

SONGS OF THE SOUL
SWAMI YOGANANDA

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SONGS OF THE SOUL

By
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PUBLISHED BY SAT SANGA
30 HUNTINGTON AVENUE, BOSTON
1923

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Everett Printing Service, Boston

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PART I

CONSECRATION

At Thy feet I come to shower
All my full heart's rhyming flower,
Of Thy breath born,
By Thy love grown,
With my lonely seeking found,
By hands Thou gavest picked and bound;—
For Thee the sheaves
Within these leaves:—
Of my life's season
The choicest flowers,
With petals soulful spread,
Their humble perfume shed;—
Hands folded now I come to give
What's Thine—receive!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

SOUL IS MARCHING ON

The shining stars are sunk in darkness,
The weary sun is dead at night,
The moon's soft smile doth fade anon,—
But still my soul is marching on.

The grinding wheel of Time has crushed
Full many a life of moon and stars
And many a brightly smiling morn;—
But still my soul is marching on.

The flowers bloomed, then hid in gloom,
The bounty of the trees did cease,
Colossal men have come and gone;—
But still my soul is marching on.

The aeons one by one are flying,—
The arrows one by one are lost,
Dimly, slowly life is fading,—
But still my soul is marching on.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Darkness, death, and failures vied,—
To block my path they fiercely tried;
My fight with jealous Nature's strong;—
But still my soul is marching on.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

THEY ARE THINE

I have nothing to offer Thee,
For all things are Thine;
I grieve not that I can not give,
For nothing is mine, for nothing is mine:
Here I lay at Thy feet
My limbs, my life, my thoughts and speech,
For they are Thine, for they are Thine.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

THOU IN ME

When I smile
Thou dost smile through me;
When I cry
In me Thou dost weep,
When I wake
Thou greetest me,
When I walk
Thou art with me.
Thou dost smile and weep,
Thou dost wake and walk
Like me; my Likeness Thou:
But when I dream,
Thou art awake;
When I stumble,
Thou art sure;
When I die
Thou art my life.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

THY CALL

When lost I roam
I hear Thy call to home—
In whistling breeze
Or rustling leaves of trees.

When drunk in folly
I wander gaily
By the sandy shore,—
Who wakes me with a sudden roar?

When clouds do spread a veil
My precious joy to steal,—
Who tears the sheet away
To burst in redd'ning ray?

When dark night blinds,
And my movements binds,—
Who shows my path and th' dark beguiles
With mildly mocking moonlit smiles?

SONGS OF THE SOUL

The million starry stares,
The waking sunny glares,
The river's ever-murmuring air
Thy sure and silent call declare.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

ONE THAT'S EVERYWHERE

The tree sighs,
The wind plays,
The sun smiles,
The river moves;
Feigning dread the sky is blushing red
At the creeping sun's gentle tread.
The earth changes robes
Of black and star-lit night
For dazzling silver light.
Dame Nature loves herself t' array
In changing seasons' colors gay;
The murmuring brook e'er tries to tell
In lispings sounds so well
Of the hidden thought
By inner spirit brought.
The birds aspire to sing
Of things unknown that swell within.
But man first speaks in language true
Both loud and clear, with meaning new,
Of what all else before
Had failed to full declare:—
Of One That's everywhere.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

WHISPERS

Leaves do sigh,
They can not speak
Of One That 's high.
The birds do scream,
They can not sing
What in their bosom springs.
The beasts do howl
In sadness foul,
They can never say as nigh
As doth in their feelings lie.
Since I can sing or say or cry
I will mighty try
To pour out whispers Thine,—one and each
That to heart doth softly reach.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

IN ME

Hello, Yonder Tree!
Thou dost breathe in me, in me;
O Fast-footed River!
Thy shining meandering quiver
Declares itself
Through myself;
Thou dost shine through me, in me.
O Huge Himalaya
With snowy sovereign white regalia!
In my mind doth rest thy throne—
 Thy home
 In me, in me.
O Ocean! endless to the eye
In boundless stretches thou dost lie;
But to me thou art small:
A tiny drop upon a ball,—
Thou art in me, in me.
O Endless Sky!

So vast to eye,—
In some brighter age or day
When I'll cast my cares away

SONGS OF THE SOUL

On thee will sail my better boat, bright and gay,
On to thy shore
To find, I'm sure,
Thy border land — in me.
O Distant Heav'ns!
O Secret One and Angels Seven!
In my sphere you all I see,
In me, in me, in me!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

TOO NEAR

I stood in silence
To worship Thee
In the temple large
With blue etheric dome,
Lighted by the spangling stars,
Shining with the lustrous moon,
Tapestried with the golden clouds,
Where reigns no dogma loud.
I prayed and waited
For Thee to come. I cried,—
Thou didst not come.
I will wait no more,
Nor send my feeble prayer
Footsteps Thine to hear,—
They are not heard without,
In me Thou art,—too near.

EVASION

When I do almost see Thee
Thou dost suddenly vanish;
When Thou art almost trapped in me
I find Thee gone.
When I think I have seized Thee
Thou dost most escape.
How long this hide and seek, and play?
I am weary with the toil of the day;
Still I may brook this evasion Thine
If 'tis for a tiny flash of time,
That in the end I may see
Thy face with doubled joy and mind more free.

