

*By the same Author*

THE LIGHT OF ASIA: or The Great Renunciation.  
Being the Life and Teaching of Gautama.

THE  
SONG CELESTIAL

OR

*BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ*

(FROM THE MAHĀBHĀRATA)

BEING A DISCOURSE BETWEEN ARJUNA,  
PRINCE OF INDIA, AND THE SUPREME BEING  
UNDER THE FORM OF KRISHNA

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT TEXT

BY

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*New Edition*



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To Rev. Thomas Merlon  
with affection from  
U. Sher-ghl.  
India. April 1950

Dedication

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TO INDIA

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।  
संवादमिममश्रीषमह्यं रोमहर्षणं ॥  
इति इह ज्ञानसाख्यानं गुह्यं क्लृप्ततरं भया ।  
नेभ्यस न मे सिन्धु लदन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥

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*So have I read this wonderful and spirit-thrilling speech,  
By Krishna and Prince Arjun held, discoursing each with  
each;  
So have I writ its wisdom here,—its hidden mystery,  
For England; O our India! as dear to me as She!*

EDWIN ARNOLD

Visible shape, and move a man with men,  
 Succouring the good, thrusting the evil back,  
 And setting Virtue on her seat again.  
 Who knows the truth touching my births on  
 earth

And my divine work, when he quits the flesh  
 Puts on its load no more, falls no more down  
 To earthly birth: to Me he comes, dear Prince!

Many there be who come! from fear set free,  
 From anger, from desire; keeping their hearts  
 Fixed upon me—my Faithful—purified  
 By sacred flame of Knowledge. Such as these  
 Mix with my being. Whoso worship me,  
 Them I exalt; but all men everywhere  
 Shall fall into my path; albeit, those souls  
 Which seek reward for works, make sacrifice  
 Now, to the lower gods. I say to thee  
 Here have they their reward. But I am He  
 Made the Four Castes, and portioned them a  
 place

After their qualities and gifts. Yea, I  
 Created, the Reposeful; I that live  
 Immortally, made all those mortal births:  
 For works soil not my essence, being works  
 Wrought uninvolved.<sup>1</sup> Who knows me acting  
 thus

Unchained by action, action binds not him;  
 And, so perceiving, all those saints of old  
 Worked, seeking for deliverance. Work thou  
 As, in the days gone by, thy fathers did.

<sup>1</sup> Without desire of fruit.

Thou sayst, perplexed, It hath been asked before  
 By singers and by sages, "What is act,  
 And what inaction?" I will teach thee this,  
 And, knowing, thou shalt learn which work doth  
 save

Needs must one rightly meditate those three—  
 Doing,—not doing,—and undoing. Here  
 Thorny and dark the path is! He who sees  
 How action may be rest, rest action—he  
 Is wisest 'mid his kind; he hath the truth!  
 He doeth well, acting or resting. Freed  
In all his works from prickings of desire,  
Burned clean in act by the white fire of truth,  
The wise call that man wise; and such an one,  
Renouncing fruit of deeds, always content.  
 Always self-satisfying, if he works,  
 Doth nothing that shall stain his separate soul,  
 Which—quit of fear and hope—subduing self—  
 Rejecting outward impulse—yielding up  
 To body's need nothing save body, dwells  
 Sinless amid all sin, with equal calm  
 Taking what may befall, by grief unmoved,  
 Unmoved by joy, unenvyingly; the same  
 In good and evil fortunes; nowise bound  
 By bond of deeds. Nay, but of such an one,  
 Whose crave is gone, whose soul is liberate,  
 Whose heart is set on truth—of such an one  
 What work he does is work of sacrifice,  
 Which passeth purely into ash and smoke  
 Consumed upon the altar! All's then God!  
 The sacrifice is Brahm, the ghee and grain  
 Are Brahm, the fire is Brahm, the flesh it eats

Is Brahm, and unto Brahm attaineth he  
 Who, in such office, meditates on Brahm.  
 Some votaries there be who serve the gods  
 With flesh and altar-smoke; but other some  
 Who, lighting subtler fires, make purer rite  
 With will of worship. Of the which be they  
 Who, in white flame of continence, consume  
 Joys of the sense, delights of eye and ear,  
 Forgoing tender speech and sound of song:  
 And they who, kindling fires with torch of Truth,  
 Burn on a hidden altar-stone the bliss  
 Of youth and love, renouncing happiness:  
 And they who lay for offering there their wealth,  
 Their penance, meditation, piety,  
 Their steadfast reading of the scrolls, their lore  
 Painfully gained with long austerities:  
 And they who, making silent sacrifice,  
 Draw in their breath to feed the flame of thought,  
 And breathe it forth to waft the heart on high,  
 Governing the ventage of each entering air  
 Lest one sigh pass which helpeth not the soul:  
 And they who, day by day denying needs,  
 Lay life itself upon the altar-flame,  
 Burning the body wan. Lo! all these keep  
 The rite of offering, as if they slew  
 Victims; and all thereby efface much sin.  
 Yea! and who feed on the immortal food  
 Left of such sacrifice, to Brahma pass,  
 To The Unending. But for him that makes  
 No sacrifice, he hath nor part nor lot  
 Even in the present world. How should he share  
 Another, O thou Glory of thy Line?

In sight of Brahma all these offerings  
 Are spread and are accepted! Comprehend  
 That all proceed by act; for knowing this,  
 Thou shalt be quit of doubt. The sacrifice  
 Which Knowledge pays is better than great gifts  
 Offered by wealth, since gifts' worth—O my  
 Prince!

Lies in the mind which gives, the will that serves:  
 And these are gained by reverence, by strong  
 search,

By humble heed of those who see the Truth  
 And teach it. Knowing Truth, thy heart no more  
 Will ache with error, for the Truth shall show  
 All things subdued to thee, as thou to Me.  
 Moreover, Son of Pandu! wert thou worst  
 Of all wrong-doers, this fair ship of Truth  
 Should bear thee safe and dry across the sea  
 Of thy transgressions. As the kindled flame  
 Feeds on the fuel till it sinks to ash,  
 So unto ash, Arjuna! unto nought  
 The flame of Knowledge wastes works' dross  
 away!

