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RUPEE ONE

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COMPILER'S NOTE

The reader is warned not to treat these explanations as definitions. Nor is the list of words gathered together here by any means complete.

The explanations given here would, it is hoped, help the reader to get some general outline of the meaning of these words so that he would be able to understand Sri Aurobindo's works even from the beginning. The precise meaning in all its fullness would be the result of a study of Sri Aurobindo's own works.

ABSOLUTE : Supreme Brahman (i. e. Parabrahma, the absolute of the Western metaphysics) is that which presents itself to the mind as void of all relations and determinations, the Ineffable, first and last word of existence. Absolute must be indeterminable at the same time source of all determination, and yet beyond them and unbound by them. Powerless absolute is unthinkable. Absolute is timeless. Absolute is not a mystery of infinite blankness or a supreme sum of negation. There is a school of thought which believes that the ineffable Absolute alone is real and that the Individual and the cosmos are unreal. Even so absolute itself is not a sheer emptiness; for a vacant absolute is no absolute.

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ABSOLUTE SELF-EXISTENCE is equal to The Reality Brahman. (Ref. to Brahman.)

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ABSOLUTE-DIVINE : Personal, supreme and omnipresent Godhead, transcendent as well as universal, an infinite master of all relations and determinations upholding a million universes and pervading each with a single ray of his self-light.

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ADHYAKSHA is the self, above the form of being, surveying its embodiment from above.

ANANDA is the essential delight of existence.

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BRAHMAN is the absolute, independent of, and basing, governing, pervading and constituting all relatives. It is at the same time omnipresent. Brahman is at once void of qualities, and capable of infinite qualities, the Lord and Doer of work, yet the non-doer and the silent witness of the workings of Nature.

The Brahman is at the same time the omnipresent Reality in which all that is relative exists as its forms or its movements; this is an absolute which takes all relativities in its embrace.

Brahman is the consciousness that knows itself in all that exists : Brahman is the Force that sustains the Power of God, Titan and Demon, the Force that acts in man and animal and forms and energies of nature; Brahman is Ananda, the secret bliss of existence which is the Ether of our being without which none could breathe or live. Brahman is the inner soul in all, Timeless in time and space and all that is in space, it is causality, cause and effect; thinker and thought: i. e. it is absolute Transcendence incommunicable, the supracosmic existence that sustains the cosmos, the cosmic self that upholds all beings: it is the self of each individual. The Brahman alone is and because of it all are, for all are the Brahman.

CENTRAL BEING is the portion of the Divine in us which supports all the rest and survives through death and birth. This central being has two forms—above, it is Jivatman, our true being, of which we become aware when the higher self-knowledge comes;—below, it is the psychic being which stands behind mind, life and body. The Jivatman is above the manifestation in life and presides over it; the psychic being stands behind the manifestation in life and supports it.

The natural attitude of the psychic being is to feel itself as the Child, the Son of God, the Bhakta; it is a portion of the Divine, one in essence, but in the dynamics of the manifestation there is always even in identity a difference. The Jivatman, on the contrary, lives in the essence and can merge itself in identity with the Divine; but it too, the moment it presides over the dynamics of the manifestation, knows itself as one centre of the multiple Divine, not as the Parameshwara.

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CONSCIOUSNESS is the faculty of becoming aware of anything through identification. Before its emergence consciousness is already concealed in the Inconscient waiting for evolution and when all is ready it breaks out from its prison of apparent Inconscience.

Consciousness is the creator of this world from apparent original Inconscience.

The original freedom enables Consciousness to create the world of determinations without being bound by it; the same freedom enables it also to withdraw from

what it has created and recreate it in the formula of a higher Truth.

Consciousness has an aspect of Impersonality, but it has no standing place if there is none who is conscious.

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COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS is that in which one is aware of the universal self, the play of the cosmic forces and the interaction of the planes in their universal extension.

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EMANATION of a God or the Divine is something of the consciousness and power put forth from the God or the Divine which so long as it is in play, is held in close connection with it, and when the play is no longer required, is withdrawn back into its source, but can always be put out and brought into play once more.