THY CRUEL SILENCE

I prayed to Thee
But Thou wert mute,
At Thy door I knocked,
Thou answered'st not,
I gave my tears
To soft'n Thy heart;
In cruel silence
Didst Thou watch.
But now I learn
The way to earn
Attention Thine:
I'll weep and pray
Unceasingly—
In cruel silence—
Till time is old,
And earth grows cold,
Till life doth fail,
Till body fall;
Then if Thou speak'st
And dost wish me peace;—
Still I will pray and weep
In cruel silence deep.

I AM HERE

I roamed alone by ocean's shore
And watched: the wrestling, brawling waves did
 roar
Alive with Thy own restless Life.
Thy angry mood and ripply quiver,
Thy wrathful vastness made me shiver;
I turned away from heated strife.—
A kindly waving tree
Caught my roving eye so free
To comfort me with gentler look sublime
That I did feel was Thine.—
I saw the gaugeless mystic sky,
And down its valley dark I ran to pry
At Thee, and play with Thee;—
I failed to find Thy hiding Body,
Yet I felt everywhere
That Thou wert always near,
Playing at hide and seek with me,—
Receding when I almost touched Thee
As to find Thee I groped blindfold—
In ignorant darkness old.

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

I left my search in dim despair;
Thou Royal, Sly Eluder!—
In haste I hied away from Thee
And I retired within me:
When lo! some Unseen Hand
Did quickly snatch away the all-black band
That did my eyes enfold
That were so numb and cold,
And in troth I felt quite keen:
Someone beside me stood unseen
And whispered to me, cool and clear,
“Hello, playmate, I am here!”

WHERE I AM

Not the lordly domes on high
With tall heads daring clouds and sky,
Nor alabaster shining floors,
Nor the rich organ's awesome roar,
Nor rainbowed windows' beauty quaint
With colossal chronicles told in paint,
Nor torch nor incense' curling soar,
Nor gay-dressed children of the choir,
Nor well-planned sermon,
Nor loud-tongued prayer
Can call Me there.
The richly carven door,
Through which all pomp and pride pour,
I deign not through to go;—
But still I come Incognito.
The stony, polished altar
Or narrow builded sermon seat
Too narrow seems to hold
My large, large Body for retreat.
A humble magnet-call,

SONGS OF THE SOUL

A whisper by the brook
On grassy altar small—
There I have my nook:—
A crumbling temple shrine,
A little place unseen,
Unwatched, unhedged,
Is where I humbly rest and lean:
A sacred heart
Tear washed and true
Doth draw me with its rue.
I take no bribe
Of strength or wealth
Of caste or church or scribe,
Of fame or faith or festive breath,
But wail for truth;
And e'er the broken distant heart
Doth draw Me e'en to heathen lands,
And My help in silence I impart.

ONE FRIEND

Many clouds do race to hide Thee—
Of friends and wealth and fame—
And yet through mist of tears I see
Appear Thy Golden Name.
Each time my father, mother, friends
Do loudly claim they did me tend,
I wake from sleep to sweetly hear
That Thou alone didst help me here.

FLOWER OFFERING

A goblet of my folly-blood
Is humbly set beneath Thy Petal Feet,—
 O, Lotus Sweet!
I've stood with tears seeking Thine angry thirst
to quench,—
 With sandal sweet, with motely cos-
 tumed flowers,
 With devotion's perfume from my heart
 of heart,
 With myrrh of constancy my soul
 imparts—
To worship Thee. Unheard is my lay,—
And for naught I pray,—
But with sleepless care
I'll lay my flower there.

THE TATTERED DRESS

I see Thy Magic Hands of Death
Snatch away in stealth
And change the tattered dress,
Which fondly men caress
With blind attachment,
Into soul-sheen habiliment,—
This newly given robe—
That shines with all the beauties of Thy globe.

THY SECRET THRONE

Behind the screen
Of all things seen
How dost Thou hide,—
Elude the tide
Of marching human eyes,
That 'round Thee rushing hies?
'Twill not be long
Ere will be known
Thy hiding place
By children with Thine eyes and grace.

Sage science splits
Each atom knit
By Thee, to find apace
Thy hiding place.
Is heart of atom,—electron,
Thy secret throne?
Deep we bore
To find Thy art, and lore
Of doings all sublime;
E'er hidden betimes.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Yet Thy abode
Seems far remote;
'Tis still to find
With deeper mind.

METHOUGHT I HEARD A VOICE

Singing by the rill
My voice doth thrill
With echoes of my thought
By fancies brought.

I wandered in my play
On faerie fields away;
I stopped to muse, rejoice;—
Methought I heard a voice!

The flowers of that field
Of wondrous hues,—perfumed
With essence of the heart—did yield
Delicious joys undreamed.

Behind the thin bright veil
Of scented feelings
I saw some fitful flash:
Some Glistening Presence rush.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

I tiptoe stood,
Listening, watching;
I poured my heart,
Listening, watching.

A MILK-WHITE SAIL

A milk white, tiny sail
Skims fast across my sea; I wail
The threatening storms to see;—
But my bark glides free toward the lee,
So near the shore
And safe from the angry roar.

