

of hunger and thirst, of cold and heat, of pain and discomfort, are in the early days, or even months of our life, located by us in definite portions of our body; they are probably quite indefinite in this respect, as many even violent sensations in after life cannot be precisely located. But this does not prevent them from being quite as intense, forming quite as real events or facts in our inner life as the impressions of the outer world.

A violent pain, which we are at a loss to locate, may absorb for a moment our entire attention, covering as it were the whole field of our consciousness and driving away every other feature within it.

But not only bodily pain or enjoyment may absorb us in this way, but even mental anguish may be so acute that we entirely forget our physical surroundings. A keen lover of nature and natural scenery may for a moment be entirely oblivious of surroundings which he otherwise passionately enjoys, when his mind is full of some distressing thought:—

“In the wild woodlands, in the wild woodlands
I hear not the song near by,
For beyond the waving tree-tops
The great world heaves a sigh.”

In such moments the self or ego is as it were contracted into a single sensation, be this external or spiritual. For we can, in the same way, in listening to the complicated world of sound of an orchestra, or watching the scenes of a play, become entirely oblivious of everything else around or within us; and we are at such moments completely unconscious of ourselves and the larger world. Fortunately such states last only for a moment, and we are soon awakened again to