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ENDURANCE is the capacity of bearing without depression.

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ENERGY is that which seems to create substance though really it is inherent in it. Energy gives form to matter. Energy is called universal Nature which produces the world. The Infinite indeterminate existence reveals itself as

Energy which is known by its works. Energy without a being possessing it or a consciousness supporting it looks like a mental construction, an unreality.

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ETERNITY : If the Absolute is self-evident to itself in eternal timelessness it can also be self-manifest to itself in eternal motion of Time. What is unmanifest in the Timeless Eternal is manifest in Time-Eternity. There is a Time-Eternity, and Timeless-Eternity. What we mean by the Timeless is a spiritual status of existence not subject to time-movement or to the successive or relative time-existence of a past, present and future. There can be three different states of consciousness with regard to its own Eternity.

1. Immobile status of the self in its essential existence without development of consciousness in movement or happening. This is Timeless Eternity.
2. A stable status, or simultaneous integrality of Time in which as in the case of an artist the whole successive relations of a manifestation are present simultaneously.
3. Progressive movement of conscious-force and its successive working out of what has been seen by it in static vision of the Eternal. This is Time movement. Time is not necessarily cancelled out of existence by timeless Eternity; in fact, it is more likely that there is a relation of dependence of Time on

Timeless-Eternity. Eternal status of being of the Reality contains in it an eternal force of being.

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EXISTENCE : Conscious-force is inherent in existence and is the creator of the worlds. It is the Absolute that is cognised as the Infinite and eternal existence; (Consciousness and Bliss).

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FAITH is the confidence in the Divine and the unshakable certitude of the Divine's victory.

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FORCE : Inconscient force creates the world. Prakriti or Nature is the Force dynamically executive.

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GRATITUDE is the loving recognition of the Grace received from the Divine, a humble recognition of all that Divine has done and is doing for you. The spontaneous feeling of obligation to the Divine which makes you do your best to become less unworthy of what the Divine is doing for you.

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INCONSCIENT : All upon earth is based on the Inconscient as it is called, though it is not inconscient at all but

rather suppressed or involved consciousness, in which there is everything but nothing is formulated or expressed. We see an Inconscience, a total Nescience as the base and beginning of things. The Nature is mechanical because of the veil of Inconscience.

The Inconscient is self-oblivion, self-opposition, self-limitation by the Infinite; and the Ignorance that we see is the process of surpassing that state step by step.

Thus, consciousness is concealed in the Inconscience waiting for evolution. The first emergence from the Inconscient is Matter. The self-absorption, the trance of Infinity, no longer luminous but dark is what we call the Inconscient; for the being of the Infinite is there though by its appearance of inconscience it seems to us rather to be an infinite non-being. A self-oblivious intrinsic consciousness and force are there in that apparent non-being, for by the energy of the Inconscient ordered world is created.

The Inconscient guards in itself all the concealed Super-conscient—all the Divine nature also is concealed but present in it, which must be gradually delivered out of it.

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INFINITE : Cosmic existence is indeterminable, the universe is contained in the indeterminable Infinite. The evolutionary cosmic order is nothing else but an Infinite casting infinite possibilities into a set form. Infinite

as creator exceeds the creation and yet is immanent in it.

In fact, Infinite does not create, it manifests what is in itself. Infinite consciousness is at once an essentiality, a boundless totality and a multiplicity. Infinite is not a negation of various determinations, it is illimitably free, free to determine itself infinitely. Infinite is infinite in quality, feature, power but no sum of qualities, features and powers can describe the Infinite. Infinite is beyond Time and beyond Space. There is also Time-Infinity and Space-Infinity. The Infinity contains both the static silence and the dynamic expression.

The Infinite of Being is also the Infinite of Power. By the Infinite we do not mean solely an illimitable self extension in space and time but something that is also spaceless and timeless, a self existent, indefinable and illimitable expressing itself in the infinitesimal and the vast. It is not a sum of all things. A free power of Self-variation must be natural to the Infinite consciousness, also the Power of self-absorption.

