

THE ORGANISM OF ADMINISTRATION

by

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In the art of administration, the role of Yoga is significant. The chief principle of the system of Yoga can be summed up in a single word: 'Organism'. The term, organism, has deep implications and it is this significant implication behind the principle of Yoga that makes it a novel feature in the conduct of human life.

You have witnessed just now a demonstration of the Yoga-Asanas. The intention behind this practice of the physical exercises in the system of Yoga is to maintain the organic character of the psycho-physical constitution. The body is not merely a machine, and here it differs from organisations of a mechanical character, though the body itself may be regarded as an organisation in a way. There are limbs in the body, just as there are parts in a machine. The physical body is constituted of minute cells. The anatomists and physiologists know very well the structural pattern of the physical body. It has many characteristics that can be compared with the structure of a machine—for instance, the parts make the whole. But, how does the human system differ from an inorganic machine, notwithstanding the fact that the body also is constituted of parts like a machine? The difference lies here: in a machine, which is inorganic, lifeless, a part can be removed and replaced without detriment to the structural pattern of the machine. But we cannot remove a limb of the body as we remove a part of the machine. We can

remove one part of the machine and study it independently. It retains its originality, even if it is wrested out of the whole, which is the machine. But if we remove the heart of a person, take it out of the body and examine it, it will not retain its originality. A heart that is taken out of its relevance to the whole, which is the system of the body, and examined independently outside, will not be a human heart—it would be a physical substance. But, the physical body is not merely a physical substance. Here comes the role of what we mean by an organism.

There is something in the physical body which distinguishes it from organisations of a mechanical character. The vitality or the life-principle, the *Prana* as we usually call it, is the distinguishing feature. Why do you perform these Asanas? How does the system of physical exercises in Yoga differ from ordinary outdoor games, like cricket, foot-ball, tennis, etc? In the usual system of games of the western type, especially, there is a depletion of energy. You feel exhausted after you play the game. You wish to take rest. Prana is diverted spatio-temporally, outwardly: The energy flows out of the body. But in the practice of the Yoga-Asanas, there is an inwardisation of the *Shakti*, the power, the energy, the *Prana*. There is a tendency to the conservation of force and not a spending of energy in the practice of the Asanas.

You heard, just now, the script that was read in connection with the practice of the Yoga-Asanas. Mention was made of the endocrine glands. The endocrine glands are a subtle arrangement in our physical body, which controls the harmonious working of the whole system. The endocrine glands are not like the other glands with ducts. The secretion of these ductless glands is of a different type altogether. It is these glands that maintain us, keep us alive. Whenever there is an exhaustion of energy, a depletion of *Prana*, there is diminution of the activity of the endocrine glands, whereas in the practice of the Yoga-Asanas, the process is, quite a different one. There is, as mentioned, a total conservation of force. You not only do not exhaust energy, but increase the output of energy in the body. The endocrine glands begin to

function more vigorously here, else they get stifled and there is sluggishness of the function due to a maladjustment of the various parts of this organism, called the body.

Now, I am coming to the point, again, of the organism. The purpose of the practice of the Yoga-Asanas is to keep the balance in the working of the system of the parts of the body. There should not be any kind of over-emphasis or neglect in respect of any part of the body. Suppose a person walks and walks for miles, every day, there is an extra work given to the legs and the other limbs of the body have to contribute their parts, also, for the purpose of the working of the legs, the blood stream moving more towards the legs. There is an unhealthy repercussion following this over-activity of the particular part of the system. There can also be neglect of the other parts of the body, similarly, the breathing system, the circulatory system, etc. The purpose of the Yoga-Asana practice, is to give the due to every part of the body, and in as much as the mind is intimately and inseparably connected with the body, it influences even the thinking process, the mind becomes perspicuous, there is clarity of thought, you feel buoyant and elastic, a kind of satisfaction automatically follows, a satisfaction that is not the outcome of the possession of material goods, but a spontaneous efflorescence of the vitality of your personality is the cause of the satisfaction that you feel within yourself. You feel happy, relaxed after this routine of practice, merely because of the release of tension in the system. By bringing into force of the principle of the organism in the body, you live a total life, instead of a partial life.

Satisfaction of any kind is nothing but the result of a totality of outlook, a completeness in living, whatever be the field of activity in which one may be engaged. Now, I would like to divert to the point with which I began at the very outset. I had occasion to mention that a very significant role is played by Yoga in the art of administration. It is for this purpose that I endeavoured to give this short introduction in regard to the meaning of Yoga. In as much as Yoga is the art of bringing about a sense of organism in life, it applies to

social and political organisations also. An organism does not mean merely a physical body. The physical body is one organism, no doubt, but there are other organisms, also, which are larger in dimension. It is precisely the purpose of Yoga to introduce the system of organism to our outward life, too. You must all have heard of the term 'Karma Yoga', the technique of unselfish activity. This art of unselfishly working in human society is nothing but the implementation of the system of Yoga in human life. Just as we have to look to our own physical personality for the purpose of maintenance of health, the physical personality not being an independent unit completely outside human society, it becomes imperative on our part to live this very same kind of Yogic life in our outer social relationships, also.

