

MOTHER INDIA

Managing Editor:
K. R. PODDAR

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

Editor:
K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

ALTERNATE SATURDAYS

DECEMBER 24, 1949

VOL. I. NO. 22. FOUR ANNAS

CONTENTS

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM OF INDIA	1	VISION AND REALISATION	8
LOVE THAT TRANSGURES AND HARMONISES By Baron Erik Palmstierna	3	BOOKS IN THE BALANCE	9
THE HINDU MAHASABHA AND POLITICS By B. C. Sen	4	VIVID APPROACHES TO THE FIVE MIND (Review by P. L. Stephen of LITERATURE AND LIFE)	
LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS By K. G.	5	A MASTER-YOGI'S VISION AND WORK (Review by Rishabhchand of Kishor H. Gandhi's SRI AUROBINDO AND THE WORLD-CRISIS)	
THE TIME-SPIRIT By Rishabhchand	6	NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT	10
SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION Part II of "The World-Crisis and India" by "Synergist"	7	RETURN TO RELIGION By Gerald Heard	
HORIZONS (Poem) by Tehmi	7	MNEMOSYNE: MOTHER OF THE MUSES By K. D. Sethna	12
ALTAR AND FLAME (Poem) by K. D. Sethna	7		

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM OF INDIA

Out of all the fatuities with which modern India is infested, the most egregious is the long drawn-out discussion on the choice of a national anthem. The two songs that have been pitted against each other are really like two worlds apart and it is supreme lack of insight to set them up as equal candidates for election posing us a most perplexing problem. Once we understand, first, the prerequisites of the ideal national anthem and, secondly, the living associations and potencies of Bankim Chandra's *Vande Mataram* on the one hand and Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana* on the other, there cannot remain the slightest doubt that nothing except *Vande Mataram* can be the creative cry and the sustaining call on the lips of resurgent India.

We are often told that the prime consideration is that a national anthem should be suitable for collective singing, that it should have an effective orchestration. But these are, for all their importance, purely technical points. And woe betide the nation which appoints a committee of technicians to decide its anthem! Orchestral skill has certainly to be brought into play and a popular song which ultimately fails to be made suitable for collective singing will never get accepted. But such a song exists only in the imagination: the very fact that a song has been popular implies that it has possibilities of collective and orchestral treatment. The right kind of treatment may not be easy to come by; yet to say that there is a fundamental defect in the popular song, rendering the right kind impossible, is to indulge in extreme partisanship for a rival ditty and in gross underestimation of a country's musical talent: already we have more than one excellent notation of *Vande Mataram*, to balance that for which *Jana Gana Mana* has been commended. In the controversy about a national anthem, the prime consideration, where a popular song is concerned, can never be a technical one. We have to go down to its significance and its emotion, we have to look at its history and its impact on the times.

What would be the ideal national anthem? Most people would think immediately of the stirring language and music of *La Marseillaise*. If we look at the history of this song and its impact on the times, it will be seen to fulfil every demand we can stipulate: it appeared at the right psychological moment, expressed the precise mood of revolutionary France wanting to be a republic, and on its magnificent flood an entire country swept to liberation from century-old bondage. It is also intensely inspired—every word rings authentic and carries the high passion that filled both philosopher and commoner, the passion for man's erect and unobstructed growth. We cannot hope for a fierier strain packed more creatively with a whole nation's yearning for liberty, equality and fraternity. But, though from a political and social angle it is the example *par excellence* of what a national anthem should be, it leaves certain wider and deeper needs unsatisfied.

The Reality of National Being

The ideal national anthem must not only express the political and social man or even the complete self of thinking and feeling individuals composing a people, but also bring home to us the reality of national being. What is a nation? Of course, a nation must have certain common cultural features in all its geographical distributions and linguistic differentiations. These common features require for their complete crystallisation, so to speak, a well-defined territory, a distinguishable physical shape of the land in which they have emerged. Certain collective confrontations of momentous and perilous issues turn all the more concrete the common and widely prevalent traits of cultural consciousness held within marked boundaries of mountain and river and ocean. But if we stop with these definitions and believe that we have done with nationhood when we have applied them to an aggregate of individuals we shall be committing a folly to which the modern mind is excessively prone—the folly of regarding the diversity of existence as real and concrete and the underlying unity as merely

ideative and abstract. But a nation can never be an aggregate of individuals any more than a country is just a large piece of land. When we speak of India we are alive to the presence and power of a single being whose outermost shell is the territorial expanse indicated on our maps and whose more subtle and plastic body is the collection of human beings living in that expanse and sharing and expressing certain cultural characteristics. But our too intellectual turn leads us to dismiss this awareness as a figurative mode of feeling: we declare that we are only practising patriotic personification and that there is no actual entity beyond the individuals inhabiting the land. But this is a patent self-deception. No patriot has ever fought and died for anything except a vast, moving and mighty supra-individual personality—a hidden Goddess, a gigantic Beloved, a great Mother. Especially as a great Mother this personality inspires him, for a country is felt as either fatherland or motherland and the latter aspect is the most intimately alive and commanding. Not in the cold dissecting rational mind but in the heart with its mysteries and profundities, its intuitions of the beyond, its inexplicable visions of the superhuman and the divine, that the essence of patriotism, as of every other individual-transcending passion, lies. A patriot who does not stir to the call of the great Mother that is his country and that is the unifying force of the millions inhabiting it is an impotent imposter. Or else if one feels the tremendous Presence and yet intellectually denies it one is effective for various ends but the schism within him will always impair his effectivity and his very triumphs will be unrounded and carry a proclivity to defeat.

The Vital Value of Nationalism

The ideal national anthem, therefore, brings out in full the reality of the single Being whose multiple expression is the myriads living in a country. And, mind you, it is the national Being and not just the Spirit of Man or the universal Spirit that is to be present in it. Nationalism has no meaning without this particularity. We may argue against the power of Nationalism, we may say that modern progressive thought minimises Nationalism in the hope of achieving a world-unity. But the very fact that we are talking of a national anthem implies the importance of the national Being. And the implication is perfectly justified. In point of fact, this Being is so far the only supra-individual entity that has concretely emerged in human consciousness. The sense of the Supreme Divine may be very strong in individuals, it may even be an effective force in certain human collectivities or nations, but not every collectivity or nation possesses it, whereas the sense of a Britannia, a *belle France*, a Cathleen ni Houlihan, a *Bharat Mata* is most vivid. Millions have lived and died for the national Being. Even avowed atheists are instinctively awake to it. Even the Russian Communists have a feeling of "Holy Russia," and if there will be a split in World Communism it will come, as it threatens in the case of Yugoslavia *versus* Russia, by way of an intense awareness of the distinct character of a national collectivity. Furthermore, not only is the national Being an already realised if not always intellectually acknowledged entity, but also is it a valuable, an essential part of the scheme of human evolution. Neither the consciousness of the one Spirit of Man in all countries nor that of the universal Spirit should annul the consciousness of nationhood. The wonderful world around us and above us and within us is never a featureless and colourless unity: it is a one-in-many, a unity-in-diversity, and we should err as much by stressing the single and the uniform as by concentrating exclusively on the multifold and the various. Life is not necessarily divided and broken up by being myriad-aspected; it is made richer, more capable of self-expression, more free and fiery, provided the inner unity is not forgotten or erased. Just as the uniqueness of the individual must never be regimented out of exist-

Continued overleaf

The National Anthem of India —Continued from page 1.

ence but carefully woven into a social symphony, so too the uniqueness of the national collectivity must be cherished without setting it at odds with the rest of mankind. Every large human aggregate has its distinct qualities of culture that are precious and that could never emerge if the aggregate did not stand out in its own rights. Nationalism is vital to the full development of humanity. Consequently, no national anthem can be ideal unless it brings, however subtly and refinedly, to the forefront the typical national Being of a country: even if a' r all divinity be hymned, there must be in the face and figure c spirit something clearly and fervently national.

The Typical Genius of an Nation

When we say "national", we mean merely a vague image of the country's consciousness. There must be a powerful suggestion of the precise colour and shape of the country's culture. Aggressiveness and fanaticism are, of course, to be avoided, though not at all the martial mood which keeps the sword ready and the soul keen-edged to combat any attempt at physical conquest or psychological enslavement. The powerful suggestion that is desirable cannot wholly come without this mood of manly self-sanctity, this ardent defensive attitude. But such an attitude itself is not sufficient to give the needed force of national individuality. What must be articulated is the typical genius of a nation. Thus, England's genius is a practical dynamic expansive life-instinct, with a background of vague poetic idealism. France's genius is an ordering brilliant clarity of intellect allied with a warm and often tempestuous enthusiasm for personal rights. The genius of India is in the first place an intense mysticism deriving from an ineradicable intuition of the Godhead that is the All and even more than the All, a creatively emanating and manifesting Consciousness and Delight, and in the second place a richness of varied, complex, adventurous, even fantastic-seeming forms of existence which yet carries a certain stability and self-balance by being rooted in a spontaneous organic energy. Something quintessential of this genius must pervade any anthem that aims at being ideally national in India. And here a point of considerable moment is the true meaning of Indianness.