There is no purifier like thereto  
 In all this world, and he who seeketh it  
 Shall find it—being grown perfect—in himself.  
 Believing, he receives it when the soul  
 Masters itself, and cleaves to Truth, and comes—  
 Possessing knowledge—to the higher peace,  
 The uttermost repose. But those untaught,  
 And those without full faith, and those who fear  
 Are shent; no peace is here or other where,  
 No hope, nor happiness for whoso doubts.

He that, being self-contained, hath vanquished  
 doubt,  
 Disparting self from service, soul from works,  
 Enlightened and emancipate, my Prince!  
 Works fetter him no more! Cut then atwain  
 With sword of wisdom, Son of Bharata!  
 This doubt that binds thy heart-beats! cleave  
 the bond  
 Born of thy ignorance! Be bold and wise!  
 Give thyself to the field with me! Arise!

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER IV. OF THE  
 BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ,

Entitled "Jnana Yôg,"  
 Or "The Book of the Religion of Knowledge."

## CHAPTER V

*Arjuna.* Yet, Krishna! at the one time thou  
 dost laud

Surcease of works, and, at another time,  
 Service through work. Of these twain plainly  
 tell

Which is the better way?

*Krishna.* To cease from works  
 Is well, and to do works in holiness  
 Is well; and both conduct to bliss supreme;  
 But of these twain the better way is his  
 Who working piously refraineth not.

That is the true Renouncer, firm and fixed,  
 Who—seeking nought, rejecting nought—dwells  
proof

Against the "opposites."<sup>1</sup> O valiant Prince!  
 In doing, such breaks lightly from all deed:  
 'Tis the new scholar talks as they were two,  
 This Sâṅkhya and this Yôga: wise men know  
 Who husbands one plucks golden fruit of both!  
 The region of high rest which Sâṅkhyans reach  
 Yogins attain. Who sees these twain as one  
 Sees with clear eyes! Yet such abstraction,  
 Chief!

<sup>1</sup> That is, "joy and sorrow, success and failure,  
 heat and cold," &c.

Is hard to win without much holiness.  
 Whoso is fixed in holiness, self-ruled,  
 Pure-hearted, lord of senses and of self,  
 Lost in the common life of all which lives—  
 A "Yôgayukt"—he is a Saint who wends  
 Straightway to Brahm. Such an one is not  
 touched  
 By taint of deeds. "Nought of myself I do!"  
 Thus will he think—who holds the truth of  
 truths—

In seeing, hearing, touching, smelling; when  
 He eats, or goes, or breathes; slumbers or talks,  
 Holds fast or loosens, opes his eyes or shuts;  
 Always assured "This is the sense-world plays  
 With senses." He that acts in thought of  
 Brahm,

Detaching end from act, with act content,  
The world of sense can no more stain his soul  
Than waters mar th' enamelled lotus-leaf.  
 With life, with heart, with mind,—nay, with  
 the help

Of all five senses—letting selfhood go—  
 Yogins toil ever towards their souls' release.  
 Such votaries, renouncing fruit of deeds,  
 Gain endless peace: the un vowed, the passion-  
 bound,  
 Seeking a fruit from works, are fastened down.  
 The embodied sage, withdrawn within his soul,  
 At every act sits godlike in "the town  
 Which hath nine gateways,"<sup>1</sup> neither doing aught  
 Nor causing any deed. This world's Lord makes

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the body.

Neither the work, nor passion for the work,  
Nor lust for fruit of work; the man's own self,  
Pushes to these! The Master of this World  
 Takes on himself the good or evil deeds  
 Of no man—dwelling beyond! Mankind errs  
 here

By folly, darkening knowledge. But, for whom  
 That darkness of the soul is chased by light,  
 Splendid and clear shines manifest the Truth  
 As if a Sun of Wisdom sprang to shed  
 Its beams of dawn. Him meditating still,  
 Him seeking, with Him blended, stayed on Him,  
 The souls illuminated take that road  
 Which hath no turning back—their sins flung off  
 By strength of faith. [Who will may have this  
 Light;

Who hath it sees.] To him who wisely sees,  
 The Brahman with his scrolls and sanctities,  
 The cow, the elephant, the unclean dog,  
 The Outcast gorging dog's meat, are all one.

The world is overcome—aye! even here!  
 By such as fix their faith on Unity.  
 The sinless Brahma dwells in Unity,  
 And they in Brahma. Be not over-glad  
 Attaining joy, and be not over-sad  
 Encountering grief, but, stayed on Brahma, still  
 Constant let each abide! The sage whose soul  
 Holds off from outer contacts, in himself  
 Finds bliss; to Brahma joined by piety,  
 His spirit tastes eternal peace. The joys  
 Springing from sense-life are but quickening wombs

Which breed sure griefs: those joys begin and  
end!

The wise mind takes no pleasure, Kunti's Son!  
In such as those! But if a man shall learn,  
Even while he lives and bears his body's chain,  
To master lust and anger, he is blest!  
He is the *Yukta*; he hath happiness,  
Contentment, light, within: his life is merged  
In Brahma's life; he doth Nirvāna touch!  
Thus go the Rishis unto rest, who dwell  
With sins effaced, with doubts at end, with  
hearts

Governed and calm. Glad in all good they live,  
Nigh to the peace of God; and all those live  
Who pass their days exempt from greed and  
wrath,

Subduing self and senses, knowing the Soul!

The Saint who shuts outside his placid soul  
All touch of sense, letting no contact through;  
Whose quiet eyes gaze straight from fixed brows,  
Whose outward breath and inward breath are  
drawn

Equal and slow through nostrils still and close;  
That one—with organs, heart, and mind con-  
strained,

Bent on deliverance, having put away  
Passion, and fear, and rage;—hath, even now,  
Obtained deliverance, ever and ever freed.  
Yea! for he knows Me Who am He that heeds  
The sacrifice and worship, God revealed;  
And He who heeds not, being Lord of Worlds,

Lover of all that lives, God unrevealed,  
Wherein who will shall find surety and shield!