There are various gradations of organisation. When we enter into the study of the secret of life, we may be said to enter into the region of philosophy. We do not believe, usually, that human society also is an organic structure, merely because of the fact that we are not able to understand the relationship that obtains among people in a social set-up. We have not been able to be secure in human society. We are insecure, as you very well know, and there is anxiety of various types in our social existence. You know, we have no anxiety about the way in which the limbs of the body work in relation to one another. You do not go to bed at night with a feeling of insecurity as to whether the legs will cooperate with the thinking of the brain tomorrow, whether the eyes or the ears may not set-up a strike in respect of the stomach which swallows all the food and gives nothing to the eyes or the ears! You have no fear that, perhaps, tomorrow there may be a battle between the right hand and the left hand. With great composure and satisfaction and security in respect of all the functions of the limbs of the body, you sleep well at night. But we cannot sleep in peace with respect of our attitude to human society. We do not know what will happen tomorrow, what our next door neighbour will do the next moment. We do not live a life of harmonious organic relationship in our outer life. Unfortunately, we seem to be

living a mechanical life. Human society is taken to be a machine. Each part is independent and it has no organic connection with another part, and if each human being is to think that he is only a disconnected part and he has no real connection with the other parts, which seems to be the fate of people today, there cannot be any social organisation. There can only be a machine of human society. And if human society is going to be a machine, then we would be like parts of a machine, and I do not think that anyone would like to live in that fashion. There cannot be sympathy then, there would be no altruistic feeling, no love, no affection, no sense of service, no feeling for another, if we are to be only parts of a machine. What feeling does a part have in respect of the other parts of a machine? It works, apparently, in harmony with the other parts on account of their juxtaposition and their arrangement in a certain way by the mechanic.

Likewise, if we are to live in a state of an apparent co-ordination among ourselves, on account of an external pressure exerted upon us by the government, or a social mandate, or by some kind of mechanical rule which has been enforced upon us from outside, then when that force is lifted, we will fly in different directions with no connection among ourselves. Yoga is the recipe and the remedy for this difficulty that we are facing in life today. Yoga is not meant merely for the monastic. It is not a mystical doctrine. It is not a 'spiritual' science. It is, to put it precisely, the system of living in perfect consonance with the law of Nature. And I am coming to a new point now, 'The law of Nature'.

If we are to be in harmony with the system that is operating in Nature as a whole, we can be regarded as healthy persons, physically, psychologically and socially. Scientists—many of you perhaps are—and psychologists, too, would be acquainted with the fact that Nature cannot be equated with a machine. It is not a machine but an organism. Only serious biologists, psychologists and philosophers would be able to appreciate this truth. The parts of Nature work in spontaneous harmony amongst themselves. The astronomical system which conditions the movements of

planets round the Sun, the so-called rising and setting of the Sun, the changing of the seasons and the various types of phenomena which we observe in Nature, are all motivated by a central organising power which does not stand outside Nature, but works inside it as an inseparable vitality that is immanent.

An administrator, a chief in an organisation, in order to be successful in his vocation, has to behave in the same way as the motivating force behind Nature works in Nature, or that mysterious principle which keeps the body alive, in a relationship among the parts of the body. No one can say why it is that the heart is working so systematically right from the beginning to the end of one's life. Who is controlling this system? We know that we do not have to play any part in the working of the heart, for instance. We can say nothing about it. There is a controlling system immanent in the physical body, in the psychological organism. The word *immanent* is very important, and has to be underlined. It is implicit and it is hidden, it cannot be detected by physical observations. You cannot know the presence of that integrating principle within the psychological organism, which keeps us alive, by any amount of microscopic observation. The principle which keeps the administration in order is inside the set-up of the administration, is a part of the administration itself. I will recite to you a small anecdote which is of a very instructive character and also may appear a little humorous.

It appears that during the reign of the king Raja Bhoja (in the early mediaeval times of India), who was a great patron of Sanskrit learning, a poet sought entry into his court. All learned men at that time were patronised by this king. One great Sanskrit poet wanted to get admission into the court of this king. He was standing at the gate outside and told the watchman, "May I have an interview with His Highness? I want to be one of the court-poets, if possible." The person in charge went and conveyed the message to the king: "There is a learned man, evidently, he seeks admission to the court." The king said nothing. He asked someone to bring one

tumbler of milk filled to the brim, and told the assistant, "Take this cup full of milk, and give it to the poet standing there, and say nothing." The tumbler full of milk was handed over. The poet said, "What is the order from the king?" The gentleman said, "There is no order, he has said nothing. He has only given you this milk—that's all." "Oh, I see, this is the reply. Please listen," he said. The poet took a handful of sugar, poured the sugar very slowly, carefully, into the milk which was full to the brim, and told the assistant, "Please take this milk back to the king." The milk was brought back. When the king asked, "What is this? How is it that the milk is returned," it was told to the king that the poet said nothing, just as he himself said nothing, that the poet had only poured sugar gradually and slowly into the tumbler full of milk, and there it was. The king seems to have said: "Very good, here is the man. I want him." The poet was admitted. No one knew the secret, what the mystery was of this milk, this sugar business.