When we speak of Indian spiritual culture expressing itself harmoniously with a varied vitality we mean the culture whose initial significances and original splendours are to be found in the Rig Veda and whose wide and luminous developments are in the Upanishads and the Gita and the Tantra and whose culmination and complete outburst of light we find today in the poetry and prose of Sri Aurobindo. This is not a narrow religion that cramps and divides: it is a profound synthesising multi-faceted movement of revelatory and transformative power not only expressed in inspired *sutra* or *sloka*, penetrating exposition or evocative exegesis, but also in the very stuff of the living consciousness and in the very gesture and action of the living body. Indian spiritual culture, true to the multiply-single Divinity of its vast intuition and experience and to the *élan* of its audacious diversely creative life-force, stands like a parliament of all faiths and philosophies, a federation of all ethical and social forms. No doubt, a few lines of growth have become rigidly assertive, but, in their exaggeration of some aspects out of the many that were natural to the Indian genius, they are not fundamental. Not these unplastic survivals of certain necessities called for by particular circumstances are what we mean by cultural Indianness. They conflict with the norms and forms set up by several religions. But the basic soul and shape of cultural Indianness can take into itself the uniqueness, the subtle nuance, of every religion. This remarkable quality of it has been evident to the students, in the West no less than in the East, of its prolific scripture and literature. Hence Indian spiritual culture cannot be objected to as being sectarian. But, on the other hand, we should be de-nationalising it if we refused to admit whatever ideas or terms in it distinguished it from the Islamic, Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Jain or even Buddhist culture. It has, for all its catholicity, characteristics of its own, and these characteristics it must retain in one manner or another if it is to be in any valid sense Indian. Take away these characteristics and it ceases being what the world knows it to be. Expunge them from a national anthem which claims to be Indian and you have a general non-descript religious terminology, lacking in all national savour and drained of all distinguishable and dynamic vitality. The Godhead hailed must bring the light and colour and configuration of what the descendents of the Rishis have felt and seen. The feeling and seeing are, because of their essential catholicity of motive, really acceptable by even a person who though in India does not think and pray with a consciousness in direct tune with the typical Indian spirituality; but if anyone takes objection to them because of their non-Islamic, non-Christian, non-Jewish, non-Zoroastrian, non-Sikh, non-Jain and even non-Buddhist suggestion, then he fails to understand what ultimate India is and he is trying to rob her of all genuine cultural value and to suppress a national genius that is, from the mystical and metaphysical viewpoint, the most wonderful in existence and, from the worldly and pragmatic viewpoint, no less wonderful by its wealth of varied creativeness and its capacity of almost unlimited organic assimilation. The concept of secularity prominent today in our Constitution must never encourage us to water down this genius: its function is discharged as soon as it ensures freedom of religious belief and ceremony, absence of

bigotry, non-discrimination on communal grounds. Over-touchiness with regard to the minorities is a blunder no less serious than riding roughshod over them. As settled dwellers in this sub-continent they are to be granted equal civic and individual rights with the majority that is called Hindu; but for their sake the majority must never diminish the marvellous potentialities of cultural Indianness. The national anthem of India cannot be ideal without burning with historical India's own distinct beauty of worship together with her broad vision of the universal Divine. If it does not thus burn, the India whose representative utterance it claims to be is just an artificial construct and not a grandly alive entity: she will be just a gilded simulacrum and the sum-total of her history will be a cypher.

A last hint remains now to be given about the ideal national anthem for us. When a country's genius itself is cast in the mystical mould, when to be truly Indian is to be charged with an instinct of the Divine and a presence of the Eternal in a way not common to other nationalities, the ideal national anthem will hardly echo the essential nature if it sings of God as a Power separate from the national Being rather than as having a core of identity with it. To draw everywhere a line, however faint, between the two and to suggest merely that God presides over or guides the Being that is India is to make the song miss the exquisite finishing touch that is the ever-so-little-more without which we are worlds away from truth and perfection. Our national Being, the Mother-Power whose children we are, must itself be visioned and voiced as ultimately the Supreme and the Eternal standing here in the evolving cosmos and in the process of time with the face and figures of our country's Soul but with all the glories of the Infinite Mystery suffusing them and spreading from them to the ends of the earth. Break up the core of direct identity and you at once muffle the master-tone of the anthem.

The Merits and Defects of "Jana Gana Mana"

Let us proceed to ask; Does Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana* fulfil the several *desiderata* we have mentioned? There is no denying its noble sentiment, poetic merit and musical charm. After all, it was the incomparable Rabindarnath who composed it, and it has a fine accent of country-wide friendliness as much as of gentle devotion to God. We must dismiss at once the ludicrous charge that it is an eulogy of George V on the occasion of his visit to India or even the cunning accusation that it lends itself easily to the apotheosis of any particular Indian deemed worthy of praise, say, Gandhiji. The phrase running like a refrain through the whole poem "Thou dispenser of India's destiny"—cannot be interpreted in its context as signifying anything except God, for this dispenser is addressed also as "Eternal Charioteer." Nor must we allow ourselves to be misguided by the contention that, because *Jana Gana Mana* refers only to certain provinces and not to all, it is insufficiently national: the song is intended to be a hymn to the one God who is pictured as looking after and uniting the diverse races of India, and the geographical names thrown in are poetically suggestive of some of the physical and ethnological features of the country, no aim is there to make an exhaustive inventory of places and races: the aim is to give a notion of India in her broad and general entirety moving in rhythm to the will of the Lord. Yes, Tagore's piece has a fineness deserving respect. But has it the qualities that are wanted in the ideal national anthem for India?

Unfortunately it fails on every count. There is not the intense consciousness of India as a mighty supra-individual Being: the mention of the country or of the nation is on the purely ideative or nobly sentimental level; the deep heart has not felt the huge presence and the words are vacant of its intimate force. India the puissant and beloved Mother does not flame out of the poem. There is not even an apostrophe to her as the Mother. The one sentence which brings in the term runs in Tagore's own translation: "Thy mother-arms were round her and thine eyes gazed upon her troubled face in sleepless love . . ." Here it is not India but God who is the Mother. This clinches the point that the poem is not directly an invocation of the national Being, much less does it visualise this Being in all its powerful particularity. As a result the ardour to preserve and defend it from losing that particularity is absent: the warrior and the hero are dumb in *Jana Gana Mana*. Neither does it embody the essence of historical India, the country that had created sublime scripture and royal epic and beautiful drama, gripped life with a happy inexhaustible versatility, built grandly in stone and wood, fashioned majestic institutions, cast the lines of harmonious polities and thrilled with the luminous colourful warp and weft of the careers of memorable men, the country that had grown a passionate pilgrim of both eternity and time and developed a flexible yet ineradicable individuality numerous centuries before Islam's crescent ever dawned on its farthest horizon. Where in *Jana Gana Mana* are the recognisable features of cultural Indianness? We have only a blurred beauty, a diffused light which can never serve to draw forth the deep *swabhava* of the national Being which has broken through all bonds and risen again with its world-unifying yet characteristically Indian face. Those two words, "Eternal Charioteer", are scarcely clear enough to stamp any vivid Indianness upon it: they make just a poetic image, they do not call up the figure of Sri Krishna who charioted Arjuna at the same time to triumph over his enemies and to the Vision of the Cosmic Deity—the

Continued on page 3

LOVE THAT TRANSCENDS AND HARMONISES

By BARON ERIK PALMSTIERNA
PRESIDENT, THE WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS

The Sorbonne had recently the bright idea to surprise their philosophical students with the following question at the examination: "Is Love a means to acquire knowledge?"

A difficult subject to explore, we may say. It touches very deep ground, and has been a matter of contention through the ages. But we shall never get rid of the question, even if we turn away and refuse to face the consequences of our attitude.

The fact that the question seems embarrassing and complex to us only shows how far we have alienated ourselves from the main problem set before man. Rationalists trust in reason and powers of logical thinking; adherents of institutional religions speak about faith that brings them to experience and knowledge; both scientists and devotees of the arts of high standing occasionally confess that intuitional glimpses brought them conceptions in a flash, which gave the needed inspiration; mystics speak to us about the "inner light" which guides and consoles. Seekers of knowledge regarding ultimate things have trodden many roads to reach their object.

But is Love truly a means to acquire knowledge? Can it be compared with any of the other means employed? I think not, but at the same time love is essential for the attainment of supreme knowledge. Better said, it is a *condition* of mind or soul, and without it we battle in vain.

Let us take a couple of examples from mundane life. We perfectly well know that we much easier gain knowledge about a subject when we love it. Our interest then becomes keener and we spare no efforts to examine the subject from all points. The same holds good in human intercourse. Two people, who love each other, develop their sense of understanding and they may become so intimately close that they easily apprehend the feelings, moods and thoughts of the beloved. It may happen that their natures become modified to an extent that makes the onlooker exclaim: "How alike they are!" An affinity grows which creates a kind of oneness.

Love was the best condition for the acquisition of knowledge.

In all the principal faiths love is accepted as the essence of the Divine, and Dante declares that it is "*il primo, il summo Valore*", which implies that without Love none reaches the regions where it is paramount and that we

cannot attain knowledge and understanding of Divine Life if love does not abide in our hearts. It is an impelling condition.

In our relations to God and Man, only love which makes us forget ourselves and makes us tolerant renders opportunities to attain our high object.

We try to establish a unity of mankind in a manner which demonstrates that we assume earth to be an isolated region where man alone shapes the conditions that suit his welfare. What a foolish assumption! If the condition which prevails in the living universe, if love, is forsaken and has no response on earth, we drift away from the Centre of All and darkness falls on human life; we lose our way.

In our programme the *World Congress of Faiths* rightly speaks of the spirit of Fellowship—an equivalent of love—without which Brotherhood cannot become established. No exterior means, no extension of communicational organisations in the end assure us that brotherhood has come to stay. It is only when the same condition prevails on earth which inspires life in higher regions we may feel safe and secure. So let us work incessantly to that end.