HERE ENDS CHAPTER V. OF THE

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ,

*Entitled "Karmasanyāsayog,"*  
*Or "The Book of Religion by Renouncing Fruit*  
*of Works."*

## CHAPTER VI

*Krishna.* Therefore, who doeth work rightful  
to do,  
Not seeking gain from work, that man, O Prince!  
Is Sânyasi and Yôgi—both in one  
And he is neither who lights not the flame  
Of sacrifice, nor setteth hand to task.

Regard as true Renouncer him that makes  
Worship by work, for who renounceth not  
Works not as Yôgin. So is that well said :  
“ By works the votary doth rise to faith,  
And saintship is the ceasing from all works ; ”  
Because the perfect Yôgin acts—but acts  
Unmoved by passions and unbound by deeds,  
Setting result aside.

Let each man raise  
The Self by Soul, not trample down his Self,  
Since Soul that is Self's friend may grow Self's  
foe.  
Soul is Self's friend when Self doth rule o'er Self,  
But Self turns enemy if Soul's own self  
Hates Self as not itself.<sup>1</sup>

The sovereign soul

<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit has this play on the double meaning  
of *Ātman*.

Of him who lives self-governed and at peace  
Is centred in itself, taking alike  
Pleasure and pain ; heat, cold ; glory and shame  
He is the Yôgi, he is *Yûkta*, glad  
With joy of light and truth ; dwelling apart  
Upon a peak, with senses subjugate  
Whereto the clod, the rock, the glistening gold  
Show all as one. By this sign is he known  
Being of equal grace to comrades, friends,  
Chance-comers, strangers, lovers, enemies,  
Aliens and kinsmen ; loving all alike,  
Evil or good.

Sequestered should he sit,  
Steadfastly meditating, solitary,  
His thoughts controlled, his passions laid away,  
Quit of belongings. In a fair, still spot  
Having his fixed abode,—not too much raised,  
Nor yet too low,—let him abide, his goods  
A cloth, a deerskin, and the Kuśa-grass.  
There, setting hard his mind upon The One,  
Restraining heart and senses, silent, calm,  
Let him accomplish Yôga, and achieve  
Pureness of soul, holding immovable  
Body and neck and head, his gaze absorbed  
Upon his nose-end,<sup>1</sup> rapt from all around,  
Tranquil in spirit, free of fear, intent  
Upon his Brahmacharya vow, devout,  
Musing on Me, lost in the thought of Me.  
That Yôgin, so devoted, so controlled,  
Comes to the peace beyond,—My peace, the peace  
Of high Nirvana !

<sup>1</sup> So in original.



But for earthly needs  
 Religion is not his who too much fasts  
 Or too much feasts, nor his who sleeps away  
 An idle mind; nor his who wears to waste  
 His strength in vigils. Nay, Arjuna! call  
 That the true piety which most removes  
 Earth-aches and ills, where one is moderate  
 In eating and in resting, and in sport;  
 Measured in wish and act; sleeping betimes,  
 Waking betimes for duty.

When the man,  
 So living, centres on his soul the thought  
 Straitly restrained—untouched internally  
 By stress of sense—then is he *Yūka*. See!  
Steadfast a lamp burns sheltered from the wind;  
Such is the likeness of the Yōgi's mind  
Shut from sense-storms and burning bright to  
Heaven.

When mind broods placid, soothed with holy wont;  
 When Self contemplates self, and in itself  
 Hath comfort; when it knows the nameless joy  
 Beyond all scope of sense, revealed to soul—  
 Only to soul! and, knowing, wavers not,  
 True to the farther Truth; when, holding this,  
 It deems no other treasure comparable,  
 But, harboured there, cannot be stirred or shook  
 By any gravest grief, call that state "peace,"  
 That happy severance Yōga; call that man  
 The perfect Yōgin!

Steadfastly the will  
 Must toil thereto, till efforts end in ease,  
 And thought has passed from thinking. Shaking off

All longings bred by dreams of fame and gain,  
Shutting the doorways of the senses close  
With watchful ward; so, step by step, it comes  
To gift of peace assured and heart assuaged,  
When the mind dwells self-wrapped, and the soul  
broods

Cumberless. But, as often as the heart  
 Breaks—wild and wavering—from control, so oft  
 Let him re-curb it, let him rein it back  
 To the soul's governance; for perfect bliss  
 Grows only in the bosom tranquillised,  
 The spirit passionless, purged from offense,  
 Vowed to the Infinite. He who thus vows  
 His soul to the Supreme Soul, quitting sin,  
 Passes unhindered to the endless bliss  
 Of unity with Brahma. He so vowed,  
 So blended, sees the Life-Soul resident  
In all things living, and all living things  
In that Life-Soul contained. And whoso thus  
Discerneth Me in all, and all in Me,  
I never let him go; nor looseneth he  
Hold upon Me; but, dwell he where he may,  
Whate'er his life, in Me he dwells and lives,  
Because he knows and worships Me, Who dwell  
In all which lives, and cleaves to Me in all.

Arjuna! if a man sees everywhere—  
 Taught by his own similitude—one Life,  
 One Essence in the Evil and the Good,  
 Hold him a Yōgi, yea! well-perfected!

*Arjuna.* Slayer of Madhu! yet again, this Yōg,  
 This Peace, derived from equanimity,  
 Made known by thee—I see no fixity

Therein, no rest, because the heart of men  
Is unfixed, Krishna ! rash, tumultuous,  
Wilful and strong. It were all one, I think,  
To hold the wayward wind, as tame man's heart.

*Krishna.* Hero long-armed ! beyond denial,  
hard

Man's heart is to restrain, and wavering ;  
Yet may it grow restrained by habit, Prince !  
By wont of self-command. This Yôg, I say,  
Cometh not lightly to th'ungoverned ones ;  
But he who will be master of himself  
Shall win it, if he stoutly strive thereto.

*Arjuna.* And what road goeth he who, having  
faith,

Fails, Krishna ! in the striving ; falling back  
From holiness, missing the perfect rule ?  
Is he not lost, straying from Brahma's light,  
Like the vain cloud, which floats 'twixt earth  
and heaven

When lightning splits it, and it vanisheth ?  
Fain would I hear thee answer me herein,  
Since, Krishna ! none save thou can clear the  
doubt.

*Krishna.* He is not lost, thou Son of Prithâ !  
No !