THE HARVEST

Drawn by joy sublime
I watch each harvest time,
When the sky glows red with ripe sunbeams;
Oh, ne'er before had I found Thy ploughing teams.
The oriole's painted, glowing breast is shown,
Yet Thy brush, O Painter, ne'er is known.
The north star timely leaps,
And its nocturnal watch unfailing keeps;
The sun and seasons Thy house supervise,
Yet Thou, O Master, seemest not to rise!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

THE SPLINTERS OF THY LOVE

The splinters of Thy love
Lie strewn in many a heart:
The little fragments of Thy love,
Descended from far above,
I find spread here and there, and charm'd I start
To seize all and with care collect.
I feel as I reflect
That I have certes seen somewhere
Thy whole unbroken love that's everywhere;
And with devotion strong
I weld my varied collection
Of tiny bits of parental, friendly love in one
To match it with Thy own.

FOR THEE AND THINE

I love to seek
What's mine.
I think, I act—
I work with tact
To gain what's mine.

I pass by th' river
In joyous quiver
To soothe this mind of mine.
I smell the flowers
To cheer the hours,—
I love to have what's mine.

I sip the gold sunshine
To warm this flesh of mine.
I drink the fresh and flowing air,
For me I lift my prayer,
I try to rake
The world to take
All things for me and mine.—

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Those dark days are gone,—
The old time 's flown,
So lived for me and mine;—
In new-born light
I see what's right,—
To live for Thee and Thine.

PART II

WAKE, WAKE MY SLEEPING HUNGER,
WAKE!

When tables large of earth and moon and meteors,
Of brooks and rills, of shining ether ore
Are laid with wondrous One Nectar,
Stolen from nature's nooks by lars,—
Do thou thy sullen sleep forsake;—
Wake, wake my sleeping Hunger, wake!

Through diverse paths of aeons thou hast cried,
For a morsel of manna begged and tried;
But now thou sleepest, dazed and tired, on leer
Undried lie drops of fresh-wept tears
While nectar touches thy lips,—partake,—
Wake, wake my sleeping Hunger, wake!

This unquenched hunger old of mine
Did eat all food and yet did pine,—
Was starved with surfeit and it sought
How might its yearn'd-for food be got.

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

The food for which thou wept'st awaits,—par-
take!—

Wake, wake my sleeping Hunger, wake!

Friends and wealth and fancy's rarest treat,
Posthumous wishes sprung from deathless roots
so sweet

Did fail to feed thy heart's true crave
And burned with thousand flaming waves
The nectar sought for seeks thee now;—par-
take,—

Wake, wake my sleeping Hunger, wake!

My hunger burned and wept to drink
The mysteries by life's bare brink,—
Ambrosial fount that sleep beneath
The mystery caves on soil of truth:
Weep more drops, nay streams—oceans—of tears,
Thy duty is for peace to weep; thy only care
To seek thy work; and all thy food
Be what doth nourish thy mood;
Thy work is done, thy nectar's here,—
Quench, quench the eternal ache!—
Wake, wake my sleeping Hunger, wake!

ETERNITY

Oh, will that day arrive
When I shall ceaselessly ask, and drive
Eternal questions
Into Thine ear, O Eternity, and await solution
As to how weak weeds do grow and stand unbent,
Unshak'n beneath the trampling current;
How the storm did wreck titanic things, rooted
trees,
And quick disturbed the mighty seas;
How the first spark blinked, and the first tree,
The first goldfish, the first blue bird so free
And the first crooning baby
In this wonder house made their visit and entry.
They come, I see;
Their growth alone I watch;
Thy Cosmic Moulding Hand
That secret works on land and seas
I wish to seize,
O Eternity!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

VANISHING BUBBLES

Many unknown bubbles float and flow,
Many ripples dance by me
And melt away in sea.
I like to know, ah, whence they come or whither
go—

The rain drops and dies,
My thoughts play wild and vanish quick,
The red clouds melt in skies;
I stake my purse or slave all life their motive
still to seek.

Some friends, though not their love,
Some dearest thoughts I ne'er would lose, I said,
And last night's surest stars, seen just above,—
All, all are fled.

The crowds of lilies, the linnet,
Perfumed blossoms, honey-mad bees,
Did meet on yonder bowered trees;
Now the lonesome field alone is left.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

The bubbles, lilies, friends, dramatic thoughts—
They all their part did play and entertain,
And now beneath the grassy screen, to change
 their displayed coats,
They quiet, concealed remain.

VARIETY

I sought for twins
I could not find;
I search my mind,
No twins have seen.

They seem alike,
Man and man, beast and brute,
Yet no faces two are like;
Ne'er the same song sang the lute.

Ne'er two hearts are same.
I bow to each new form and name—
Variety complete,
Through forms infinite.

I wish that I were you and he,
And all at once what I would be;
Oh, could I wear at will all terrene minds,
Like robes of newer kinds!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Then would I flash forth varied smiles,
Or languorous walk in sorrow robed,
Or charm with sparkling wiles
And time beguile;

Or march with martial songs,
To right all wordly wrongs;
Or wear a powerful prophet mind
And into dust earth's sorrows grind;

Or wear the youthful hermit's heart,
To scatter love and strength impart.

I'd wear each heart
And don each will and smiles and spend my pelf
To try all noble minds and thoughts
And take what suits myself.

With brain-born nixes,
With marsh-marauding hopes and pixies,
With every elfin thought that timid trod on mind
I'd friendship find.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

To soul of the New in things
My spirit homage sings.
I would not taste the same nectar,
Nor twice drink from th' Immortals' jar.