The love I speak of in this connection cannot be explained nor defined, because it originates in a realm we cannot as yet approach, and it has its well-springs in human souls. Its flow is unapproachable and unreal to those who close their inner chambers and refuse to allow the excess of Divine Love to enter themselves, but its might is apparent in many devoted lives we meet on our way. It is not organised masses, but individuals, who can save the world. It is individual men and women who by self-renewal are the carriers and instruments of the divine flow. The great Seers of the past rightly understood it and addressed themselves to individual man. It is by means of him and his willingness to serve that we can reach ahead to make the Cosmic force of Love supreme even on earth.

The East has, better than the Western world, understood how to maintain the affinity with the spiritual realm in individual souls. May it never lose this bond, but strengthen it, and thus assist struggling mankind which in our time undergoes the hard trials it has brought upon itself through belief in its own sovereignty.

The National Anthem of India—Continued from page 2

Vision that is itself so typically Indian. Throughout the poem we feel a disappointing though never undignified washing away of the fact that the force of unification cannot come by an assembled and outwardly constructed "universal religion" but only by plunging into the wide vibrating heart of the Indian spiritual consciousness which, behind all sectarian excrescences, holds in its multi-rhythmed rapture the secret of a spontaneous fundamental universality. To achieve lasting and natural unity of being we must not annul Indianness but be Indian in the central infinity-focussing sense and develop out of its ancient spiritual potencies a new vision that is no less recognisably Indian for all its modernism and secular state-idea. Lastly, *Jana Gana Mana* keeps a cleavage between the concept of India and the concept of the Divine, instead of making them converge and fuse: India here is only the country whose destiny is dispensed by God, she is collectively held to be separate from the Supreme in the phrase about the latter. "Thy finger points the path to all people," and in the sentence about the former, "My country lay in a deathlike silence of swoon." There is indeed a pervading suggestion that India has a spiritual aspiration and adventure, but it is not set aglow and her spiritual origin and destiny are not revealed with a flaming finality by making the Supreme shine out through her Soul.

The Paramount Qualities of "Vande Mataram"

All that *Jana Gana Mana*, despite its fineness, fails to convey is brought out with rare felicity in *Vande Mataram*. The unique union, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, of sweetness, simple directness and high poetic force in *Vande Mataram* is difficult to translate with absolute accuracy into English verse from the original Sanscrit interspersed with a few Bengali words. But the inspired drive of it is admirably caught in general in Sri Aurobindo's own rendering which is born of his having felt it in his very bloodstream during the days when he led the revolt of Bengal against foreign rule:

Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free.
Glory of moonlight dreams,
Over thy branches and lordly streams,
Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet!

Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low!
Mother, to thee I bow.

Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,
When the swords flash out in twice seventy million hands
And seventy million voices roar
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore?
With many strengths who art mighty and stored,
To thee I call, Mother and Lord!
Thou who savest, arise and save!
To her I cry who ever her foemen drave
Back from plain and sea
And shook herself free.

Thou art wisdom, thou art law,
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath,
Thou the love divine, the awe
In our hearts that conquers death.
Thine the strength that nerves the arm,
Thine the beauty, thine the charm,
Every image made divine
In our temples is but thine.

Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen,
With her hands that strike and her swords of sheen,
Thou art Lakshmi lotus-throned,
And the Muse a hundred-toned,
Pure and perfect without peer,
Mother, lend thine ear.
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Dark of hue, candid-fair
In thy soul, with jewelled hair
And the glorious smile divine,
Loveliest of all earthly lands,
Showering wealth from well-stored hands!
Mother, mother mine!
Mother sweet, I bow to thee,
Mother great and free!

Continued on page 4

THE HINDU MAHASABHA & POLITICS

By B. C. SEN

Secretary, Unity Party of India.

MOTHER INDIA puts before its readers for their consideration the opinions expressed by several political parties in India whenever there is an attempt to draw inspiration from the spiritual founts of our country. These opinions are not necessarily its own. In fact, MOTHER INDIA, as stressed in its editorial manifesto of February 19, represents no political party, although it may be in agreement with certain views held by one party or another.

The Hindu Mahasabha has decided to resume political work after sixteen months of its suspension. After the assassination of Gandhiji the Hindusabhis were marked out for public condemnation and in many Provinces they had to pass through an ordeal of indescribable fury. As a last attempt to save the organisation from utter ruin the leaders decided to abjure all political activity. The result of the trial, however, has proved the innocence of the Mahasabha and the Government were compelled to release all its members and leaders (about twenty thousand) after a period of most arbitrary detention. The public prejudice gradually melted away, and now the need of a powerful political party which can serve as a democratic opposition is being felt everywhere, and the Mahasabha is intending to come to the political front.

Explaining the new stand of the Mahasabha, Mr. Asutosh Lahiri, the General Secretary, said in a Press Conference recently in Calcutta: "If India is to rediscover her soul which had been all but lost during hundreds of years of our political slavery, we must go back to our ancient moorings, and reconstruct life and Society, in all its aspects from the fountainhead of knowledge and experience. Today though the foreigners have left, and we have achieved freedom, we have not yet attained Swarajya. Freedom has not yet heralded an era of Indian Renaissance, nor do the masses breathe the air, or sense the joy, of freedom. There, is, indeed, an oppressive load on the people's mind, and the increasing tales of corruption, profiteering, and maladministration, have been the most unsettling factors in the present political situation. All these are due to the

fact that our real freedom has not yet been achieved. It has to be consummated through years of hard work, fresh sacrifices and suffering and new construction in accordance with the genius of our people. This is a task which the present Congress leaders are incapable of undertaking, as they lack faith in the superiority of India's ancient achievements, and are themselves living embodiments of Western civilization and Western thought and outlook."

Referring to the menace of Provincialism he says in another booklet: "Unless we succeed in stemming the tide of this monster of provincialism, we do not know where the country will drift to. We feel the Mahasabha is the only organisation that provides the necessary ideal for keeping all sections of the people united, for we want to build up Free India on the basis of our ancient Indian culture. The supe-

rior call of a common culture and civilisation and a higher human existence is a powerful cementing factor and can alone provide an enduring basis for internal solidarity amidst conflicting forces that are so active today."

The Quest for Indian Culture

There is no doubt that the unity of India and the Indian nation can be built up only on the basis of her ancient culture, but the difficulty is that no one gives a clear idea of what that culture is and the Hindu Mahasabha is not an exception. Some of the Congress leaders also are alive to the need of revitalising the ancient culture of India. Thus addressing the Convocation of Benares Hindu University, Mr. K. M. Munshi, the veteran Congress leader, said that India was facing a "cultural crisis", and he remarked that after the attainment of independence, India was being governed by "the best amongst us", and commanded a prestige in international life which she had only done in the classical age of the Guptas. Thus the plea that the Mahasabha is the only organisation that provides the necessary ideal will not be easily accepted; the mere fact that the Mahasabha calls itself "Hindu" does not give it any authority to be the interpreter and spokesman of Hindu or Indian culture. Besides the Congress and the Maha-

sabha, there are other bodies also, such as the R.S.S., the Rama Rajya Parishad, the Santana Dharma Parishad and a host of others who are giving their own interpretations of Hindu culture. How then does the Mahasabha propose to bring about the unity of India by appealing to people in the name of Indian culture?

The Mahasabha will render a great service to the country if at this time of crisis, it can give an authoritative exposition of Indian culture in all its aspects, spiritual, political, economic, artistic and it can do so if it accepts entirely the exposition of Indian culture that has been given by Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya*, a unique journal in which he expressed for seven years his yogic experience and furnished the highest and the deepest solutions of all human problems from a supra-mental vision. Most of the writings of the *Arya*, covering all aspects of Indian culture, have been reprinted in book form, the latest being *The Human Cycle* about which the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (22-11-1949) has made the following remarks:

"The book is without doubt the most significant landmark in the history of social thought in the modern age, one of incomparable value, because no other thinker of the present age has set forth in such

Continued on page 10

The National Anthem of India *Continued from page 3*

Not a single demand in order to get the ideal national anthem for India is left unanswered here by a poetic language and rhythm that come with the mystical inevitability of what is called the *mantra*—the visionary word springing by some identification of the hidden poetic self with the deep heart of the thing to be uttered, and catching in the moment of identification the secret divine truth and reality which has figured forth that thing. Not only is each phrase replete with precise and necessary significance, but the various phrases form an unfolding scheme both artistically and philosophically satisfying, a three-stepped progression which, in a speech delivered thirty-one years ago in the grand square of the National School of Amraoti, Sri Aurobindo is reported to have explained. As with the individual, so with the nation, there are three sheaths or bodies—the gross or outer, the subtle or inner, the causal or higher. The first consists of the physical elements, the shape, the visible organic functioning. In Bankim Chandra's poem it is the rapid rivers and the glimmering orchards, the winds and the harvests waving, the moon-magical nights in forest and on riverside. A transition from the outer body to the inner is through the human populations, the warrior men who are the physical instruments of the fine frenzy of freedom that is hers. Their teeming vitality is the cry of independence she sends forth from the inner to the outer—the inner that is a formation of beautiful disciplined powers, an inspired energy, a pure passion, an illumined thought, a righteous will, an aesthesis enchanting and refining. This subtle sheath of her being bears hints of a still greater mode of her existence and by those hints the supra-individual and national self of her mingles, in our enthusiasms as well as in our meditations, with all the symbols of the Infinite and the Eternal our religious nature instals everywhere in our land. That still greater mode is the prime creative arch-image, at once single and many-aspected, whose evolving expression is the vast world with its nations and peoples. Cause and controller from its transcendental status, it is the Divine Truth of all formulated being, the ever-living supreme Personality whose power and bliss and knowledge are the perfection towards which we aspire in this country of ours when we love so vehemently the soil sanctified by hero and saint and seer and when we fling ourselves so happily into the service of the majestic and maternal Presence that we feel to be the indivisible India stretched in a myriad harmonious moods across space and time.