Nor earth, nor heaven is forfeit, even for him,  
Because no heart that holds one right desire  
Treadeth the road of loss ! He who should fail,  
Desiring righteousness, cometh at death  
Unto the Region of the Just ; dwells there  
Measureless years, and being born anew,  
Beginneth life again in some fair home

Amid the mild and happy. It may chance  
He doth descend into a Yôgin house  
On Virtue's breast ; but that is rare ! Such birth  
Is hard to be obtained on this earth, Chief !  
So hath he back again what heights of heart  
He did achieve, and so he strives anew  
To perfectness, with better hope, dear Prince !  
For by the old desire he is drawn on  
Unwittingly ; and only to desire  
The purity of Yôg is to pass  
Beyond the *Sabdabrahm*, the spoken Ved.  
But, being Yôgi, striving strong and long,  
Purged from transgressions, perfected by births  
Following on births, he plants his feet at last  
Upon the farther path. Such as one ranks  
Above ascetics, higher than the wise,  
Beyond achievers of vast deeds ! Be thou  
Yôgi Arjuna ! And of such believe,  
Truest and best is he who worships Me  
With inmost soul, stayed on My Mystery !

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER VI. OF THE  
BHAGAVAD-GÎTÂ,

Entitled " *Atmasanyamayôg,*"  
Or " *The Book of Religion by Self-Restraint.*"

## CHAPTER VII

*Krishna.* Learn now, dear Prince! how, if  
thy soul be set

Ever on Me—still exercising Yôg,  
Still making Me thy Refuge—thou shalt come  
Most surely unto perfect hold of Me.  
I will declare to thee that utmost lore,  
Whole and particular, which, when thou knowest,  
Leaveth no more to know here in this world.

Of many thousand mortals, one, perchance,  
Striveth for Truth; and of those few that strive—  
Nay, and rise high—one only—here and there—  
Knoweth Me, as I am, the very Truth.

Earth, water, flame, air, ether, life, and mind,  
And individuality—those eight  
Make up the showing of Me, Manifest.

These be my lower Nature; learn the higher,  
Whereby, thou Valiant One! this Universe  
Is, by its principle of life, produced;  
Whereby the worlds of visible things are born  
As from a *Yoni*. Know! I am that womb:  
I make and I unmake this Universe:  
Than me there is no other Master, Prince!

No other Maker! All these hang on me  
As hangs a row of pearls upon its string.  
I am the fresh taste of the water; I  
The silver of the moon, the gold o' the sun,  
The word of worship in the Vêds, the thrill  
That passeth in the ether, and the strength  
Of man's shed seed. I am the good sweet smell  
Of the moistened earth, I am the fire's red  
light,

The vital air moving in all which moves,  
The holiness of hallowed souls, the root  
Undying, whence hath sprung whatever is;  
The wisdom of the wise, the intellect  
Of the informed, the greatness of the great.  
The splendour of the splendid. Kunti's Son!  
These am I, free from passion and desire;  
Yet am I right desire in all who yearn,  
Chief of the Bhâratas! for all those moods,  
Soothfast, or passionate, or ignorant,  
Which Nature frames, deduce from me; but all  
Are merged in me—not I in them! The  
world—

Deceived by those three qualities of being—  
Wotteth not Me Who am outside them all,  
Above them all, Eternal! Hard it is  
To pierce that veil divine of various shows  
Which hideth Me; yet they who worship Me  
Pierce it and pass beyond.

I am not known  
To evil-doers, nor to foolish ones,  
Nor to the base and churlish; nor to those  
Whose mind is cheated by the show of things.

Nor those that take the way of Asuras.<sup>1</sup>

Four sorts of mortals know me: he who weeps,  
Arjuna! and the man who yearns to know;  
And he who toils to help; and he who sits  
Certain of me, enlightened.

Of these four,  
O Prince of India! highest, nearest, best  
That last is, the devout soul, wise, intent  
Upon "The One," Dear, above all, am I  
To him; and he is dearest unto me!  
All four are good, and seek me; but mine own,  
The true of heart, the faithful—stayed on me,  
Taking me as their utmost blessedness,  
They are not "mine," but I—even I myself!  
At end of many births to Me they come!  
Yet hard the wise Mahatma is to find,  
That man who sayeth, "All is Vāsudev!"<sup>2</sup>

There be those, too, whose knowledge, turned  
aside

By this desire or that, gives them to serve  
Some lower gods, with various rites, constrained  
By that which mouldeth them. Unto all such—  
Worship what shrine they will, what shapes, in  
faith—

'Tis I who give them faith! I am content!  
The heart thus asking favour from its God,  
Darkened but ardent, hath the end it craves,

<sup>1</sup> Beings of low and devilish nature.

<sup>2</sup> Krishna.

The lesser blessing—but 'tis I who give!  
Yet soon is withered what small fruit they reap:  
Those men of little minds, who worship so,  
Go where they worship, passing with their gods.  
But Mine come unto me! Blind are the eyes  
Which deem th' Unmanifest manifest,  
Not comprehending Me in my true Self!  
Imperishable, viewless, undeclared,  
Hidden behind my magic veil of shows,  
I am not seen by all; I am not known—  
Unborn and changeless—to the idle world.  
But I, Arjuna! know all things which were,  
And all which are, and all which are to be,  
Albeit not one among them knoweth Me!

By passion for the "pairs of opposites,"  
By those twain snares of Like and Dislike,  
Prince!

All creatures live bewildered, save some few  
Who, quit of sins, holy in act, informed,  
Freed from the "opposites," and fixed in faith,  
Cleave unto Me.

Who cleave, who seek in Me  
Refuge from birth<sup>1</sup> and death, those have the  
Truth!

Those know Me BRAHMA; know Me Soul of  
Souls,

The ADHYĀTMAN; know KARMA, my work;  
Know I am ADHIBHŪTA, Lord of Life,  
And ADHIDĀIVA, Lord of all the Gods,

<sup>1</sup> I read here *janma*, "birth;" not *jara*, "age."

See! as the shoreless airs  
Move in the measureless space, but are not space,  
[And space were space without the moving airs];  
So all things are in Me, but are not I.