Thy presence, O Eternity,
Show Thou in endless variety;
Yet change not me,
Though various my costumes be.

THE BLOOD OF ROSE

I tore the rose,
I bled its slender stem,
Its petals quivered
And I shivered;
Yet I dared to rob its smell!
My heart did break and tell,
"Thy hands are soiled," and mute I stood,
Thus self-condemned and stained with rose's blood.
But I know now,
I love the rose
More than its wealth, and vow
Ne'er its love to desecrate or lose.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

AT THE ROOTS OF ETERNITY

With sailing clouds and plunging breeze,
With swaying trees and youthful, stormy seas,
With whirling planets I wildly play
In some absorbing way
But not alway;—
At close of day
I lay
My eager hands at the roots of Eternity
To seize and own its nectar free.

UNDYING BEAUTY

They did their best
And they are blest,—
The sap, the shoots,
The little leaves and roots;
The benign breath,
The touch of light,—
All worked in amity
To grow the rose's beauty.
Watch its splendor,
Its undying grandeur,
The Infinite Face
That peeps through its little case;—
Watch not in grief
Its falling petals or its brief
Sojourn here;—
For its career
Done, its duty ends;
Toward the Immortals' home it tends.
The sap dried,
The summer petals fled,

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Its body pines;
Yet its death 's divine;
Through death and spurns
Its deathless glory won:
The rose is dead,—
Its beauty lives instead.

THE NOBLE NEW

Sing songs that none have sung,
Think thoughts that in brain have never rung,
Walk in paths that none have trod,
Weep tears as none have shed for Lord,
Love all with love that none have felt, and brave
The battle of life with strength unchained,
Give peace to all to whom none other gave,
Claim him your own who is e'er disclaimed.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

PROTECTING THORNS

The charm of the blushing rose
Hides its stinging thorns beneath;
Yet without the wounds from those
Thou could'st not snatch its wealth with stealth,—
The rose with thorns unstained with blood,
The rose that sprang from earthly sod.

In her defense the thorns do sting,
To keep thee out by thorny ring;
Yet the perfumed petals' show
Thy drowsing soul doth wake and draw:
If thou dost love the beauty alone
Why would'st thou rush to bleed from prickly
thorns?

TATTERED GARMENT

Oh, sing no plaintive lay
When at last my earthly raiment dies,
Nor let ashes tell thy tears where it lies;
Oh, blow my tattered garment's dust away!

The dust clean washed,
The hidden gold beneath will show
Itself anew all bright and brushed,
And shine somewhere aglow,—

And wait with luring lustre
For some home-lorn soul
To show the path with lightening glimmer
From darkness on to goal.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

IN STILLNESS DARK

Hark!

In stillness dark,
When noisy dreams have slept,
The house is gone to rest,
And busy life
Doth cease from strife,—
The soul in pity soft doth kiss
The truant flesh to soothe, and speak
With mind-transcending grace
Its soundless voice of peace.

Through transient fissures deep
In walls of sleep
Take thou a gentle peep;
Nor droop, nor stare,
But watch with care
The sacred glare,
Ablaze and clear,

SONGS OF THE SOUL

In golden glee
Flash past thee
So nigh.
Ashamed, Apollo droops in dread
To see that lustre spread
Through boundless reach of sky.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

NATURE'S NATURE

Away, ye muses, all away,
Away with songs of finch and fay,
Away the jaundiced sight
That conflagrates the firefly's light
To bonfire,—
That sets ablaze at once
Your musing's burning lamps;
That ornaments with rhymes
The penury-stricken looks betimes;
That over-clothes the Logic lord
With fancy-swollen words.
Away, the partial love
That 'boldens nature to sit above
Her Maker!

This day I fasten eye-lid doors,
With absence wax my ears,
With langour all congeal my tongue, my touch,
my tears,
That I myself may pore

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Upon the things behind, ahead
Of the darkness 'round me spread.
I lock Dame Nature out
With all her fickle rout:
Somewhere here
In the darkness drear
I myself with cheer
My course will steer

In the path
E'er sought by all:
Its magnet-call
I hear.

Not here, not here
Apollo would his burning chariot steer;
Nor Dian dares to peep
Into the sacred silence deep.

Not here, not here
The mounts nor rebel waves, nor far or near,
Can make me full of fear, nor evermore
Their dreadful grandeur adore.

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Not here, not here
The soft capricious wiles of flowers,
Nor swarming storm clouds' sweeping terror,
Nor doomsday's thunder drear
Dismantling earth and stars,
The cosmic beauties all to mar;
 Dishevelling of trees
 And light-haired skies,
 Nor nature's murderous mutiny
 Nor man's all-powerful destiny
 Can touch me here.

Not here, not here—
Through mind's strong iron bars
No gods nor goblins, no men nor nature
Without my pass dare enter.
I look behind, ahead,
And on naught but darkness tread.
In wrath I strike, and set it ablaze
With the immortal spark of thought,
By the friction process brought

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Of concentration
And distraction;—
The darkness burns
With a million tongues,
And now I spy
All past, all distant things as nigh.

I smile serene
As I expose to gaze
In wisdom's brilliant blaze
All charms of the Hidden Home Unseen:
The Home of Nature's birth,
The planets' moulding hearth,
The factory whence all forms or fairies start,
The bards, colossal minds and hearts,
The gods and all,
And all, and all!