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ISHWAR is God, the Divine Being, Lord of all the Beings, conscious in the conscious, also in the inconscience, master and controller of the many who are in the hands of Nature. He is timeless in Time, the omnipresent, omnipotent, All-ruler who by his Shakti i.e. conscious power, manifests himself in time and governs the universe.

Ishwar is Supracosmic as well as intracosmic; He is that which exceeds and inhabits and supports all individuality; He is the Supreme and universal Brahman, the Absolute, the Supreme Self, the Supreme Purusha. Ishwar is Brahman the Reality, Self, Spirit, revealed as possessor, enjoyer of his own existence, creator of the universe and one with it, Pantheos and yet superior to it, the Eternal, the Infinite, the Ineffable, the Divine Transcendence.

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LIFE : Matter, Life, Mind are the three realised powers of the evolution. Life is not an original reality but is yet a form, a power of it. When Life manifests it is involved in Matter. Matter is the basis of life, life a form of cosmic energy, a dynamic movement, a play of the Force which builds up forms, energises them by an unceasing process of disintegration and renewal. Life has three realms : the material, the vegetable, the animal. Movement, breathing and eating are only processes of Life, not life itself.

Life in man seeks expression mainly through the vital being. Desire, attachment, ambition, greed, lust etc. constitute its ordinary movements. But it is not necessary that the action of the vital should always remain bound to the lower consciousness.

An ascetic refusal of life is also no solution, for life-force is indispensable for a spiritual realisation. Life therefore has to be accepted as the means of our activity and the dynamic mould into which we have to pour

the Divine Existence; but it can be accepted only because it is a form of a Divine Energy which is itself greater than the Life-force. In matter life appears and living physical beings. But life or matter is not the sole reality; it is a power of the Spirit.

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MATTER is a form of the Spirit, a habitation of the Spirit, and here, in matter itself, there can be a realisation of Spirit.

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MIND : Matter, Life, Mind; these three are the three terms of cosmic evolution. The nature of the mind as we know it is an Ignorance seeking for knowledge; it is a power of fractions and a worker of divisions striving to arrive at a sum, to piece together a whole, it is not possessed of the essence of things or their totality. Mind when it first begins to function is involved in action, in satisfying vital and physical needs. But when it grows in man then there is a first hope of understanding, discovery and comprehension.

But even though human mind can build theories and hypothesis of the process, it is not sufficient to explain the universe. Thus mind is not a faculty of knowledge; it is a faculty for the seeking of knowledge, for expression in certain forms of relative thought.

Mind interprets the truth of the universal existence for the practical use. It is the reflective mirror which

receives presentations or images of pre-existent truth. It can construct images.

Mind is only one of the instruments of spirit. It is an instrument of analysis and synthesis and not of essential knowledge. Mind divides and takes division as real. Mind does not really know, it knows only its own analysis of the object and the idea it has formed of it by its synthesis of parts and properties. When mind emerges in the process of evolution it uses Life and Matter as means of its expression, a field for its own growth and sovereignty. But mind is not the sole supreme creative principle. Mind is not a culmination of human evolution. It is a passage to a higher consciousness.

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NATURE : The energy which produces the world is called Nature i.e. the nature of things is what it is by virtue of a force which arranges them according to the inherent truth in them. According to current scientific ideas all cosmic phenomena are called nature and an inconscient force creates this or that object without any determining principle by sheer chance.

Really speaking, all that Nature does in whole or in parts is a miracle, an act of incomprehensible magic. An infinitely variable fundamental oneness seems the very principle of Nature. Oneness is everywhere; differentiation is everywhere. Nature here is a limited expression of Supernature open to the intervention by its light, force and influence. Movement of Nature is a manifes-

tation of creative consciousness-force. Existence is Prakriti or Nature. There must be one consciousness or One Energy which is Nature.

Prakriti or Nature presents itself as an inconscient Energy in the material worlds but as the scale of consciousness rises she reveals herself more and more as a conscious-force and we perceive that even her inconscience conceals a consciousness. The mechanical mathematical automatic law is a fact but within it there is a spiritual law of consciousness at work.

