and Truth rises in the Idea and Truth comes out in the form and there is one truth of knowledge and will, one truth of self-fulfilment and therefore of delight; for all self-fulfilment is satisfaction of being. Therefore, always, in all mutations and combinations a self-existent and inalienable harmony.