Away, Away
With all the lightsome lays;—
Oh, I'll now portray
In humble way,

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

And try to lisp half-truths
Of wordless charms of Thee Unseen
To whom Nature her nature owes, and sheen.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

MY KINSMEN

In spacious hall of trance I spied—
Aglow with million dazzling lights,
Tapestried with the snowy cloud —
My kinsmen all, lowly, proud;

The banquet great with music rolls,
The drum of Om* in measure falls,
The hosts, in many ways arrayed,
Some plain, some gorgeous dress displayed.

Around the various tables large
Of earth and moon and sun and stars,
The countless mute, and noisy guests
Observed Dame Nature's feast with zest.

The tiny-eyed and shiny sands,
Thirsty, drank of ocean's life:
I well remember once I brawled
For a sip of sea, with kinsmen sands.

*Cosmic vibration.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Yes, I know those old dame rocks
Who rocked me on their stony laps
When I a tiny baby tree
Did chafe to run with winds so free.

The green-attired friends I know,
With rose and lily buds aglow;
I once adorned a kingly breast,
Lost life, returned to mother dust.

I know the ruby redbreast dear,
My blood in it once flowed so clear;
I smiled in diamonds, gleaming bright,
I danced in Roentgen rays of light.

A ray of friendship from my heart
In diamond and ruby joy did start,
The bright ones smiled, the ruby wept
To meet their long-lost friend at last.

The soul of gold in yellow gown,
The soul of silver whitely shone,—
Bestowed on me maternal smiles
That told they knew me long erewhile.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

The lark, the cuckoo, the pheasant sweet,
The deer, the lamb, the lion great,
The shark and monsters of the sea!
In love and peace all greeted me.

The leafy fingers, arms outspread,
Caressed me when a tiny bird,
And fed me with ambrosial fruit
That drew its life from immortal root.

When atoms and the star-dust sprang,
When Vedas, Bible, Koran sang,—
I joined each choir; their long-past thrilling songs
Still echo in my soul in accents strong.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

OM

Whence, Oh, this soundless roar doth come
When drowseth matter's dreary drum?—
The booming Om* on bliss' shore breaks;
All heaven, all earth, all body shakes.

Cords bound to flesh are broken all,
Vibrations vile do fly and fall;
The hustling heart, the boasting breath
No more disturb the yogi's health.

The house is lulled in darkness soft,
Dim, shiny light is seen aloft,
Subconscious dreams have gone to bed.
'Tis then that one doth hear Om's tread.

The bumble bee doth hum along,
Baby Om, hark! sings his song;
Krishna's flute is sounding sweet,
'Tis time the watery God to meet.

* Cosmic vibration.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

God of fire is now singing,
Om,—Om—his harp is ringing;
God of prana† is now sounding,
Wondrous bell of soul resounding.

Upward climb the living tree, ‡
Hear the sound of ethereal sea;
Marching mind doth homeward hie
To join the Christmas Symphony.

† Vibration of life energy.

‡ Spinal cord

SONGS OF THE SOUL

MYSTERY

Burst, inky cloud, do burst,
Fling open thy fathomless gloom!
In Thy dark chamber must
A million mysteries loom.

Heartless, staring sky!
Make quick reply
To aching query of my straining eye,
Show what thou hidest and why;—
The ceaseless surging thoughts
Go mocking, dancing by,
I deign to know their lot.
Someone did throw me free
To battle all alone in this rough sea.
Rudderless I drift,
Stranded on shoals my boat could n't shift.

I'll burst the clouds, I'll clean the shoals,
I'll rip the sky in twain,

SONGS OF THE SOUL

I'll break my heart,
With question crush my brain—
I'll ask and pray,
Will beg or steal
To find the friends long stolen away,
To know their woe or weal.

This wondrous day,
Stage set for play
By Unseen Hand,—
The players drop
From no-man's land,
Then vanish away or stop
With changing scenes of birth and death.
 The drama's on
 The actors play anon
 Yet know not why they play
 This glorious day!

SONGS OF THE SOUL

SILENCE

The earth, the planets play
In and through the sun-born rays
In majesty profound.

Umpire Time
In silence sublime
Doth watch
This cosmic match.

The Author of the great game
Assumes no spoken name;—
With boundless poise
He doth His will without a noise,
Ungrateful moods ignoring,
Unkindness all forgiving.

Truth clearly speaks to all,
But speaks not loud;
They hear its call
Who noises enthrall.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

The voice in threatening silence speaks
To those who error's path do seek.
 The tiger may be tamed,
 Failures' talons can be maimed,
 All friends forsaking reason's way be
 gained,
 Unruly nature trained
 By powerful silence o' unspoken words,
 If in Truth maintained.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

IT'S ALL UNKNOWN

Each rose-bud dawning day,
In hourly opening petal-rays
Doth fair display
Its hidden beauty.

The petal-hours, unfolding smile,
My drooping, lagging heart beguile.
Day spreads its petals all
Of novel hopes and joys withal.
The rose-buds' there,—
“Today” is here;
In time the rose-bud blooms,—
While lazy day often glooms.
Forsake thy sleep
O, Lazy Day,
Open Thou with thy full-bloom ray
To chase my gathered gloom away!
The rose-bud opened,
The day now smiled
In fullness fine;

Still I opine
'Tis all unknown
Just why the rose was blown,
And the day was drowned in night
Then raised again to light
Of glorious dawn,
So swiftly marching o'er the lawn!