At closing of each Kalpa, Indian Prince!  
All things which be back to My Being come:  
At the beginning of each Kalpa, all  
Issue new-born from Me.

By Energy  
And help of Prakriti, my outer Self,  
Again, and yet again, I make go forth  
The realms of visible things—without their will—  
All of them—by the power of Prakriti.

Yet these great makings, Prince! involve Me  
not  
Enchain Me not! I sit apart from them,  
Other, and Higher, and Free; nowise attached!

Thus doth the stuff of worlds, moulded by Me,  
Bring forth all that which is, moving or still,  
Living or lifeless! Thus the worlds go on!

The minds untaught mistake Me, veiled in  
form;—  
Naught see they of My secret Presence, nought  
Of My hid Nature, ruling all which lives.  
Vain hopes pursuing, vain deeds doing; fed  
On vainest knowledge, senselessly they seek  
An evil way, the way of brutes and fiends.

But My Mahatmas, those of noble soul  
Who tread the path celestial, worship Me  
With hearts unwandering,—knowing Me the  
Source,

Th' Eternal Source, of Life. Unendingly  
They glorify Me; seek Me; keep their vows  
Of reverence and love, with changeless faith  
Adoring Me. Yea, and those too adore,  
Who, offering sacrifice of wakened hearts,  
Have sense of one pervading Spirit's stress,  
One Force in every place, though manifold!  
I am the Sacrifice! I am the Prayer!  
I am the Funeral-Cake set for the dead!  
I am the healing herb! I am the ghee,  
The Mantra, and the flame, and that which burns!  
I am—of all this boundless Universe—  
The Father, Mother, Ancestor, and Guard!  
The end of Learning! That which purifies  
In lustral water! I am Om! I am  
Rig-Veda, Sama-Veda, Yajur-Ved;  
The Way, the Fosterer, the Lord, the Judge,  
The Witness; the Abode, the Refuge-House,  
The Friend, the Fountain and the Sea of Life  
Which sends, and swallows up; Treasure of  
Worlds  
And Treasure-Chamber! Seed and Seed-  
Sower,  
Whence endless harvests spring! Sun's heat is  
mine;  
Heaven's rain is mine to grant or to withhold;  
Death am I, and Immortal Life I am,  
Arjuna! SAT and ASAT, Visible Life,

And Life Invisible !

Yea ! those who learn

The threefold Veds, who drink the Soma-wine,  
Purge sins, pay sacrifice—from Me they earn  
Passage to Swarga ; where the meats divine

Of great gods feed them in high Indra's heaven.  
Yet they, when that prodigious joy is o'er,  
Paradise spent, and wage for merits given,  
Come to the world of death and change once  
more.

They had their recompense ! they stored their  
treasure,

Following the threefold Scripture and its writ ;  
Who seeketh such gaineth the fleeting pleasure  
Of joy which comes and goes ! I grant them it !

But to those blessèd ones who worship Me,  
Turning not elsewhere, with minds set fast,  
I bring assurance of full bliss beyond.

Nay, and of hearts which follow other gods  
In simple faith, their prayers arise to me,  
O Kunti's Son ! though they pray wrongfully ;  
For I am the Receiver and the Lord  
Of every sacrifice, which these know not  
Rightfully ; so they fall to earth again !  
Who follow gods go to their gods ; who vow  
Their souls to Pitris go to Pitris ; minds  
To evil Bhûts given o'er sink to the Bhûts :

And whoso loveth Me cometh to Me.  
Whoso shall offer Me in faith and love  
A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water poured forth,  
That offering I accept, lovingly made  
With pious will. Whate'er thou doest, Prince !  
Eating or sacrificing, giving gifts,  
Praying or fasting, let it all be done  
For Me, as Mine. So shalt thou free thyself  
From *Karmabandh*, the chain which holdeth men  
To good and evil issue, so shalt come  
Safe unto Me—when thou art quit of flesh—  
By faith and abdication joined to Me !

I am alike for all ! I know not hate,  
I know not favour ! What is made is Mine !  
But them that worship Me with love, I love ;  
They are in Me, and I in them !

Nay, Prince !

If one of evil life turn in his thought  
Straightly to Me, count him amidst the good ;  
He hath the high way chosen ; he shall grow  
Righteous ere long ; he shall attain that peace  
Which changes not. Thou Prince of India !  
Be certain none can perish, trusting Me !  
O Prithâ's Son ! whoso will turn to Me,  
Though they be born from the very womb of Sin,  
Woman or man ; sprung of the Vaisya caste  
Or lowly disregarded Sudra,—all  
Plant foot upon the highest path ; how then  
The holy Brahmins and My Royal Saints ?  
Ah ! ye who into this ill world are come—

I am the Spirit seated deep in every creature's heart ;  
 From Me they come ; by Me they live ; at My word they depart !  
 Vishnu of the Âdityas I am, those Lords of Light ;  
 Maritchi of the Maruts, the Kings of Storm and Blight ;  
 By day I gleam, the golden Sun of burning cloudless Noon ;  
 By Night, amid the asterisms I glide, the dappled Moon !  
 Of Vedas I am Sâma-Ved, of gods in Indra's Heaven  
 Vâsava ; of the faculties to living beings given  
 The mind which apprehends and thinks ; of Rudras Śankara ;  
 Of Yakshas and of Râkshasas, Vittesh ; and Pāvaka  
 Of Vasus, and of mountain-peaks Meru ; Vrihaspati  
 Know Me 'mid planetary Powers ; 'mid Warriors heavenly  
 Skanda ; of all the water-floods the Sea which drinketh each,  
 And Bhriḡu of the holy Saints, and Om of sacred speech ;  
 Of prayers the prayer ye whisper ;<sup>1</sup> of hills Himâla's snow,  
 And Aswattha, the fig-tree, of all the trees that grow ;  
 Of the Devarshis, Narada ; and Chitrarath of them

<sup>1</sup> Called "The Jap."