The revelatory vision and the mantric vibration distinguishing *Vande*

Mataram throw *Jana Gana Mana* entirely into the shade. And it is no wonder that not Tagore's but Bankim's song has been the motive-force of the whole struggle for India's freedom. Until it burned and quivered in the hearts of our patriots and rose like a prayer and incantation on their lips, the country was striving with an obscure sense of its own greatness: there was a vagueness, a lukewarmness, a fear: we were overawed by the material prowess and pomp of our foreign rulers and our efforts to find our true selves were spoiled by either an unthinking imitation of the West or else a defensive anti-Western conservatism. We had not struck upon the master-key to the problem of national existence. Then, out of a book that had been neglected when it first appeared, the music of *Vande Mataram* rang into the ambiguously agitated air of the nation's reawakening consciousness. Sri Aurobindo was at that time the political guru of Bengal. He realised at once the creative energy packed into this poem. With a gesture as of an ultimate world-secret found at last, he scattered the words of Bankim Chandra all over idealistic Bengal from whose "seventy million voices" that are rightly celebrated in the poem they spread to Gujarat and Maharashtra and beyond. In his own life he incarnated the presence of the mighty Mother with her aura of mystical consciousness. Under the spell of this presence a giant determination and zest took birth in the entire land, beginning a movement whose goal was bound to be independence. No sacrifice was too exacting, no suffering too poignant to be endured, not death itself could terrify. Laughing and singing, the patriots fought and served and died. Through all the long years during which the struggle for swaraj went on, *Vande Mataram* stimulated and supported the peoples of India, instilling into them a hope and a strength beyond the human. It is the one cry that has made modern Indian history; not political speeches, but this magical strain breaking through Bankim Chandra from the inmost recesses of resurgent India's heart and interfused by Sri Aurobindo with India's mind and life as the true national anthem, brought us, two years ago, on the fifteenth of August which was also the seventy-fifth birthday of Sri Aurobindo, our political liberation. To put such a saviour-song on any other footing than that of the national anthem is to be disloyal to the Power that has given us a new birth. To overlook the fact that it has been a saviour-song because it is ideally the national anthem of India is to set ourselves out of tune with the glorious future calling to our glorious past.

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(21)

One of our chief aims will be to provide authentic guidance in regard to the many perplexing questions with which the common man is faced in his daily life. This cannot be better done than by considering these questions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's writings, because Sri Aurobindo is not merely a Master of Yoga in possession of the Eternal Spiritual Truths, but also a Guide and Helper of mankind in the many trying situations that arise in the course of its day-to-day existence. To bring home the light of this guidance and to make it directly applicable to the concrete problems of life, a series of questions of common interest along with precise answers directly taken from Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q: 1. What was the chief reason which turned the materialistic objectivism of the last century to subjectivism?

A: In Europe this materialistic objectivism "has proceeded by the discovery of the laws of the physical universe and the economic and sociological conditions of human life as determined by the physical being of man, his environment, his evolutionary history, his physical and vital, his individual and collective need. But after a time it must become apparent that the knowledge of the physical world is not the whole of knowledge; it must appear that man is a mental as well as a physical and vital being and even much more essentially mental than physical or vital. Even though his psychology is strongly affected and limited by his physical being and environment, it is not at its roots determined by them, but constantly reacts, subtly determines their action, effects even their new-shaping by the force of his psychological demand on life. His economic state and social institutions are themselves governed by his psychological demand on the possibilities, circumstances, tendencies created by the relation between the mind and soul of humanity and its life and body. Therefore to find the truth of things and the law of his being in relation to that truth he must go deeper and fathom the subjective secret of himself and things as well as their objective forms and surroundings."

Q: 2. But could he not find this truth and this law by the power of his critical analytic intellect without having recourse to his deeper powers?

A: "Not for very long. For in his study of himself and the world he cannot but come face to face with the soul in himself and the soul in the world and find it to be an entity so profound, so complex, so full of hidden secrets and powers that his intellectual reason betrays itself as an insufficient light and a fumbling seeker: it is successfully analytical only of superficialities and of what lies just behind the superficialities. The need of a deeper knowledge must then turn him to the discovery of new powers and means within himself. He finds that he can only know himself entirely by becoming actively self-conscious and not merely self-critical, by more and more living in his soul and acting out of it rather than floundering on surfaces, by putting himself into conscious harmony with that which lies behind his superficial mentality and psychology and by enlightening his reason and making dynamic his action through this deeper light and power to which he thus opens. In this process the rationalistic ideal begins to subject itself to the ideal of intuitional knowledge and a deeper self-awareness; the utilitarian standard gives way to the aspiration towards self-consciousness and self-realisation; the rule of living according to the manifest laws of physical Nature is replaced by the effort towards living according to the veiled Law and Will and Power active in the life of the world and in the inner and outer life of humanity."

Q: 3. What changes did this new subjective Intuitionalism produce in the cultural activities of the modern age?

A: "The art, music and literature of the world, always a sure index of the vital tendencies of the age, have undergone a profound revolution in the direction of an ever-deepening subjectivism. The great objective art and literature of the past no longer commands the mind of the new age. The first tendency was, as in thought so in literature, an increasing psychological vitalism which sought to represent penetratingly the most subtle psychological impulses and tendencies of man as they started to the surface in his emotional aesthetic and vitalistic cravings and activities. Composed with great skill and subtlety but without any real insight into the law of man's being, these creations seldom got behind the reverse side of our surface emotions, sensations and actions which they minutely analysed in their details but without any wide or profound light of knowledge; they were perhaps more immediately interesting but ordinarily inferior as art to the old literature which at least seized firmly and with a large and powerful mastery on its province. Often they described the malady of Life rather than its health and power, or the riot and revolt of its cravings, vehement and therefore impotent and unsatis-

fied, rather than its dynamis of self-expression and self-possession. But to this movement which reached its highest creative power in Russia, there succeeded a turn towards a more truly psychological art, music and literature, mental, intuitional, psychic rather than vitalistic, departing in fact from a superficial vitalism as much as its predecessors departed from the objective mind of the past. This new movement largely aimed like the new philosophic Intuitionalism at a real rending of the veil, the seizure by the human mind of that which does not overtly express itself, the touch and penetration into the hidden soul of things. Much of it was still infirm, unsubstantial in its grasp on what it pursued, rudimentary in its forms, but it initiated a decisive departure of the human mind from its old moorings and pointed the direction in which it is being piloted on a momentous voyage of discovery, the discovery of a new world within which must eventually bring about the creation of a new world without in life and society. Art and literature seem definitely to have taken a turn towards a subjective search into what may be called the hidden inside of things and away from the rational and objective canon or nature."

Q: 4. In the field of education, as in the fields of art and literature, the subjective movement has brought about a definitive change in the ideals of the previous generation. What is the main consequence of this change?

A: "Formerly, education was merely a mechanical forcing of the child's nature into arbitrary grooves of training and knowledge in which his individual subjectivity was the last thing considered, and his family upbringing was a constant repression and compulsory shaping of his habits, his thoughts, his character into the mould fixed for them by the conventional ideas or individual interests and ideals of the teachers and parents. The discovery that education must be a bringing out of the child's own intellectual and moral capacities to their highest possible value and must be based on the psychology of the child-nature was a step forward towards a more healthy because a more subjective system."

Q: 5. In what respect did this new discovery fall short of the complete truth about child-education? By what way could it arrive at this complete truth?

A: It "fell short because it still regarded him as an object to be handled and moulded by the teacher, to be educated. But at least there was a glimmering of the realisation that each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. It is not yet realised what this soul is or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity within. That, if we ever give it a chance to come forward, and still more if we call it into the foreground as 'the leader of the march set in our front,' will itself take up most of the business of education out of our hands and develop the capacity of the psychological being towards a realisation of its potentialities of which our present mechanical view of life and man and external routine methods of dealing with them prevent us from having any experience or forming any conception. These new educational methods are on the straight way to this truer dealing. The closer touch attempted with the psychical entity behind the vital and physical mentality and an increasing reliance on its possibilities must lead to the ultimate discovery that man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evocation of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life if it would find and live according to the hidden Truth and deepest law of its own being. That was the knowledge which the ancients sought to express through religious and social symbolism, and subjectivism is a road of return to the lost knowledge. First deepening man's inner experience, restoring perhaps on an unprecedented scale insight and self-knowledge to the race, it must end by revolutionising his social and collective self-expression."

K.G.

The Time-Spirit

By RISHABHCHAND

The Time-Spirit or the Zeitgeist is an epochal or periodic expression of the universal will in the evolutionary thought and activity of human society. Evolution means a spiral ascent, a progressive self-transcendence, a series of self-unfoldings of consciousness, at every crucial stage of which something new and imperatively dynamic infiltrates into it from above and emerges from below to impart a distinct turn and a decisive tempo to the working of the existing energies. This is the Time-Spirit. It comes charged with the fiat of the Absolute and steadily or abruptly overcomes all resistance to its own fulfilment. But it has its stages of emergence, steps of development, rhythms of self-fulfilment; and its action is often unpredictable inasmuch as it has to make its way through a tangle of contending forces, and proceeds now by strife, now by compromise and now by sweeping triumphs to its pre-ordained, but to us inscrutable, goal. Sometimes it effects a partial change and, leaving its fermenting touch upon favourable elements, bides its time for an intenser and wider working; but, at other times, it comes pouring down like an avalanche and by mighty, transforming strokes, brings about a radical and revolutionary change. Whatever the nature of its action, it suggests the crucial steps of evolution and is an infallible pointer to what is struggling to emerge from the womb of the future.