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OPENING is the release of consciousness by which it begins to admit into itself the working of the Divine Light.

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OVERMIND is the plane of consciousness beyond individual mind, beyond even universal mind in ignorance,—it carries in itself a first direct masterful cognition of cosmic truth.

In overmind we find dichotomy of pure silent self without feature and mighty dynamics of a knowledge-power of a creative consciousness and Force which precipitates itself into the form of the universe.

The overmind consciousness maintains equally the two truths 'Nirguna' and 'Saguna' of the Eternal : both are supreme aspects of one reality in the Overmind. Over-

mind can hold any number of seemingly fundamental differences together in a reconciling vision. They are to the Overmind coexistent correlatives and are complimentary.

Overmind is a creator of truths not of illusions or falsehood. It is a principle of cosmic truth and a vast and endless catholicity is its very spirit. Overmind takes each aspect of Power and gives to it an independent action.

Purusha-Prakriti, one and many, divine personality and divine impersonality each acts on the overmind as an independent entity, arrives at the fullness of separate expression. Overmind releases many gods into action.

The overmind is the protective Double, a delegate of the Supermind consciousness. Overmind has not the integrality of the Supramental truth but it is well aware of the essential truth of things. Thus overmind gives to the Sachchidananda Brahman the character of a teeming infinite of possibilities which can be developed into worlds or one world.

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PATIENCE is the capacity to wait steadily for the realisation to come.

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PERSEVERANCE is the patience in action.

PHYSICAL MIND : At the outset man lives in his physical mind which perceives the actual, the physical, the objective and accepts it as fact and this fact as self-evident truth beyond question; whatever is not actual, not physical, not objective it regards as unreal and unrealised, only to be accepted as entirely real when it has succeeded in becoming actual, becoming a physical fact, becoming objective: its own being too it regards as an objective fact, warranted to be real by its existence in a visible and sensible body; all other objective beings and things it accepts on the same evidence in so far as they can become objects of our external consciousness or acceptable to that part of the reason which builds upon the data supplied by that consciousness and relies upon them as the one solid basis of knowledge. Physical Science is a vast extension of this mentality: it corrects the errors of the sense and pushes beyond the first limitations of the sense-mind by discovering means of bringing facts and objects not seizable by our corporal organs into the field of objectivity; but it has the same standard of reality the objective, the physical actuality; its test of the real is possibility of verification by positive reason and objective evidence.

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PRAKRITI is the working of the Purusha, the self-conscious existence. Prakriti presents itself as an inconscient energy in the material world but as the scale of consciousness rises she reveals herself more and more as a conscious force. Behind it is the living consciousness and Force of the Divine Shakti.

The Prakriti itself is divided into lower and higher—the lower is the Prakriti of the Ignorance,—the Prakriti of the mind, life and matter separated in consciousness from the Divine; the higher is the Divine Prakriti of Sachchidananda with its manifesting power of Supermind always aware of the Divine and free from Ignorance and its consequences.

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PRESENCE : It is intended by the word “Presence” to indicate the sense and perception of the Divine as a being, felt as present in one’s existence and consciousness or in relation with it, without the necessity of any further qualification or description.

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PSYCHIC BEING is not the ordinary desire-soul or the occult being. Veiled Psychic Entity is the flame of the Godhead within. It is the flame born of the Divine. It is the concealed control, and hidden guide.

It is the indestructible spark of the Divine. It is called Chaitya Purusha supporting mind, life and body, standing behind the mental, vital and the subtle physical being. This entity puts forward a psychic personality which changes, grows and develops from life to life. This is the true original consciousness in us deeper than the constructed and conventional conscience of the moralist.

PURITY is to accept no other influence but only the influence of the Divine.

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REALISATION : (In Integral Yoga) Realisation is the establishment of the Supramental truth upon earth.

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REALITY : 1. Reality as self bases, supports, informs and pervades the worlds. This is also called the Brahman. (see Self).

2. Reality as Purusha, that is conscious being, witnesses and experiences.

3. Reality as Ishwar wills, governs and possesses Its world of manifestation created and kept in motion and action by Its own conscious force which is variously termed as Maya, Prakriti and Shakti respectively.