That sing in Heaven, and Kapila of Munis, and the gem  
 Of flying steeds, Uchchaisravas, from Amrit-wave which burst ;  
 Of elephants Airâvata ; of males the Best and First ;  
 Of weapons Heav'n's hot thunderbolt ; of cows white Kâmadhuk,  
 From whose great milky udder-teats all hearts' desires are strook ;  
 Vâsuki of the serpent-tribes, round Mandara entwined ;  
 And thousand-fanged Ananta, on whose broad coils reclined  
 Leans Vishnu ; and of water-things Varuna ; Aryam  
 Of Pitris, and, of those that judge, Yama the Judge I am ;  
 Of Daityas dread Prahlâda ; of what metes days and years,  
 Time's self I am ; of woodland-beasts—buffaloes, deers, and bears—  
 The lordly-painted tiger ; of birds the vast Garûd,  
 The whirlwind 'mid the winds ; 'mid chiefs Rama with blood imbrued,  
 Makar 'mid fishes of the sea, and Ganges 'mid the streams ;  
 Yea ! First, and Last, and Centre of all which is or seems  
 I am, Arjuna ! Wisdom Supreme of what is wise,  
 Words on the uttering lips I am, and eyesight of the eyes,

Which I have made, and Me, for Love's sole end,  
That man, Arjuna ! unto Me doth wend.

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XI. OF THE  
BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ,

*Entitled "Viṣṭwarupadarśanam,"*  
Or "*The Book of the Manifesting of the One*  
*and Manifold.*"

## CHAPTER XII

*Arjuna.* Lord ! of the men who serve Thee—  
true in heart—

As God revealed ; and of the men who serve,  
Worshipping Thee Unrevealed, Unbodied, Far,  
Which take the better way of faith and life ?

*Krishna.* Whoever serve Me—as I show My-  
self—

Constantly true, in full devotion fixed,  
Those hold I very holy. But who serve—  
Worshipping Me The One, The Invisible,  
The Unrevealed, Unnamed, Unthinkable,  
Uttermost, All-pervading, Highest, Sure—  
Who thus adore Me, mastering their sense,  
Of one set mind to all, glad in all good,  
These blessed souls come unto Me.

Yet, hard  
The travail is for such as bend their minds  
To reach th' Unmanifest. That viewless path  
Shall scarce be trod by man bearing the flesh !  
But whereso any doeth all his deeds  
Renouncing self for Me, full of Me, fixed  
To serve only the Highest, night and day  
Musing on Me—him will I swiftly lift  
Forth from life's ocean of distress and death,  
Whose soul clings fast to Me. Cling thou to  
Me !



Clasp Me with heart and mind! so shalt thou  
dwell

Surely with Me on high. But if thy thought  
Droops from such height; if thou be'st weak to  
set

Body and soul upon Me constantly,  
Despair not! give Me lower service! seek  
To reach Me, worshipping with steadfast will;  
And, if thou canst not worship steadfastly,  
Work for Me, toil in works pleasing to Me!  
For he that laboureth right for love of Me  
Shall finally attain! But, if in this  
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure! find  
Refuge in Me! let fruits of labour go,  
Renouncing hope for Me, with lowliest heart,  
So shalt thou come; for, though to know is more  
Than diligence, yet worship better is  
Than knowing, and renouncing better still.  
Near to renunciation—very near—  
Dwelleth Eternal Peace!

Who hateth nought  
Of all which lives, living himself benign,  
Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,  
Exempt from love of self, unchangeable  
By good or ill; patient, contented, firm  
In faith, mastering himself, true to his word,  
Seeking Me, heart and soul; vowed unto Me,—  
That man I love! Who troubleth not his kind,  
And is not troubled by them; clear of wrath,  
Living too high for gladness, grief, or fear,  
That man I love! Who, dwelling quiet-eyed,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Not peering about," *anapeksha*.

Stainless, serene, well-balanced, unperplexed,  
Working with Me, yet from all works detached,  
That man I love! Who, fixed in faith on Me,  
Dotes upon none, scorns none; rejoices not,  
And grieves not, letting good or evil hap  
Light when it will, and when it will depart,  
That man I love! Who, unto friend and foe  
Keeping an equal heart, with equal mind  
Bears shame and glory; with an equal peace  
Takes heat and cold, pleasure and pain; abides  
Quit of desires, hears praise or calumny  
In passionless restraint, unmoved by each;  
Linked by no ties to earth, steadfast in Me,  
That man I love! But most of all I love  
Those happy ones to whom 'tis life to live  
In single fervid faith and love unseeing,  
Drinking the blessed Amrit of my Being!

HERE ENDETH CHAPTER XII. OF THE  
BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ,

Entitled "*Bhaktiyōg*,"

Or: "*The Book of the Religion of Faith.*"

CHAPTER XIII

*Arjuna.* Now would I hear, O gracious  
Keśava! <sup>1</sup>  
Of Life which seems, and Soul beyond, which  
sees,

And what it is we know—or think to know.

*Krishna.* Yea! Son of Kunti! for this flesh  
ye see

Is *Kshetra*, is the field where Life disports;  
And that which views and knows it is the Soul,  
*Kshetrajna*. In all “fields,” thou Indian  
prince!

I am *Kshetrajna*. I am what surveys!  
Only that knowledge knows which knows the  
known

By the knower! <sup>2</sup> What it is, that “field” of life,  
What qualities it hath, and whence it is,  
And why it changeth, and the faculty  
That wotteth it, the mightiness of this,  
And how it wotteth—hear these things from Me!  
<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Calcutta edition of the Mahābhārata has these three opening lines.

<sup>2</sup> This is the nearest possible version of *Kshetrakshetrajnayanān yat tajnān matan mama*.

<sup>3</sup> I omit two lines of the Sanskrit here, evidently interpolated by some Vedantist.

The elements, the conscious life, the mind,  
The unseen vital force, the nine strange gates  
Of the body, and the five domains of sense;  
Desire, dislike, pleasure and pain, and thought  
Deep-woven, and persistency of being;  
These all are wrought on Matter by the Soul!

Humbleness, truthfulness, and harmlessness,  
Patience and honour, reverence for the wise.  
Purity, constancy, control of self,  
Contempt of sense-delights, self-sacrifice,  
Perception of the certitude of ill  
In birth, death, age, disease, suffering, and sin;  
Detachment, lightly holding unto home,  
Children, and wife, and all that bindeth men;  
An ever-tranquil heart in fortunes good  
And fortunes evil, with a will set firm  
To worship Me—Me only! ceasing not;  
Loving all solitudes, and shunning noise  
Of foolish crowds; endeavours resolute  
To reach perception of the Utmost Soul,  
And grace to understand what gain it were  
So to attain,—this is true Wisdom, Prince!  
And what is otherwise is ignorance!