AT THE FOUNTAIN OF SONG

Dig, dig, yet deeper dig
In the stony earth for fount of song
Dig, dig, yet deeper dig
In soil of muse's heart along.

Some sparkle is seen,
Some bubble is heard:
'T is then unseen,—
The bubble is dead.

The watery sheen
Again doth show;
Dig, dig, still deeper e'en
Till the bubble song again would grow.

I hear the song,
I see its body bright,—
Yet cannot touch—I long
To seize it now and drink its liquid light.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Bleed, O my Soul, do amply bleed
To dig yet deeper, —dig!

I touch the holy fount,— rejoice;
I drink its bubble voice
My throat's ablaze,—
I want to drink and drink always;
The sphere's aflame
With my thirst as I came:
So dig, dig, yet deeper dig
Though it seems thou canst not dig!

I thought with heart aglow
All, all, I had drunk this day,
And idly looked for more, deep, deep,
 below,—
But lo! undrunk, untouched,
There the fountain lay.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

THE EVER NEW

Newer joys adorn the day,
Brighter burn through livelong night
The stars with purer light,
Brighter thoughts do brace my voice,
Newer words await my choice,
With heart of th' new I 'll sing my lay.
Wings of thoughts would ceaseless beat
The sky of time, and race to meet
Thy distant throne
That somewhere is alone.

Each and every day
Men choir some song
Not with thoughts the same but a changing throng
Of newer ones that make Thy greater lay.

The bubbling joy
Of each little boy,
Each brew of friendship still
I steal, and with them fill

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Mine cup of aged heart
With ceaseless thrills to start.
Morrow each and each today
With newer love I will sing my lay.
The voices same do sing the lay
In temple church and fane:
But I deign ne'er to hear
The strains all stained with age-old tear;
My fountain flows anew today,
With newer tears will flow my lay.
In the same old church
I'll newly sing and search,
In the same old sermon
For unending truths and newer reason;
In the same old organ will I seek
The newer hopes of new-born week.

Every day, oh, every day
The bell will ring a new Sunday,
And bathed in Thy beaming ray
With newer thoughts I'll sing my lay.

THE EVER-TRODDEN PATH

This ever-trodden path
Where travelers all of earth
Do walk in joyous haste
Or slothful sorrow's state
I walk and wonder,—
In truth or blunder.
The path is cleft
To right and left,
In front, behind;—
The diverse ways I find,
Bewildered am I—
As baffling mazes do they lie;
 Still, they say
 There's a royal way
For all—the right, the error-wed,—
 'Tis the sub-way path of ruby red
 Which far beneath lies hid
 For eager eyes to lead
 Straight on the feet
To where all paths do meet.

THE HUMAN MIND

I love to roam alone, unseen,
In cities of the human mind,
Untrodden by the crooked thoughts
 Vile-born,—unkind.

Incognito I wish to wander,
To living lanes my thoughts surrender
With simple wish to know and learn
The straight nice paths and danger turns.

I wish to roam in mazy lanes
Of dark and brighter thoughts,
With love to all and harm to none,
With better message fraught.

I'd love to broaden narrow lanes
Of selfish crooked thoughts
With my love's true-building brain
That I've within me got.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

I long to soar so high
That I at once may spy
The narrow alleys, broader roads
Of human thoughtful moods.

THE CUP OF ETERNITY

The traveler of the endless track
All weary, thirsty, sore doth seek
To quench the quenchless mortal thirst,
The wordless worry of his heart.

He spies a cup —a little orb,
He tries to drink with joyful sob,
He stands aback, the cup sets down,—
On the contents scant his heart did frown.

Yet up he lifts the cup again,
But fears his baneful thirst to flame.
When, hark! a voice of counsel deep
Forbids him this to soil with lip.

The cup so small to mortal eye,—
The cup whose depth the wise can spy
Dries up, alas! if mortals drink;
Perennial fount, the soulful think.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Now, in the little cup he'll see
The unsounded deep of eternity;
For ageless hours and endless days
The ambrosial drink he'll taste and praise.

The deathly thirst so fleshly born
Ne'er shall parch his soul again;
The cup he'll drink, but not the bane,
To quench his thirst, and bliss attain.
And vain would mighty north winds try
Compassion's gathered tears to dry.

A MIRROR NEW

I bring to you
A mirror new—
A glass of introspection clear,
That illusions shows and sooty fear
That spots thy mind.
Thou wilt find
This mirror new
 Would also show all true
 The “Inner You,”
That’s veiled in flesh
And doth ne’er appear.
Each night consult afresh
Thy mirror friend and clear away
The dust that gathers each day.

THE SPELL

Ah, this old, old nectar of night
Brewed below by Sun God bright!—
Let every little fleshly cell
That's tired and thirsty drink it well.
By soothing spell of sleep eject
All aches that heart and brain infect!
The spell quick marching on
Falls on me now so warm,
And robs my mind
Of linked thoughts, to bind
Me prisoner in its charm.

PART III

MY NATIVE LAND

The friendly sky,
Inviting shades of banian tree,
The holy Ganges flowing by,—
How can I forget thee!

