

Canto Fifteen

The Kingdoms of the Greater Knowledge

AFTER a measureless moment of the soul
Again returning to these surface fields
Out of the timeless depths where he had sunk,
He heard once more the slow tread of the hours.
All once perceived and lived was far away;
Himself was to himself his only scene.
Above the Witness and his universe
He stood in a realm of boundless silences
Awaiting the Voice that spoke and built the worlds.
A light was round him wide and absolute,
A diamond purity of eternal sight;
A consciousness lay still, devoid of forms,
Free, wordless, uncoerced by sign or rule,
For ever content with only being and bliss;
A sheer existence lived in its own peace
On the single spirit's bare and infinite ground.
Out of the sphere of Mind he had arisen,
He had left the reign of Nature's hues and shades;
He dwelt in his self's colourless purity.
It was a plane of undetermined spirit
That could be a zero or round sum of things,
A state in which all ceased and all began.
All it became that figures the absolute,
A high vast peak whence Spirit could see the worlds,
Calm's wide epiphany, wisdom's mute home,
A lonely station of Omniscience,
A diving-board of the Eternal's power,
A white floor in the house of All-Delight.
Here came the thought that passes beyond Thought,
Here the still Voice which our listening cannot hear,
The Knowledge by which the knower is the known,

The Love in which beloved and lover are one.
All stood in an original plenitude,
Hushed and fulfilled before they could create
The glorious dream of their universal acts;
Here was engendered the spiritual birth,
Here closed the finite's crawl to the Infinite.
A thousand roads leaped into Eternity
Or singing ran to meet God's veiless face.
The Known released him from its limiting chain;
He knocked at the doors of the Unknowable.
Thence gazing with an immeasurable outlook
One with self's inlook into its own pure vasts,
He saw the splendour of the spirit's realms,
The greatness and wonder of its boundless works,
The power and passion leaping from its calm,
The rapture of its movement and its rest,
And its fire-sweet miracle of transcendent life,
The million-pointing undivided grasp
Of its vision of one same stupendous All,
Its inexhaustible acts in a timeless Time,
A space that is its own infinity.
A glorious multiple of one radiant Self,
Answering to joy with joy, to love with love,
All there were moving mansions of God-bliss;
Eternal and unique they lived the One.
There forces are great outbursts of God's truth
And objects are its pure spiritual shapes;
Spirit no more is hid from its own view,
All sentience is a sea of happiness
And all creation is an act of light.
Out of the neutral silence of his soul
He passed to its fields of puissance and of calm
And saw the Powers that stand above the world,
Traversed the realms of the supreme Idea
And sought the summit of created things
And the almighty source of cosmic change.

There Knowledge called him to her mystic peaks
Where thought is held in a vast internal sense
And feeling swims across a sea of peace
And vision climbs beyond the reach of Time.
An equal of the first creator seers,
Accompanied by an all-revealing light
He moved through regions of transcendent Truth
Inward, immense, innumerably one.
There distance was his own huge spirit's extent;
Delivered from the fictions of the mind
Time's triple dividing step baffled no more;
Its inevitable and continuous stream,
The long flow of its manifesting course,
Was held in spirit's single wide regard.
A universal beauty showed its face:
The invisible deep-fraught significances,
Here sheltered behind form's insensible screen,
Uncovered to him their deathless harmony
And the key to the wonder-book of common things.
In their uniting law stood up revealed
The multiple measures of the upbuilding force,
The lines of the World-Geometer's technique,
The enchantments that uphold the cosmic web
And the magic underlying simple shapes.
On peaks where Silence listens with still heart
To the rhythmic metres of the rolling worlds,
He served the sessions of the triple Fire.
On the rim of two continents of slumber and trance
He heard the ever unspoken Reality's voice
Awaken revelation's mystic cry,
The birthplace found of the sudden infallible Word
And lived in the rays of an intuitive Sun.
Absolved from the ligaments of death and sleep
He rode the lightning seas of cosmic Mind
And crossed the ocean of original sound;
On the last step to the supernal birth

He trod along extinction's narrow edge
Near the high verges of eternity,
And mounted the gold ridge of the world-dream
Between the slayer and the saviour fires;
The belt he reached of the unchanging Truth,
Met borders of the inexpressible Light
And thrilled with the presence of the Ineffable.
Above him he saw the flaming Hierarchies,
The wings that fold around created Space,
The sun-eyed Guardians and the golden Sphinx
And the tiered planes and the immutable Lords.
A wisdom waiting on Omniscience
Sat voiceless in a vast passivity;
It judged not, measured not, nor strove to know,
But listened for the veiled all-seeing Thought
And the burden of a calm transcendent Voice.
He had reached the top of all that can be known:
His sight surpassed creation's head and base;
Ablaze the triple heavens revealed their suns,
The obscure Abyss exposed its monstrous rule.
All but the ultimate Mystery was his field,
Almost the Unknowable disclosed its rim.
His self's infinities began to emerge,
The hidden universes cried to him;
Eternities called to eternities
Sending their speechless message still remote.
Arisen from the marvel of the depths
And burning from the superconscious heights
And sweeping in great horizontal gyres
A million energies joined and were the One.
All flowed immeasurably to one sea:
All living forms became its atom homes.
A Panergy that harmonised all life
Held now existence in its vast control;
A portion of that majesty he was made.
At will he lived in the unoblivious Ray.

In that high realm where no untruth can come,
Where all are different and all is one,
In the Impersonal's ocean without shore
The Person in the World-Spirit anchored rode;
It thrilled with the mighty marchings of World-Force,
Its acts were the comrades of God's infinite peace.
An adjunct glory and a symbol self,
The body was delivered to the soul, —
An immortal point of power, a block of poise
In a cosmicity's wide formless surge,
A conscious edge of the Transcendent's might
Carving perfection from a bright world-stuff,
It figured in it a universe's sense.
There consciousness was a close and single weft;
The far and near were one in spirit-space,
The moments there were pregnant with all time.
The superconscient's screen was ripped by thought,
Idea rotated symphonies of sight,
Sight was a flame-throw from identity;
Life was a marvellous journey of the spirit,
Feeling a wave from the universal Bliss.
In the kingdom of the Spirit's power and light,
As if one who arrived out of infinity's womb
He came new-born, infant and limitless
And grew in the wisdom of the timeless Child;
He was a vast that soon became a Sun.
A great luminous silence whispered to his heart;
His knowledge an inview caught unfathomable,
An outview by no brief horizons cut:
He thought and felt in all, his gaze had power.
He communed with the Incommunicable;
Beings of a wider consciousness were his friends,
Forms of a larger subtler make drew near;
The Gods conversed with him behind Life's veil.
Neighbour his being grew to Nature's crests.
The primal Energy took him in its arms;

His brain was wrapped in overwhelming light,
An all-embracing knowledge seized his heart:
Thoughts rose in him no earthly mind can hold,
Mights played that never coursed through mortal nerves:
He scanned the secrets of the Overmind,
He bore the rapture of the Oversoul.
A borderer of the empire of the Sun,
Attuned to the supernal harmonies,
He linked creation to the Eternal's sphere.
His finite parts approached their absolutes,
His actions framed the movements of the Gods,
His will took up the reins of cosmic Force.

END OF CANTO FIFTEEN
END OF BOOK TWO