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RECEPTIVITY is the capacity of admitting and retaining the Divine working.

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SELF is the fundamental aspect of the Brahman with a certain stress on its impersonality. We are conscious of Self as eternal, unborn, unembodied, uninvolved in its work-

ings. It is omnipresent, same in everything, intimate, pure and intangible. The Self can be experienced as the self of the individual.

It is at the same time universal. Self is that aspect of the Brahman in which it is intimately felt as at once individual, cosmic and transcendent.

To realise Self is to realise the Eternal freedom of the Spirit. Freedom and impersonality are the character of the Self. The first realisation of the Self as something intensely silent and purely static is not the whole truth of it. There can also be a realisation of Self in its power, the Self as the condition of the world-existence and world-activity.

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SINCERITY is to lift all the movements of the being to the level of the highest consciousness and realisation already attained. It exacts the unification and harmonisation of the whole being in all its parts and movements.

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SPIRIT is the antithesis of matter, which is impersonal, eternal and universal. Spirit as Purusha puts on a more personal aspect. Purusha is the Spirit (i. e. the conscious being,) in its relation to Nature. The Purusha is the Self, originator, witness, support, lord and enjoyer of forms and works of Nature. In each status of the gradation of Nature Spirit takes the poise proper to that gradation in mind, in life and in matter.

SUBCONSCIENT can be felt anywhere,—felt as something below the movement of the consciousness and, in a way supporting it from beneath or else drawing the consciousness down towards itself. The subconscient is the main support of all habitual movements, especially of the physical and lower vital movements. When something is thrown out of the vital or physical, it very usually goes down into the subconscient and remains there as if in seed and comes up again when it can.

The subconscient is universal as well as individual like all other main parts of the nature.

The subconscient in us is the extreme border of our secret inner existence where it meets the Inconscient, it is a degree of our being in which the Inconscient struggles into a half consciousness.

The subconscient lies between the Inconscient and the conscious mind, life and body.

This nature-part of our being may be described as the antichamber of the Inconscient through which its formations rise into our waking or our subliminal being. All seeds are there in the subconscient and all Sanskars of the mind, vital and body.

The subconscient is a thing of habits and memories and repeats persistently or whenever it can, old suppressed vital or physical reflexes, mental, vital or physical responses.

The subconscious is the evolutionary basis in us, it is not the whole of our hidden nature, nor is it the whole origin of what we are.

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SUBLIMINAL : It is true that the subliminal in man is the largest part of his nature and has in it the secret of the unseen dynamisms which explain his surface activities.

The subliminal self stands behind and supports the whole superficial man; it has in it a larger and more efficient mind behind the surface-mind, a larger and more powerful vital behind the surface-vital, a subtler and free physical behind the surface bodily existence. And above them it opens to higher superconscious as well as below them to subconscious ranges. But the subliminal self has not at all the subconscious character; it is in full possession of a mind, a life-force, a clear subtle physical sense of things.

Awareness by direct contact is the principal power of the subliminal. All unseen movement and action of the world-forces can be known by the subliminal consciousness.

Subliminal possesses the power of telepathy, clairvoyance, second sight and other supernormal faculties.

Still, the subliminal is a movement of Knowledge-Ignorance.

SUPERMIND is the instrumentation of the Sachchidananda,—the Infinite consciousness higher than the mental being. Its evolution here is an inevitable necessity. It is a Self-awareness of the Infinite and Eternal and a power of Self-determination inherent in that Self-awareness. Supermind keeps always and in every status and condition the Spiritual realisation of the unity of all. It is the consciousness creatrix of the world, a will to light and vision and also a will to power of works. It is the vastness beyond the ordinary firmament of our consciousness, vast all-comprehension,—the true, the right, the vast. (Satyam, Ritam, Brihat). Supermind is the Light one with Force, vibration of knowledge with the rhythm of the will. It is Truth-consciousness.