In the beginning, the Time-Spirit may manifest itself as a vague but insistent thought or a sudden flash of intuitive perception in the mind of one person or in the minds of a few representatives of their age, and then begin to recur and become more and more widely articulate, definite and active. Or, as in cataclysmic periods of radical change, it is embodied in a human incarnation of the Supreme (Avatar) and acquires an authenticity and potency abnormal to the habitual action of the universal Nature. The Time-Spirit is irresistible, in whatever guise it may manifest itself, and not all the forces of the world are capable of checking its course or baulking it of its purpose. But yet it is stubbornly resisted when it becomes articulate and insistent in its demands—the forces of conservatism veto its self-expression and oppose it with their inertia and heavy insensibility.

Man, bound to the earth and confined to her established norms and fixed grooves, boggles at anything new to which he is not accustomed, and revolts against its advent and growth. In the name of religion and social usage, in the name of ideative values and inherited prepossessions, he combats the action of the Time-Spirit and strives to perpetuate his *status quo*. This rigid conservatism or insensate attachment to orthodoxy is a characteristic of the physical mind of man. It is, really speaking, the revolt of Matter against the creative self-expansion and self-expression of the Spirit. "This is my religion and these are its inviolable tenets; this is the time-honoured custom of my society and I cannot give it the go-by by any means"—these are the usual, stupid arguments of the physical part of our consciousness. And yet it submits willy nilly to the working of the Time-Spirit, and is obliged to subserve its ends. By almost imperceptible means, the Time-Spirit penetrates into the thoughts and feelings of mankind, achieves a distinct formulation and articulation here, suffers a set-back there and prepares in this way its final outburst and victory through a complex, incalculable process of permeation and elimination.

The Ideals of the French Revolution

The Time-Spirit of the age in which we live was first embodied and expressed, however imperfectly, by the French Revolution. It was at that distant date that the destiny of the human race was outlined in

the mighty watchword of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. A new principle evolved in the relations of human society and a new horizon opened. A message of stupendous moment and significance came to stay and shape the life and thought of mankind. But it lacked clear light and what force it commanded was rather turbid and mostly spent itself upon the soil of its birth. But still the world felt its repercussion and a thrill passed through it like the thrill of awakening passing through Nature at the first kiss of the morning light. Here and there a few chains clanked and looked like snapping, and an intense thirst for liberty possessed humanity. Liberty in thought and action, an uncurbed liberty of the individual in his self-development and self-expression and in his manifold relations with his fellowmen, became the passion and obsession of the times following the French Revolution, and individualism came to be the dominant philosophy of this new trend. But the individual is not a solitary in society, he is bound up with others; and an extreme individualism stultifies itself by an uncompromising insistence on self-insulation. The weight was then shifted on to the side of society or community—liberty had to be mated with equality. But, as it is bound to happen in all mind-made arrangements, the stress fell preponderantly, even exclusively, on equality, and the result was the theory of socialism with its disregard of individual liberty and deliberate discouragement of all individual initiative. This was Nature's nemesis for the gross inequalities of mediaeval feudalism and subsequent capitalism; and its extreme form is Communism, which is a philosophy of the equality of the mass reduced to an enforced, mechanical uniformity and topped by an atavistic autocratic control carrying on its organized coercion in the name of democracy. All individual initiative is ruthlessly crushed in Communism, till equality becomes only a constrained conformity of regimented human automatons.

The problem before the present world is, therefore, the equating of liberty with equality. Perfect individual liberty must be made not only compatible with perfect equality, but both must become indispensable to mutual development. Here the problem rises to a higher than the mental-vital level of human consciousness; for, on this normal level, there can be no reconciliation between individual freedom and

collective equality. Individual liberty betrays an inveterate tendency to deviate into licence and ride rough-shod over the interests of the collectivity; and collective equality is usually purchased at the cost of a crippling curb on individual liberty. The third principle of the French Revolution, Fraternity, has, therefore, to emerge and unite these two apparently antagonistic principles. But fraternity is not mutual tolerance or a co-ordination by compromise of mutual interests between the individual and the society. If it were that, it would be a poor and brittle enough base for the development of liberty and equality. Fraternity is, in essence, love, the most potent force in the world for the binding together of all individual units. It is a denial of all egoistic propensities, a permanent safeguard against liberty sliding into licence and a generator of perfect equality. It must be remembered here that this love is not human love, which is intrinsically tainted with partiality and precariousness; it is the love of the soul for all creatures, the inalienable feeling of identity with all, which is implanted in all beings. It is only when this love comes to the front and leavens the whole of human consciousness that full individual liberty and social equality can safely play into each other's hands and make for an unprecedented progress in human relations and cultural life.

It is clear, then, that the Time-Spirit calls to-day for the birth of the third principle of love, without which the individual and the collectivity will be in perpetual conflict. The herd may try to sit upon the individual for a time by sheer brute force, but ultimately it is the individual, the man of genius, the soul of fire who will knock down the herd and lead it by the nose. In fact, history does not furnish a single instance of a country or a nation having been ruled by the people in the mass, the proletariat. It is always a few intelligent and enterprising individuals who rule by the submissive or mechanical acquiescence of the mass; and it is interesting to note that, barring some exceptions, these individuals are almost always either of bourgeois origin or bourgeois breeding. Today in Russia, in the name of the mass, in the ostensible interest of democracy, an organized and entrenched bourgeois regime represses the very humanity it so loudly professes to serve. A few individuals in power constitute the State and dominate a whole mass of people by a ruthless and unchallenged dictatorship. But this cannot go on for ever. A day is bound to come when one or more will raise the standard of revolt and the whole hoax of the proletarian rule will come crashing down to the ground.

This is not to say that there can be no organization of life on the basis of equality. The Time-Spirit unmistakably suggests such an eventuality and the world conditions are steadily tending to bring it into being. But, as I have said, unless the third principle of the French Revolution, Fraternity, appears as a dynamic factor in the relations of man to man, real equality will still remain a distant, if tantalizing, ideal. Love has to come and act as a cementing bond, but the love which

is not a passing emotion or a sterile, superficial sentiment, helplessly at the mercy of outward circumstances or vital self-interest. The love which will liberate human liberty from its self-forged fetters and unite it with equality, insuring the latter against mechanical uniformity, must be a growth from within and a descent from above. It can come only from that in man which is above all, common to all, and one in all—the Divine. It cannot be produced by pacts and policies or an adjustment of desires and interests, nor is it a manufacture of the mental consciousness of man. It has to be sought in something which is beyond the mind. Universal and eternal dynamic love, as distinguished from the static, can come only from what Sri Aurobindo calls the Supermind, or what was regarded by the Vedic and the Upanishadic Rishis as the unitarian Truth-Consciousness.

Liberty has established its sway over the consciousness of man as the sole condition of individual and collective growth and unhindered self-expression. Without it life tastes bitter and proves a burden. But an external liberty, unaccompanied by an inner freedom, is a truncated achievement. The next stage in the expansion of the principle of liberty will, therefore, be a breaking of the inner bonds and an assertion of the sovereignty of the in-dwelling Spirit over all that constitutes the outer personality and the external nature.

Equality has been accepted as the ruling creed of modern humanity. But an abolition of all external distinctions and an equal distribution of the amenities of material life are only the first step of an outer equality, which will always remain extremely insecure, unless the inner equality comes eliminating egoistic greed and envy from the human mind and creating free mutuality and interchange. The inner equality will not be troubled or deluded by the outer disguises of men, but shine undimmed out of the core of unity and identity. The distinctions, even the divisions, of life must and will persist, but the inner equality will regard them only as superficial and temporal variations, indispensable to a multitudinous play of man's terrestrial possibilities.

Fraternity has still to emerge as a vital concept and natural feeling of mankind. It may, in the beginning, wear the aspect of a social and political comradeship or a binding principle of practical humanism, or it may appear as a result of a pronounced cosmopolitan outlook; but it must ultimately reveal its identity as an innate love for all beings, promoting and perfecting not only unity and harmony, but also an endless depoyment of infinite diversity pedestalled upon unity.

The True Fraternity

But the present extraverted state of the human mind, its voluntary exile from the light and life of the depths and its obsession with the superficial and the transitory has to be replaced by a growing ingathering and introversion and a discovery of the hidden founts. The prodigal has to return to his father

Continued on page 8

SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION

PART II OF "THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA"

BY "Synergist"

SECTION III: THE NEW WORLD-VIEW

(1) THE CULTURAL CRISIS AND THE PROBLEM OF THOUGHT

In *The World Crisis and India* a number of inter-related philosophical ideas concerning man's physical, vital, mental and spiritual evolution were brought together, and then the direction in which his further evolution should proceed was shown. What was attempted there was an "assemblage", to use a phrase of Whitehead's; what is attempted in this Series may be called a systematization, the stage that should follow the "assemblage".

It was first shown that consciousness is the primary determinant in shaping the particular character of a culture, and that if it were to succeed in transcending the limitations of the ego and attain contact with the Spirit it would naturally create a culture greater than one created by the physical-vital-mental ego-centric consciousness of the average human. Its apprehension of Reality being greater, it would be able to comprehend more clearly the extrinsic as well as intrinsic relations between God, Universe and man, and create a more enlightened culture.