Now will I speak of knowledge best to know—  
That Truth which giveth man Amrit to drink,  
The Truth of HIM, the Para-Brahm, the All,  
The Uncreated; not *Asat*, not *Sat*,  
Not Form, nor the Unformed; yet both, and  
more;—

Whose hands are everywhere, and everywhere

Planted His feet, and everywhere His eyes  
Beholding, and His ears in every place  
Hearing, and all His faces everywhere  
Enlightening and encompassing His worlds.  
 Glorified in the senses He hath given,  
 Yet beyond sense He is ; sustaining all,  
 Yet dwells He unattached : of forms and modes  
 Master, yet neither form nor mode hath He ;  
 He is within all beings—and without—  
 Motionless, yet still moving ; not discerned  
 For subtlety of instant presence ; close  
 To all, to each ; yet measurelessly far !  
 Not manifold, and yet subsisting still  
 In all which lives ; for ever to be known  
 As the Sustainer, yet, at the End of Times,  
 He maketh all to end—and re-creates.  
The Light of Lights He is, in the heart of the  
Dark

Shining eternally. Wisdom He is  
And Wisdom's way, and Guide of all the wise,  
Planted in every heart.

So have I told  
 Of Life's stuff, and the moulding, and the lore  
 To comprehend. Whoso, adoring Me,  
 Perceiveth this, shall surely come to Me !

Know thou that Nature and the Spirit both  
 Have no beginning ! Know that qualities  
 And changes of them are by Nature wrought ;  
 That Nature puts to work the acting frame,  
 But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause  
 Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit, linked

To moulded matter, entereth into bond  
 With qualities by Nature framed, and, thus  
 Married to matter, breeds the birth again  
 In good or evil *yonis*.<sup>1</sup>

Yet is this—

Yea ! in its bodily prison !—Spirit pure,  
 Spirit supreme ; surveying, governing,  
 Guarding, possessing ; Lord and Master still  
 PURUSHA, Ultimate, One Soul with Me.

Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul  
PURUSHA, working through the qualities  
With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him !  
Whatever flesh he bears, never again  
Shall he take on its load. Some few there be  
 By meditation find the Soul in Self  
 Self-schooled ; and some by long philosophy  
 And holy life reach thither ; some by works :  
 Some, never so attaining, hear of light  
 From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it  
 Worshipping ; yea ! and those—to teaching true—  
 Overpass Death !

Wherever, Indian Prince !  
 Life is—of moving things, or things unmoved,  
 Plant or still seed—know, what is there hath grown  
 By bond of Matter and of Spirit : Know  
He sees indeed who sees in all alike.  
The living, lordly Soul ; the Soul Supreme,  
Imperishable amid the Perishing :  
 For, whoso thus beholds, in every place,  
 In every form, the same, one, Living Life,

<sup>1</sup> Wombs.

Doth no more wrongfulness unto himself,  
 But goes the highest road which brings to bliss.  
 Seeing, he sees, indeed, who sees that works  
 Are Nature's wont, for Soul to practise by  
 Acting, yet not the agent; sees the mass  
 Of separate living things—each of its kind—  
 Issue from One, and blend again to One:  
 Then hath he BRAHMA, he attains!

O Prince!

That Ultimate, High Spirit, Uncreate,  
 Unqualified, even when it entereth flesh  
 Taketh no stain of acts, worketh in nought!  
 Like to th' ethereal air, pervading all,  
 Which, for sheer subtlety, avoideth taint,  
 The subtle Soul sits everywhere, unstained:  
Like to the light of the all-piercing sun  
 [Which is not changed by aught it shines upon,]  
 The Soul's light shineth pure in every place;  
 And they who, by such eye of wisdom, see  
 How Matter, and what deals withit, divide;  
 And how the Spirit and the flesh have strife,  
Those wise ones go the way which leads to Life!

HERE ENDS CHAPTER XIII. OF THE

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ,

Entitled "*Kshetrakshetrainavibhāgayōg,*"  
 Or "*The Book of Religion by Separation of*  
*Matter and Spirit.*"

Sadva  
 Rajas  
 Tamass } No 3  
 Modes.

## CHAPTER XIV

*Krishna.* Yet farther will I open unto thee  
 This wisdom of all wisdoms, uttermost,  
 The which possessing, all My saints have passed  
 To perfectness. On such high verities  
 Reliant, rising into fellowship  
 With Me, they are not born again at birth  
 Of *Kalpas*, nor at *Pralayas* suffer change!

This Universe the womb is where I plant  
Seed of all lives! Thence, Prince of India, comes  
 Birth to all beings! Whoso, Kunti's Son!  
 Mothers each mortal form, Brahma conceives,  
 And I am He that fathers, sending seed!

*Sattwan*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*, so are named  
 The qualities of Nature, "Soothfastness,"  
 "Passion," and "Ignorance." These three  
bind down.

The changeless Spirit in the changeful flesh.  
 Whereof sweet "Soothfastness," by purity  
 Living un sullied and enlightened, binds  
 The sinless Soul to happiness and truth;  
 And Passion, being kin to appetite,  
 And breeding impulse and propensity,  
 Binds the embodied Soul, O Kunti's Son!  
 By tie of works. But Ignorance, begot

Of Darkness, blinding mortal men, binds down  
 Their souls to stupor, sloth, and drowsiness.  
 Yea, Prince of India! Soothfastness binds souls  
 In pleasant wise to flesh; and Passion binds  
 By toilsome strain; but Ignorance, which blots  
 The beams of wisdom, binds the soul to sloth.  
 Passion and Ignorance, once overcome,  
 Leave Soothfastness, O Bharata! Where this  
 With Ignorance are absent, Passion rules;  
 And Ignorance in hearts not good nor quick.  
 When at all gateways of the Body shines  
 The Lamp of Knowledge, then may one see well  
 Soothfastness settled in that city reigns;  
 Where longing is, and ardour, and unrest,  
 Impulse to strive and gain, and avarice,  
 Those spring from Passion—Prince!—engrained;  
 and where  
 Darkness and dulness, sloth and stupor are,  
 'Tis Ignorance hath caused them, Kuru Chief!