It is a link between the two worlds: above is the unitarian or indivisible consciousness of pure Sachchidananda, and below is the analytic dividing consciousness of the mind. Supermind is between them; a comprehensive and creative consciousness, the child of self-awareness by identity which is the poise of the Brahman. Above, the formula of the one, below the formulations of the many. It has the knowledge of the One but it is able to draw out from the One its hidden multitudes. It manifests the many but it is not lost in them. Unity is the basis of the Supermind. Supermind creates, governs and upholds the world. It upholds both knowledge and ignorance. Supermind is Sachchidananda himself. It creates nothing which is not in its own existence. Infinite liberty within determines the Self-limitation by the Idea. It is a Power of the self-limitation of the Infinite. Supermind is the truth inherent in all cosmic force and existence.

TIME cannot be measured entirely as an objective element. It also depends upon the level of consciousness upon which it is experienced. There are different times and spaces for different conditions of consciousness. Time is Brahman in self-extended movement.

Time would be a course of movement of material energy or impression of something which presents itself to us regularly in successive movement, or else Time could be a dimension of space according to some. But it is seen by our consciousness subjectively as something subjective, felt by our mind, not perceived by our senses. Therefore it cannot be a dimension of space.

Movement of consciousness creates the sense of time. Behind all movement Time is eternal Transcendence, Supra-cosmic transcendence. There is something in us, not in the ego but in the self and Inmost being that surpasses cosmic Nature and belongs to the Transcendence.

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TRANSCENDENT is that which is (1) above the cosmos, not included in the universal manifestation, (2) above our cosmos of mind, life and body. In that sense the supra-mental is part of the Transcendent. The word has a relative, not an absolute significance.

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TRUTH is an inherent imperative truth of things unseen by us capable of manifold manifestation. This

inherent Truth governs automatically all the processes in the universe. Vast baseless negation of Reality cannot be the sole outcome of the Eternal truth. Behind the ignorance the human soul is seeking for the truth. The Supramental cognition of things would see the one Truth everywhere. The One is the fundamental truth of existence.

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TRUTH CONSCIOUSNESS and Supramental consciousness are the same.

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VITAL-HIGHER : In one classification in which mind is taken as something more than the thinking, perceiving and willing intelligence, the emotional can be reckoned as part of the mind,—the vital in the mental. In another classification it is rather the most mentalised part of the vital nature. In the first case, the term “higher vital” is confined to that larger movement of the conscious life-force which is concerned with creation, with power and force and conquest, with giving and selfgiving and gathering from the world for farther action and expenditure of power, throwing itself out in the wider movements of life, responsive to the greater objects of Nature. In the second the emotional being stands at the top of the vital nature and the two together make the higher vital.

VITAL-LOWER : The lower vital being is that which is concerned with the pettier movements of action and desire and stretches down into the vital-physical where it supports the life of the more external activities and all physical sensations, hungers, cravings, satisfactions. The term lower must not be considered in a pejorative sense; it refers only to the position in the hierarchy of the planes. For although this part of the nature in earthly beings tends to be very obscure and is full of perversions, —lust, greed of all kinds, vanity, small ambitions, petty anger, envy, jealousy are its ordinary guests,—still there is another side to it which makes it an indispensable mediator between the inner being and the outer life.

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VITAL MIND OR VITAL MENTALITY : It is an instrument of desire; it is not satisfied with the actual, it is a dealer in possibilities; it has the passion for novelty and is seeking always to extend the limits of experience for the satisfaction of desire, for enjoyment for an enlarged self-affirmation and aggrandisement of its terrain of power and profit. It seeks too an imaginative, a purely emotive satisfaction and pleasure.

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VITAL-PHYSICAL is the vehicle of the nervous responses of our physical nature; it is the field and instrument of the smaller sensations, desires, reactions of all kinds to the impacts of the outer physical and gross material life.

WILL is the power of consciousness turned towards effectuation:
It is consciousness applying itself to the work and a
result. The active nature of consciousness is will.

Will is the energy that creates the world. Knowledge
and will are the twin aspects of forms which the One
Power takes in creating the world.

A certain will is emerging in evolution.