Then it was pointed out that the culture of a people can be said to be the expression of its life-awareness and world-awareness. This expression formulates itself triply, each formulation expressing a fundamental strain in the human consciousness. The first formulation is that of Religion and Philosophy as in the West, or as in India, that of a Spiritual Metaphysic—a system of philosophy created on the basis of truths realised in spiritual experience.* Philosophy is the expression of the mind's seeking for the absolutes of Truth and Good and for wide and all-embracing generalisations which can explain the nature of the Ultimate Reality, man's relation with it, and the rationale of the cosmic process. Religion is the expression of the soul's seeking for its transcendent Source, the Divine Being, its aspiration to live in constant union with Him and thereby lead a more perfect and a diviner existence. In primitive man these urges worked blindly, in the evolved mental man they work more consciously, because his consciousness is capable of detaching itself to a much greater extent from its vital and physical envelopments and therefore in a position to see clearly and co-operate with the evolutionary nîsus, which secretly impels him to seek the Divine Reality and to lead a more perfect existence. Art and Literature are formulations created by the aesthetic strain in the human consciousness; this strain makes man seek the absolute of Beauty and urges him to capture its inmost spirit and embody it in terrestrial things. The third important formulation is created by the pragmatic strain; it expresses itself in man's attempts to create on the foundation of his philosophy and religion ideal norms of conduct and a perfect system of social relationships—this strain creates ethics, politics and sociology. The type of ethic referred to here is the Social Ethic, not the

(To be continued in the next issue.)

Idealistic Ethic which is an expression of the strain that seeks the absolute of Good.*

In the highest types of culture, the metaphysic or, as in India, the spiritual metaphysic, acts as the unifying matrix of the cultural unity and integrates its diverse strands. It is largely from its metaphysic with its attendant norms and values that a culture takes its shape and character, for a people's philosophy and religion are its answers to the eternal questions, these answers depending upon its knowledge of God, man and the Universe, and it is according to its conceptions of these that it will form its ideas of good and evil, right and wrong, these ideas ultimately influencing its attitude towards others and largely governing its conduct.

Finally it was shown that what humanity needs today is a new world-view based upon a spiritual metaphysic—a non anthropomorphic yet theocentric one capable of explaining the meaning and purpose of life, and that only a spiritual metaphysic grounded in Reality can give rise to a living religion and sanction an ethic. But, as a spiritual metaphysic and ethic can only point the way to the visioned goal, but cannot by themselves show how spiritual truths can be actualised in life and how man can attain divine perfection, it was pointed out that a new Psychology was needed. First, a body of knowledge that can reveal the working of the psychological and psycho-physiological processes which govern the total personality of a man, his inner subliminal being, his inmost soul, his outer natural physical-vital-mental being that he calls "I", the dark and obscure nether subconsciousness ranges of his being, as well as his Superconscient higher self. It must also show how an individual being is connected with the Universe and with the Transcendent Reality, for without this knowledge the relation of man's immortal soul-being to the Divine, or that of his outer natural being to Universal mental, vital and material Nature of which it is a temporal formation, will not be known, nor the kinesis by which the ontological process turns into the existential process. So this part of the psychology needed for the new world-view may be called Meta-psychology as it takes its stand on metaphysical truths. The second part of this Psychology must be practical. It must give the detailed workings of a system of Yoga through the practice of which man can take the next step in his evolution and ultimately succeed in transforming his entire nature. Only such a spiritual discipline can make man's religion a living reality and lead him towards God-realisation and divine fulfilment. Once man's face is turned Godwards, and he realises the purpose for which this world was created, and knows through direct spiritual experience that other individuals are also like him emanations of the Divine Being, that his self is the same as the self of all and is identical with the Supreme Self, it will not be difficult for him to solve the problem of collective living.

*Refer to *World Crisis and India*: Essay VII, Consciousness and Culture.

*The four types of Ethic, the Anthropomorphic, the Social, the Idealistic and the Spiritual are discussed in *The World Crisis and India*: Essay XI.

Horizons

Beyond the unperspected horizons is nothing;
 Don't lie still, unsuspecting, dear;
 Sit up or twist yourself into a posture
 to picture the world straight.
 Let the nerves storm, the bones grate,
 the thought-curves gripe awry,
 the wrench-twirls cry and torture,—
 Till the whirl of blood tincture moods
 aright; give themes their proper shade and colour,
 discover all proportions—proper, unselfish, right-toned.
 They say, man becomes centre and measure
 of all his gaugings, and self-centred, self-cinctured,
 self-caged,
 ventures to encounter Sun-Truth—
 Sit up, though the limbs ache and hiss
 their agony; sit up and see
 with chastened eyes the starlit order;
 Fling the girdle of your dances over
 seas and mountains; meet
 sunbeam and rain-beat
 with the same God-mood; the horizon, dear,
 is nothing; and all our beyond is here.

TEHMI

Altar and Flame

Not with new altar-plan but with new flame
 Life lays on Godhead a king-coloured claim
 The shadowless Liberty can never deny!
 To cut the marble shape more beautiful
 Is but to pleasure distantly the Eye
 Burning above the mind: it cannot pull
 The great invisible Sun into earth's heart.
 Beyond ourselves, beyond the chisel's art
 Offering cold beauty motionless below,
 We must with visionary vehemence go,
 Calling and calling through unmeasured space,
 Changing the small fire's smile to a maddened blaze
 That laughs like a golden wilderness of whips
 And slashes the skies of secrecy hung between
 Our groping sight and the miracled Unseen.
 Thus only we drag down the Apocalypse!

K. D. SETHNA

VISION and REALISATION

Living and accurate expression of mystical and spiritual experience is rare. To convey the realities of this experience, in all their many-sidedness, and to show what the immense reaches of yogic evolution are, this series will present extracts from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

(After a few moments devoted to putting in order some familiar objects)

As a strong breeze passes over the sea and crowns with foam its innumerable waves, so a great breath passed over the memory and awakened a multitude of reminiscences. Intense, complex, crowded the past lived again in a flash, losing nothing of its savour, no part of its riches.

Then was the whole being raised up in a great uplift of adoration, and, gathering all its remembrances like an abundant harvest, it laid them, O Lord, at Thy feet as an offering.

For through all its life, without knowing it, or with some presentiment of it, it was Thou whom it was seeking; in all its desires, all its enthusiasms, all its hopes and disappointments, all its sufferings and all its joys, it was Thou whom ardently it wanted. And now that it has found Thee and possesses Thee in a supreme peace and felicity, it wonders that so many sensations, emotions and experiences should have been needed to discover Thee.

But all this which was a struggle, a turmoil and a perpetual effort, has become, through the sovereign grace of Thy conscious Presence, a priceless fortune which the being rejoices to make its gift to Thee. The purifying flame of Thy illumination has turned them into jewels of price laid down as a living holocaust on the altar of my heart.

The errors have become stepping-stones; the blind gropings conquests; Thy glory transforms defeats into eternity's victories; all shadows have fled before Thy radiant brightness.

It is Thou who wert the motive and the goal; Thou art the worker and the work.

The personal existence is a canticle, perpetually renewed, which the universe offers to Thy inconceivable splendour.

THE MOTHER

—Prayers & Meditations.

Paris, November 2, 1915

JIVANMUKTA.

There is a silence greater than any known
To earth's dumb spirit, motionless in the soul
That has become Eternity's foothold,
Touched by the infinitudes for ever.

A Splendour is here, refused to the earthward sight,
That floods some deep flame-covered all-seeing eye;
Revealed it wakens when God's stillness
Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature.

A Power descends no Fate can perturb or vanquish,
Calmer than mountains, wider than marching waters,
A single might of luminous quiet
Tirelessly bearing the worlds and ages.

A Bliss surrounds with ecstasy everlasting,
An absolute high-seated immortal rapture
Possesses, sealing love to oneness
In the grasp of the All-beautiful, All-beloved.

He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
Unrolls the form and sign of being,
Seated above in the omniscient Silence.

Although consenting here to a mortal body,
He is the Undying; limit and bond he knows not;
For him the æons are a playground,
Life and its deeds are his splendid shadow.

Only to bring God's forces to waiting Nature,
To help with wide-winged Peace her tormented labour
And heal with joy her ancient sorrow,
Casting down light on the inconscient darkness,

He acts and lives. Vain things are mind's smaller motives
To one whose soul enjoys for its high possession
Infinity and the sempiternal
All is his guide and beloved and refuge.

SRI AUROBINDO

Collected Poems and Plays: Vol. II

THE TIME-SPIRIT —Continued from page 6

after his forlorn wanderings in the wilderness of sense-objects. This does not mean a giving up of the present possessions and a forswearing of all material achievements. It simply means a uniting of the two and a bridging of the gulf between the eternal Spirit and phenomenal Matter. It is only out of the depths and heights of man's being that the uniting love can emerge and heal the myriad ills of life. If peace is to come, it can come only through love and not otherwise; for, how can peace be established in a society torn by bitter rivalries and possessive passions? The peace that is sought to be brought about by covenants and pacts, by mutual concessions and compromises, will be, if it materialise at all, only a simulacrum of its real self serving as a smoke-screen, behind which the disruptive forces of human nature will prepare again for a fresh aggression. The genuine, abiding peace can come only when love has knit the hearts of men together.

The main cause of the failure of the Western peoples to salvage human culture and civilization is an ignorance of the essential nature of man and his terrestrial destiny. They have never had a full and firm view of life and a clear perception of its base and crown. They have never had, indeed, any synthetic and dynamic philosophy of life. What little philosophy was there in the pagan culture and outlook was gradually supplanted by the rigid ethics and

incomplete theology of Christianity which succumbed, after a spell of strenuous struggle, to the conquering forces of life and ceased as a guardian and guide of mankind. Since then a sort of growing hedonism swinging between stark materialism and bustling humanism has been the shaping force in the Western world. The triumphs of Science, the signal achievements of the intellect, the splendid flowering of the many-sided genius of man have been the creation of a free, vigorous and surging vitality, the manifold self-expression of Life, and not of any steady, central Light. To-day under the enormous shadow of materialistic Science, life wobbles or waltzes, rushes and stumbles, devoid of a guidance and unaware of a goal. Western philosophy has foundered in the shallows of Physics and Mathematics and forgotten its high office of lighting the path of man towards his goal. Western psychology, in spite of its surprising advance, is but a groping science, self-condemned to insuperable limitations by its exclusive dependence on sense-evidence and conjectural hypothesis. A stupendous amount of mental and physical energy is wasted upon ideologies and movements that lead nowhere. The energy drives on and man has the deceptive feeling of progressing, but real progress cannot come without knowledge and a conscious and resolute self-direction. This knowledge and power of self-direction

can be acquired only by a sounding of the depths and a scaling of the heights of man's being, and it is precisely this from which the modern man stubbornly shrinks. It is not surprising, therefore, that he floats as a waif on the stream of time, unguided and unhavened.