I love the waving corn
Of India's fields so bright,
Oh, better than those Heav'nly grown
By deathless gods of might.

My soul's broad love so grand
Was born here first below,—
In my own native land,
On India's sunny soil aglow.

I love thy breeze,
I love thy moon,
I love thy hills and seas,
In thee I wish to cease, or swoon.

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Thou taught'st me first to love
Thy sky, the stars, the God above;
So my first homage meets,
O India, at thy feet!

From thee I now have learn'd to see,
To love all lands alike as thee;
I bow to thee, my native land,
The Mother of my love so grand.

ON COMING TO THE NEW-OLD LAND—
AMERICA

Sleeping memories
Of friends once more to be
Did greet me—sailing o'er the sea,—
 Sensing my coming
The Pilgrim Land to adore.
The distant sleeping shore
Lay in the twinkling night,
Dim through the vanished light,
 The breeze wafted strong
 Strange thoughts
 That my brain did throng,
 Hopes sweet and richly wrought.

The raven-winged gloom did perch
On the portals of my mind and search
My soul, my strength to awe;
 Yet crowds with joy oh, then, I saw

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Of phantom friends,
Now come to lend
Their cheer,
And end my fear!

THE TOILER'S LAY

From school of life,
From bossy duty's binding day,
From hours of dollar-strife
I wish I were a run-away!

From chasing worry hound
I'll fly one day,
From crowds and throngs around
I wish I were a run-away!

From greedy food
That steals its way,
From luring dainties' tempting mood
I wish I were a run-away!

From homely cups and chairs and couch
The call of grassy-bed today
My heart doth snatch;—
I wish I were a run-away!

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

From nature's given cup,
My hollow hands, I'll drink
At the streamlet's bounteous brink;
With finger forks I'll eat the meat
Of fresh plucked fruits from trees, my seat
All snug beneath the shady trees,
Enliv'n'd by birds and bumble bees,
Fanned by mothering air,—
From warmth and tear
I'll bathe my weary mind
In new-made joyous day:
Away dish-washing, cups and saucers, all away!
For just a day
I wish I were a run-away!

CITY DRUM

'Tis morn
The rolling wheels are on
Of a marching world
So strong.

I love to be roused
From a silent sleep
By the early hum
Of the active city drum.

The drum beats
To loudly greet
All those heroes true
That would die or do,—
To meet the morning's foe
Of worry or of woe
With a dauntless smile,
And thus success beguile

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Únto the happy camp
Where peace e'er burns its lamp.
The city's drum
With its noisy hum
Announces true and strong
The world is marching on.

MOHAWK TRAIL

Welcomed by a fresh and smiling day,
Usher'd by trees benign that lay
To shade our bodies from the jealous sun,
With rubber shoes pressing on asphalt road,
With softly humming noise we rode
Through Mohawk Trail where Adam lies.
Unlike all other joyful rides
When mind with sameness was dulled sometimes
and did abide
The time and common scenes in passive mood,
My mind was now so full, bright and good.
A strange, unknown, unthought, new thrill
Did steal o'er me in soothing sweep so still.
I raced with wind and scattered smiles
That played with sunshine, spread for miles.
My secret hoarded joy in vault of soul
I extravagantly did spend withal
To buy new nature's gaudy scenes
That one hasty, racing peddler brought me in.

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

My spirit hemm'd in city's narrow walls
Was free once more; all nature sent a joyous call:
The waving leaves of trees, the babbling rill,
The impatient wind, sober skies and hill.

PART III

FOREWORD

The eleventh chapter of the Bhagavadgita, of which "Vision of Visions" is a lyrical rendition interwoven with an interpretation of its spiritual significance, is the consummation of the teachings of the Book. It describes how the Lord Krishna, the Warrior-Prophet, blessed Arjuna, his devotee, with the great yogic vision of the cosmic drama of life and death, enacted on the Infinite Body of the Lord by Himself. Arjuna, still human, was perplexed, being unable to reconcile the benign aspect of the Lord with His destructive aspect: doing good to men and the world as a whole on the one hand, and bringing death and destruction to countless creatures and worlds on the other. It has been shown here that life and death are both momentary scenes in the cosmic drama, meant not to hurt or please anybody, but designed to afford infinite opportunities to the Lord's children for the attainment of higher and higher states of evolution through apparently unpleasant disturbances caused by great changes. The relative value of life and death in this Drama, which is a dream in comparison with the Reality of the Lord, is the same. This vision represents the great Cosmic Law, as seen not from the point of view of finite creatures, but from that of the Lord Himself. Hence this allows no room for the finite questioning of Arjuna as to whether the Lord is benign or destructive. To Him, to destroy life is not an absence of benignity, nor to give life a presence of it, as is the case with us. The Lord views life and death as forms of change only,

SONGS OF THE SOUL

.....
according to His Cosmic Law. A law is law. It has been His nature, and always will be. There is no question about benignity or otherwise.

Nevertheless, it describes the Lord as leading this Cosmos with all its individuals to higher and higher stages of unfoldment. Every individual is expected to do his duty unattached, with the consciousness of an intelligent agent merely, that he can reach those higher stages easily, and finally be in tune with that Great Being.