The idea was this. The king wanted to convey the message that the court was full. There was no vacancy. That was the meaning of the milk filled to the brim in the tumbler. "I have no place." But the poets' answer was: "Even if there is no place, I can find a place, just as sugar can find a place in the milk, though full to the brim." And not only that; the sugar has been so effective that it has sweetened the whole of the milk. "My presence in the court will sweeten your court in the same way as the sugar has sweetened the whole of the milk. Secondly, my presence in the court will not be felt and I will not be an unwanted man, or an extra person, even as one cannot see the presence of sugar in the milk."

This is an anecdote which should give illustration to the ways of a good administrator. Every person who can be regarded as a real leader, a true administrator, is not to be outside the set-up of the administration. He is not just one individual among the many, rather he is a super-individual power. Are we not more than a physical system or disconnected parts? We have an impersonal significance in us, beyond the bodily limbs. This is something which the

Yoga will tell you. We are not persons but vehicles of impersonality. The more you are able to develop this impersonal character in your personality, the more will you be a successful leader of people, because impersonality is nothing but the capacity to enter into the personality of other people. But, if you are also to be merely one of the personalities, you cannot enter into others' hearts. Your dimension of outlook is to be wider than the dimension of the outlooks of other people. You are to be a power, rather than a person. You have significance as a force rather than as an individual, and when you become a true administrator, you become a super-individual element, unknowingly.

Yoga is not a difficult technique, though it appears a difficult one in the beginning. It is an art of expanding the area of your outlook and conduct, so that you learn to live a larger life in your own personal career and private aspirations, as well as be an incentive to others to whom you owe a responsibility, so that when you become the most efficient leader of people, you become a superman, almost.

The lesser the vehemence of your personality or individuality, the greater is the capacity in you for positive achievement. But when one's individuality protrudes itself or becomes an ostensible feature in the organisation, it sets itself, at times, in opposition to other individuals. A true leader of people ceases to be one individual among other individuals and rises above the totality of individualities of others. That is the meaning of the impersonality that the leading individual develops. He may appear to be an individual from the point of view of his physical body, but from the standpoint of his inner outlook, he is not just that much. He is a vibration of an impersonal type, of a super-individual nature. Well, I cannot say that all of us can become supermen. It is a far-fetched ideal. But we have to try to approximate our lives one step at least, in the direction of the superhuman expectation. Nature is a vast infinite organisation, and we are tending towards the realisation of this infinitude in our lives. That is why endless things are what we seek economically, physically, temporally. Vast

possessions are our desire. A very long life is our desire, and anything that we seek seems to have no end. We seek happiness. To what extent? You may say, "Well, there is no limit—as much as is possible." This urge within us for an endless satisfaction, an infinitude of possession in our quest is an indication of what we are essentially. Nature seems to speak to us in the language of *Dharma*, and infinity, and to the extent we are able to rise to the expectations of this infinity in our working, to that extent we shall be perfect in our life. But if we assert our egoism, if we are too ostentatious in our behaviour, if our conduct in life, in society, is repugnant to the equal affirmations of other people, then we would be a failure in our vocations. We may be factory workers, office-goers, army men, whatever we are—we may be sweepers on the road, whatever work we do, the spirit behind this work should be of uniformity. When you look to the spirit behind the work, you will find there is no difference between the work of a Prime Minister or a low-paid labourer as far as their contributions to the well-being of the Nation are concerned. There is an organising spirit that is working behind every kind of activity, and when there is harmony among the various types of the manifestation of this central principle of working, we are said to have a national conduct. We should generally speak of a national character. It is the character of the consciousness developed in ourselves in respect of the total ideal of the entire Nation. Dharma is the ideal towards which the Nation is moving and working. If our daily conduct and the little work that we do even in the lowest capacity contributes, directly or indirectly, to the fulfilment of the ideal that is before the Nation, then we have a national character, whatever be the work that we do—that would make no difference. If we worked only for a parochial purpose, then we would lose the national character. Today we have come to a stage of life where it is not enough if we are merely national units. We are also international citizens. We all know it very well. We are not merely this. There is something more true. We are citizens of the Universe.

You are not merely members of a small family. You are not fathers or mothers, brothers or sisters. You are conscious, significant, responsible units which contribute and ought to contribute to the welfare of the whole country, to the fulfilment of the ideal of the whole Nation, which keep in view the ideal of the whole world towards which human society is moving.

I conclude with a word of caution, you may say, that even an international ideal is not the goal of life. Our ideal is a universal one, and we are not moving merely towards the fulfilment of a national ideal or an international purpose, but a universal realisation. The universe is beckoning us from inside, it is not outside us. The universe is in our hearts. That is the great principle finally, you call the universe, of which you are an integral part. When you are summoned by it, you become restless until you get it, until you attain it, until you become one with it. Organisations are degrees of the Universe. There is the physical organisation, the psychological organisation, the social organisation, the moral organisation, the intellectual organisation, all feelers of the Universal Organisation.