But the Time-Spirit is inexorable. It will bring down Light into the movements of Life by forcing man to look within. It will gather up all his past achievements and forge and transform them into higher values. As it has rendered liberty indispensable to human progress and made equality a pre-condition of human unity, so it will, in its inscrutable way, call forth love which will widen and perfect liberty and equality and fulfil the great promise blazoned forth in the motto of the French Revolution. Love will come to effect the unification of mankind, which is the master passion of the sub-conscious part of the modern mind and the immediate, if obscure, object of its complex strivings.

In inducing the inner plunge and exploration, the Time-Spirit will see that man does not relax his hold upon the material world or lose even a jot or tittle of his essential conquests, but combine with them, first, a discovery and contact and then a knowledge and mastery of the inner worlds and their incalculable forces. An unlimited empire of inconceivable opulence will have thus been annexed to this petty terrain of his uncertain dominion.

The inner dive will reveal to man not only his soul, his essential and immortal being, and the Being of all beings, but also the oneness of all souls and the unity of all existence. This internal vision of oneness will then transmit itself to his external consciousness and create and consolidate there a constant sense of universal unity and evolving harmony. But, as I have said above, for this unity to be the permanent basis of all human relations and the sustaining background of all individual and collective life-expression, the consciousness of man has to be steeped in the supreme, dynamic Love, which is the inestimable gift of the Supermind.

To wind up, the Time-Spirit demands a harmonious perfection of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in the life of humanity. To the modern mind, doped with rationalistic materialism, it may sound like a wild chimera, but it did not so seem to those who conceived and formulated the ideal which inspired the French Revolution, nor will it so appear to those who will live to witness its fulfilment. The unwritten history of the evolution of man from the day of his advent upon the earth up to the present will appear as a series of variable miracles, if we can view its whole panorama in the right perspective, from behind the serried march of the noisy hours; and all that has been accomplished is but the glistening fringe of the glorious finale.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

VIVID APPROACHES TO THE CREATIVE MIND

LITERATURE AND LIFE
Addresses to the English Association
(George Harrap, London, Price 8sh. 6d. net).

Addresses to the English Association are mostly concerned with technical details and scarcely known authors; they settle Hotis' business, or properly base Oum, and give us the enclitic De, as Browning would say. But among the many addresses are some that are, though scholarly and detailed, full of general interest, and of these some to be nare selected and presented in this volume.

But it is not quite clear why this volume is called "Literature and Life." No doubt, all literature flowers from life: as such all literary work is connected with life. Otherwise there is no special connection between literature and life in some of these addresses.

Dr. H. V. Routh's "Authors Lead the Same Lives As Their Readers" perhaps brings together most closely literature and life. It is a delightful account of the ways of life of authors, their working habits, the money they make and other details showing that they lead the same kind of lives as other people. Though there is no depth of thought or even of knowledge in the Address it is a very lively and pleasant essay, and will be of great interest to everyone who loves literary men or aspires to be one.

The Problem of Translation

But the Address that must be of the greatest interest to us in India at the present time is undoubtedly Sir Idris Bell's on the problem of translation. There is a wrong notion current among thoughtless people that books may easily be translated from one language to another; that all that is required is mechanical labour and that, therefore, in no time we may have all the books we need even for university education in all subjects. But those who have studied the question know how hard it is to make really good translations. Recently John Cowper Powys published a translation of some books of Rabelais. Translation from French into English is very much easier than most other translations, and yet Powys shows how even the famous translation by Urquhart is unsatisfactory in many respects.

It is not surprising therefore that Sir Idris speaks of translation as a problem, and in his address it puts on even a more difficult look because he discusses the translation of poetry. He begins with the observation that there was much truth in Hamlet's remark that he has reading words, words, words. For poetry is the best words in the best order. If so, the translation of a true poem must be well nigh impossible. Says Sir Idris, "The simple transference of any poem from one tongue to another, as we might carry a vase of flowers from one room to another, is for ever impossible. . . . What is possible is to secure that this new poem shall be closely parallel to the old, that it shall produce on the readers an effect corresponding as nearly as possible with that received by the readers of the original". For this, is the translator to use the idioms in his own language, or is he to adapt the idioms of the original language? Some observations which Powys has made in his Preface to Rabelais are helpful here. He says: "Out of this whole perplexing and complicated question of translation there seems to me to emerge two alternative methods. According to the first method the aim should be to reproduce

in the most eloquent and most inspiring manner possible all the alien idioms, alien traditions, alien social atmosphere, alien habits and ways that can, by stretching a few points, be beautifully, naturally reproduced; but when the idiom is too absurdly foreign, just to let it go"

The second of the methods "is the evocation, out of his own absorbing love of his subject, of as much of the thing's essence in all its alien and foreign atmosphere as he can manage to catch—never mind how to us it may be!—and the sharing of it with those among us who are, like himself, anxious to fill a gap in our personal culture that can only be filled by a scrupulously literal translation, supplemented, if possible, by at least the look of the words of the original, and otherwise left unfilled". Powys prefers the second method, but in both cases the satisfactory rendering, into another language, the idioms expressed in one language is shown to be no easy matter and Sir Idris Bell's whole address shows the truth of this.

Kipling and "Q."

Another Address that must interest Indian Readers is C. S. Lewis's on "Kipling's World." Kipling is either intensely loved or intensely hated. Mr. Lewis recognises in Kipling a very great artist, and yet he has not taken him to his heart. He claims therefore that he is well qualified to speak of Kipling. In the course of his excellent analysis of Kipling's work he points out the fact that Kipling's distinction is that he has pictured men at their jobs and emphasized the need of discipline. Probably this and his over-insistence on technical perfection have detracted from the warmth of his works. What the real quality of that work is, apart from mere adulation or abuse, Mr. Lewis has brought out by an excellent analytical study, which is full, detailed and many-sided.

While Mr. Lewis is guarded and judicial Mr. S. C. Roberts lets himself go in his enthusiastic praise of "Q" in his address on that great literary giant of the other day. That is no wonder. For all who have listened to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch have spoken with feeling and admiration about him. Mr. Roberts divides "Q"'s life into three clear divisions: the first twenty four years of study and preparation of which "Q" himself has written most effectively, the second period of another quarter of a century in Fleet Street, and finally about thirty years as Professor at Cambridge. In his rapid survey Mr. Roberts has succeeded in touching on the essential features of "Q"'s poetry, fiction and criticism. But more than that, the man "Q" stands out clear and distinct with "his care for cleanness and grace of writing", and especially the man "who has never been discouraged in his devotion to letters or in his will to learn more."

Of the remaining Address-

A MASTER-YOGI'S VISION AND WORK

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE WORLD-CRISIS
By Kishor H. Gandhi
Published by Sri Aurobindo Circle, Bombay.

This is a slender brochure of only 24 neatly printed pages, but a veritable feat of compactness and lucidity of exposition. We welcome this timely publication, for we are sure, it will go a long way to remove the incomprehension or the fantastic misconceptions which exist in the minds of people as to what Sri Aurobindo, the pioneer and prophet of Indian nationalism and the poet, philosopher and Yogi of unquestioned eminence, has been doing for the last 40 years in retirement at Pondicherry. Not only the public, but even the leaders of thought and action in India betray a startling ignorance about him and his work and seem to have written him off as a dynamic personality.

And yet Sri Aurobindo cannot be so easily written off. As the days pass, his thoughts seem to permeate the progressive mind of humanity and his influence is seen steadily at work, firing the soul and moulding the mind and destiny of the rising generation. There is an increasing recognition, at home and abroad, of the wide range and depth of his vision and the originality and far-reaching significance of his creative work in the chaos and confusion of the modern age.

The two outstanding characteristics of the modern mind are its uncompromising insistence on life and its harmonious perfection and a growing gravitation towards unity in every sphere of life. The dust-laden ideal of an ascetic flight has gone by the board and humanity is labouring against baffling odds to hammer out a synthetic scheme of life and a symmetrical pattern of society which will fulfil its highest dreams and deepest aspirations. The multiplicity of discords in human relations is not a denial but a positive evidence of the emergent force of unification; for, it is sometimes inevitable in the economy of Nature that a solid progress is wrung out of a stark opposition of hostile forces.

It is only when we view Sri Aurobindo's work in connection with these two characteristic trends or urges of the modern mind that we can appraise it rightly and are struck by its hold over the future. Sri Aurobindo accepts life, the whole of it with all its multifarious, wholesome activities; but on condition that it consents to be so radically converted as to be a perfect vehicle of the divine Light; and, by the power of the Supermind, which is the supreme power of the creative spirit, he proposes to transform and integrate the multi-dimensional being of man and enable him to live in complete unity and concord with all, fulfilling God's Will and revealing God's glory upon earth.