Moreover, when a soul departeth, fixed  
 In Soothfastness, it goeth to the place—  
 Perfect and pure—of those that know all Truth.  
 If it departeth in set habitude  
 Of Impulse, it shall pass into the world  
 Of spirits tied to works; and, if it dies  
 In hardened Ignorance, that blinded soul  
 Is born anew in some unlighted womb.

The fruit of Soothfastness is true and sweet;  
 The fruit of lusts is pain and toil; the fruit  
 Of Ignorance is deeper darkness. Yea!

For Light brings light, and Passion ache to have;  
 And gloom, bewilderments, and ignorance  
 Grow forth from Ignorance. Those of the first  
 Rise ever higher; those of the second mode  
 Take a mid place; the darkened souls sink back  
 To lower deeps, loaded with witlessness!

When, watching life, the living man perceives  
 The only actors are the Qualities,  
 And knows what rules beyond the Qualities,  
 Then is he come nigh unto Me!

The Soul,

Thus passing forth from the Three Qualities—  
 Whereby arise all bodies—overcomes  
 Birth, Death, Sorrow, and Age; and drinketh  
 deep  
 The undying wine of Amrit.

*Arjuna.* Oh, my Lord!  
 Which be the signs to know him that hath gone  
 Past the Three Modes? How liveth he? What  
 way  
 Leadeth him safe beyond the threefold Modes?

*Krishna.* He who with equanimity surveys  
Lustre of goodness, strife of passion, sloth  
Of ignorance, not angry if they are,  
Not wishful when they are not: he who sits  
A sojourner and stranger in their midst  
 Unruffled, standing off, saying—serene—  
 When troubles break, “These be the Qualities!”  
 He unto whom—self-centred—grief and joy  
 Sound as one word; to whose deep-seeing eyes  
 The clod, the marble, and the gold are one;

Whose equal heart holds the same gentleness  
 For lovely and unlovely things, firm-set,  
 Well-pleased in praise and dispraise; satisfied  
 With honour or dishonour; unto friends  
 And unto foes alike in tolerance;  
 Detached from undertakings,—he is named  
 Surmounter of the Qualities!

And such—  
 With single, fervent faith adoring Me,  
 Passing beyond the Qualities, conforms  
 To Brahma, and attains Me!

For I am  
 That whereof Brahma is the likeness! Mine  
 The Amrit is; and Immortality  
 Is mine; and mine perfect Felicity!

HERE ENDS CHAPTER XIV. OF THE  
 BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

*Entitled "Gunatrayavibhāgayōg,"*  
 Or "The Book of Religion by Separation from the  
 Qualities."

## CHAPTER XV

*Krishna.* Men call the Aśwattha,— the  
 Banyan-tree,—  
 Which hath its boughs beneath, its roots above,—  
 The ever-holy tree. Yea! for its leaves  
 Are green and waving hymns which whisper  
 Truth!  
 Who knows the Aśwattha, knows Veds, and all.

Its branches shoot to heaven and sink to earth,<sup>1</sup>  
 Even as the deeds of men, which take their birth  
 From qualities: its silver sprays and blooms,  
 And all the eager verdure of its girth,  
 Leap to quick life at kiss of sun and air,  
 As men's lives quicken to the temptings fair  
 Of wooing sense: its hanging rootlets seek  
 The soil beneath, helping to hold it there,

As actions wrought amid this world of men  
 Bind them by ever-tightening bonds again.  
 If ye knew well the teaching of the Tree,  
 What its shape saith; and whence it springs;  
 and, then

<sup>1</sup> I do not consider the Sanskrit verses here—which are somewhat freely rendered—"an attack on the authority of the Vedas," with Mr Davies, but a beautiful lyrical episode, a new "Parable of the fig-tree."

How it must end, and all the ills of it,  
The axe of sharp Detachment ye would whet,  
And cleave the clinging snaky roots, and lay  
This Aśwattha of sense-life low,—to set

New growths upspringing to that happier sky,—  
Which they who reach shall have no day to die,  
Nor fade away, nor fall—to Him, I mean,  
FATHER and FIRST, Who made the mystery

Of old Creation; for to Him come they  
From passion and from dreams who break away;  
Who part the bonds constraining them to flesh,  
And,—Him, the Highest, worshipping alway—

No longer grow at mercy of what breeze  
Of summer pleasure stirs the sleeping trees,  
What blast of tempest tears them, bough and stem:  
To the eternal world pass such as these!

Another Sun gleams there! another Moon!  
Another Light,—not Dusk, nor Dawn, nor  
Noon—  
Which they who once behold return no more;  
They have attained My rest, life's Utmost boon!

When, in this world of manifested life,  
The undying Spirit, setting forth from Me,  
Taket on form, it draweth to itself  
From Being's storehouse,—which containeth  
all,—  
Senses and intellect. The Sovereign Soul

Thus entering the flesh, or quitting it,  
Gathers these up, as the wind gathers scents,  
Blowing above the flower-beds. Ear and Eye,  
And Touch and Taste, and Smelling, these it  
takes,—  
Yea, and a sentient mind;—linking itself  
To sense-things so.

The unenlightened ones  
Mark not that Spirit when he goes or comes,  
Nor when he takes his pleasure in the form,  
Conjoined with qualities; but those see plain  
Who have the eyes to see. Holy souls see  
Which strive thereto. Enlightened, they perceive  
That Spirit in themselves; but foolish ones,  
Even though they strive, discern not, having  
hearts  
Unkindled, ill-informed!

Know, too, from Me  
Shineth the gathered glory of the suns  
Which lighten all the world: from Me the moons  
Draw silvery beams, and fire fierce loveliness.  
I penetrate the clay, and lend all shapes  
Their living force; I glide into the plant—  
Root, leaf, and bloom—to make the woodlands  
green  
With springing sap. Becoming vital warmth,  
I glow in glad, respiring frames, and pass,  
With outward and with inward breath, to feed  
The body by all meats.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I omit a verse here, evidently interpolated.