VISION OF VISIONS

Beloved Lord,
Adored of gods,
Behold, behold
Thy body holds
All fleshly tenants, seers fine,
The diverse saints divine.
Indwelling mystery cave,
The Serpent Nature's forceful crave,
Though fierce and subtle, now is tame,
Forgetful of her deadly game;
And Sovran Brahma, God of gods,
On lotus seat is snug secured.
O Cosmic-Bodied Lord of worlds,
Oh, I behold, again behold
Thee all and everywhere
Thy countless arms and trunks and eyes!
Yet, drooping dark my knowledge lies
About Thy birth and reign and presence here.

[continued]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

This day,
O Blazing, Furious Flame,
O Blinding Ray,
Thy focussed power's aglow: Thy Name
Spreads everywhere
To dark'st abysmal lair.
Thou, gilded with a crown of stars,
And wielding mace of sovereign power,
Thou whirlest forth, O Burning Phoebus,
Thy evolution's circling discus.
Immortal Brahma, all Supreme,
Thou Cosmic Shelter, Wisdom's Theme,
Eternal *Dharma's guardian true,
Thou diest not I ever knew!

O Birthless, Fleshless, Deathless One,
Unseen, thy endless, working arms,
Thy Ever-Watching Eyes!
The suns and moons and staring skies,
Thy Selfborn Lustre shields from harm,
And the distant creation warms,
O Sovereign Soul, this earth and gods'

*Religion.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

All high-abode and all encircling spheres,
Directions all, and earthly sods,
By Thee pervaded, far and near,
The worldly beings, struck by fear,
Thy wondrous form adore.
In Thee the gods their entry make
With folded hands, afraid, some pray to shelter
take
In Thee. The seers great, on Heaven's path
successful ones,
With superb hymns of peace do worship Thee and
Thee alone.
The eleven lamps of Heaven,
The twelve bright suns,
The grizzly Eight,
The starry lustres great,
Aspiring hermits, gods,
The agents of the Cosmic Lord,
The twin-born princes strong,
Of valor known so long,
Two-score and nine noil breezes' force,

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

That binds the atoms close,
The long-passed guardian spirits all,
The demi-goblins, gods, and demòns tall,
Mighty ones in Spirit's path,
In wonder all behold Thy blazoned worth.
Colossal arms, Thy countless cheeks,
Thy starry eyes, Thy endless hands, and legs
adorned
With lotus feet, Thy chasmed mouth, with
doomsday's teeth
Doth yawn to swallow swooning worlds around,
And leaves a distilled joyous awe in me.
Thy grandeur I and all are wonder-struck to see;
The bowels of the void deep are filled with Thee
Thy diverse hues and gaping mouths and lustre-
smeared body,
O *Vishnu of the flaming sight,
Directions lost, Thou now awest me, my peace
dost fright.
Ferocious teeth and deadly fire do howl
In mouths of Thine which at me scowl.

*The principle of preservation.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Directions lost and gone,
I find no peace alone.
Cosmic Guardian, Lord of gods,
Be pleased t' accept my pleading words.
The Ego, Karma, Senses great abide
And wait to leap upon our Wisdom's chiefs.
And yet they both do ride
The race of death, to fall and hide
For e'er in Thy devouring mouth,
Adorned with crushing cruel teeth uncouth.
The victor and the vanquished must,
Thy offsprings both, the righteous and ungodly
ones,
Thy love still claim, yet all some day shall kiss
the dust,
And sleep on common floor of earth.
The shattered skulls of some are seen,
As caught Thy greedy teeth between.

As diverse, restless, watery waves
Of river branches all do crave
To force through crowded wavelets' way,

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

And meet where Neptune's home long lay,
So the heroic streams of life
Do plunge to meet in maddest strife
At Thy foaming mouth of sea,
Where sparkling lives do dance so free:
As insects lost in beauty's game
All swiftly, thoughtless rush to flame,
So fog-born passion's fires pretend
To glow like Heav'nly light of Thine,
And draw on mortals to attend
The trumpet call to deathly line.
Thy mouth ablaze
Doth bring to gaze
Its leaping tongues to lick
The angry blood of strong and weak,
Thou Gourmand God dost eat
With hunger Infinite;
O Vishnu, Thou dost scorch
The worlds with All-pervading fiery torch.

Be pleased, O Prime of gods;
I ache to know Thee, Primeval Lord.

SONGS OF THE SOUL

O tell, Thou, O Fiery Mood,
Who art yet so good,—
Thy Royal Will,
I know not still.

The Lord sang:
“Am Endless Doom,
All bent to room
In burning maw
Of mine the weaklings’ awe
And all the mortal meat
Of weary worlds of deathly change, and treat
Them with my nectar life
To new and fearless, better strife.
E’en if thou dost not slay
These wicked warriors all in war array,
They surely certain have to fall,
Ah, in my teeth-of-law, withal.
Arise, awake! Arise, awake!
Oh, dash to war thy foe, the flesh a captive make,
And seize the victor’s fame,
With battle-hunted game,

[*continued*]

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Wealth of the King
Of Peace, and Heaven's Kingdom bring.
I know right now the happenings all
Which mystic future forth doth call,
And thus thy foes and warriors true,
Long, long ago I slew
Ere thy agent-hand,
That I would wield to land
Thy foes on death's dim shore, could understand.
My agent thou,
Oh, this is how
I work my plans in universe
Through instruments diverse;
'Tis I who slew and yet will slay the senses'
train
Through thee, as through both past and future
ones, my soldiers sane."

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