All agree that the world has gone completely out of gear and that man with his hypertrophied intellect and incommensurable material resources has cut himself off from the fount of his life and is drifting towards self-destruction. Bereft of most of the very qualities which distinguish him from the beast, blinded, befogged and drunk with a myriad contradictory desires, he totters today on the brink of a dismal wreckage of his humanity and a collapse of all

his culture and civilisation. And yet for all his fall and faltering, there is an insistent urge in him to transcend himself, to retrieve his lost glory and bring about the long-hoped-for millennium in his society.

This paradoxical inner conflict, of which the present outer chaos is but a passing, if pronounced, symptom, can be resolved, not by any haphazard, groping attempts of the politicians and sociologists, but by the knowledge and power of the Master of life and the supreme Maker and Manipulator of all its springs. That Master, as the Vedas and the Upanishads affirm, is the Supermind, and the writer of the book under review very succinctly but with an admirable force and precision describes how Sri Aurobindo, undistracted by the passing events, has been quietly working in his seclusion for the descent of this Supermind and the consequent transfiguration of human existence.

"For about the last four decades he has made it his sole concern to conquer the very roots of life's basic difficulties. More than any one else he feels the grim and immense load of humanity's suffering; more than any one else is his heart moved by it. But with his deep and realistic vision he has seen the incapacity of political, economical, humanitarian, ethical, religious and even partial spiritual methods to bring any lasting deliverance to humanity; these are at their best only palliatives which leave the roots of our malady untouched. It is for this reason that he has left aside all these superficial activities and has devoted himself exclusively to the central task of finding an integrally executive spiritual power by which the fundamental difficulties of life could be decisively and lastingly conquered."

"All the basic difficulties of our earthly life which the idealistic, ethical, religious and the incomplete spiritual effort of the past was not able to remove would be decisively conquered by the dynamic self-effective truth-will of the Supermind which no resistance or opposition of the lower ignorance can obstruct or defeat."

A close and sympathetic perusal of this book will not only give a clear idea of Sri Aurobindo's vision and work, but also a glimpse of the glory and greatness of the future of mankind.

RISHABHCHAND

ses, "England and Greece" by Osbert Lancaster deals with a theme often dealt with by others; but Mr. Lancaster, as is well known, has a way of his own with subjects, and the points he makes and the illustrations he gives surprise even readers who have already read a dozen essays on

the subject. In "What Is Light Verse?" Mr. Guy Boas, who has edited a much discussed Selection of light verse, considers its three characteristics. In the same way, Mr. Restrever Hamilton studies the Epigram, Mr. L. E. Tanner the Westminister Abbey, and Mr. W. M. Continued on page 11

NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT

RETURN TO RELIGION

BY GERALD HEARD

Vedanta and the West

There is a growing demand today for books on the spiritual life. But it is one that it is easier to make than to supply. Religious books are still printing by the thousand. Yet it is hard to draw up even a small list which would meet the present enquirer's need. Why? Partly because most religious books are written by professionals in the language and to support the cause of their specific sect. True, they do wish to bring comfort and self-understanding to the reader but they have also the obligation to prove that their religion is true and, often, that it alone is true. This was always a grave handicap for those religions—till lately the only ones known in the West—which were and still mainly are exclusive. A large number of those people who today are wishing to enquire about the spiritual life, actually left the religion in which they were brought up—or their parents did—because that religion seemed grossly careless about the truth of many of the statements which it made and even more grossly uncharitable to those who dared raise this grave question of truthfulness. Hence to offer them spiritual information in the terms of such theology is not merely not to attract them, but to repel them. It is very hard for ministers and clergy to realize that "the return to religion" is not a return to orthodoxy; that it is a return to an interest in the spiritual not because the interpretation of certain historic event has become any more credible. The contrary is true.

The reason why today so many people want to hear from experts about spirituality is simply because the Economic Revolution has failed and is over: the Psychological Revolution has begun. Not through creeds or rites but through anthropology, psychology and psychical research, free minds today are exploring a new empire of the mind. These are the people who are asking the real practitioners—not the purveyors—of religion to give them, not dogmas or closed systems, but data. What the world today needs, and an increasing number of pioneers are seeking out, is the psychologist who has gone beyond the limited findings of the psychophysicist, the restricted techniques of the psychoanalyst, who can also arrange the data of psychical research and finally—and the real proof of the adequacy of the process—bring about a co-ordination

of his life which can henceforward interpret and embrace, explain and include all experience. That is the reason why Protestants today tend increasingly to read such masters of spirituality as François de Sales and Fenelon. These writers are felt at once to be experts. They speak very little of dogma and much of method; though both of them masterly men of affairs they are interested in specific advice and counselling; they employ organisation but only when it is a convenient matrix in which to work upon the development of individual consciousness and character. Another advantage that the reader finds is their style. When we go to a doctor we do not ask of him eloquence or the gift of pretty way with words. We want neither rhetoric nor poetry: we want a diagnosis and prescription. Poetry and often not of the best—in other words Hymns—rhetoric not seldom as weak as the rhymes—the weekly Sermon—these have been the two standard methods of protestant instruction and edification. The great Catholic Directors owe their popularity both inside and outside their Communion, to the fact that they are always precise, always great diagnostic psychologists and, even when their letters are found for centuries to be applicable to thousands of souls they are like all great physicians actually prescribing for a specific, individual case.

Instruction is in fact of very little use unless it is a reply to a question and indeed we add, its use is in the same ratio to the intensity with which the questioner puts his problem. Yet, though the western masters of spirituality are unfailing aids to those who would survey the problem of their own souls, though they show clearly that path of hope which lies between the glib rationalism which falsely promises self-control by an act of the will and the despairing emotionalism which declares "Human nature never learns nor can be taught," still we need keenly something more. With this they would agree—they would say, without the Sacraments and the Graces of God that come through the Church, decay may be arrested but progress can really not be made. A man may be "Returned to Normalcy" and may come to accept Society and Society to accept him and may even come to accept the Universe with a resignation that may pass for peace. But he may never

attain to that understanding of himself, his fellows and of Nature, without which this world and this life remain an enigma only to be sustained with courage. It is at that point that the student who has benefited from the instructions of the Western Directors has to ask himself—should I not, must I not join their communion, if I am to attain to any kind of completeness? This problem, this issue (shall I for the sake of profound psychological knowledge join a communion which excommunicates all others, which claims the right to persecute because it alone, it believes, has the truth?) tortured sixteenth century westerners. "Mad-man or Slave, must man be one?" cried Matthew Arnold. On the one hand was a materialistic rationalism which managed the outer world so as to obtain increasing power and was helpless to produce rational conduct from human beings. On the other hand was a Church having great psychological insight and able to transform certain characters but apparently as indifferent to historic truth or scientific demonstration as it was disregarding of the rights of man.

That dilemma has now ended and it may be that historians looking back on our age will take this change to be more momentous to human society than the discovery of atomic energy or the fixation of chlorophyll. For now we see with our growing knowledge of Vedanta not only that we may have all that Catholicism could give of method in spiritual training, and may have it without yielding one iota of truth, yes, further, may have it and keep the widest charity toward all other religions and systems, but that we may hope to have a far deeper and wider psychological knowledge than western spirituality has so far attained. Two brief illustrations may be given of this.

First the attitude of the occidental masters of spirituality toward psychic phenomena. Lacking the vast cosmology and subtle psychology of Vedanta, visions and all manner of psychic powers have either been thought to authenticate the dogmas of the church—and so give those who experienced them a certain height of spiritual rank and authority—or if they did not support the church's theories—then they were diabolic. True, a great master such as John of the Cross allows there is

a third source, the unknown parts of the human mind itself. But even he has only the vaguest notion of the vastness of this subject, of its importance as a correlate in the development of spirituality and the expert care that is therefore needed in guiding all who would advance any distance in the life of prayer.

The second illustration is akin to the above. Owing to the West's ignorance of psycho-physiology the methods of training mind-body were very crude and indeed dangerous. When we reflect that the "discipline", the whip is still regularly used in all "enclosed" orders, when we study physical mortification as understood in catholicism and when we compare the dangerous crudity of such methods with the subtlety, thoroughness and variety of methods used by Vedanta and Mahayana—and indeed by Hinayana—we see the incomparable superiority of methods of the East. Indeed as we have looked on Asia as a huge fringe-area into which our physical science is only now penetrating, so now we must look upon our West as a penumbral belt into which the true psychology and psycho-physiology of the East is infiltrating, at last.

Finally the frame of reference, "the universe of discourse" of Vedanta—and its children Mahayana and Hinayana—is so much vaster and at the same time more rational than that narrow and hasty picture which Catholicism took from the backward sect of the Jews and never had the moral courage to reconstruct and enlarge. The doctrine of Eternal Punishment—a grotesque amalgam made from Hebrew emotionalism alloyed with Hellenic speculation—has always haunted and hindered the minds of the spiritual in the West. With its great metaphysics Vedanta has been able to preserve justice and ally it with mercy. On this count alone—and it is a big one—the Eternal Gospel as interpreted by the Orient is a surer guide to ultimate understanding than anything the West has till the present provided. Yet most people when they pick up some Oriental text—such for example as, *The Crest-Jewel of Discrimination* of Shankara or the Sutras of Patanjali are daunted by the subtlety and gnomic elaboration of the system. That is why they should start with works written by modern masters of Indian spirituality.

The Hindu Mahasabha and Politics

Continued from page 4

revealing outline the fundamental factors and basic laws that govern the evolution of human society, the different stages through which that evolution passes forward, the central significance of that upward progression and the final culmination—the emergence of a perfect society—to which it is destined to arrive after whatever travail and difficult labour. The book unfolds a vast vista of social thought. It is a masterly and luminous approach to the psychology of the collective development of mankind. Incidentally, a number of important issues like the real value of democracy, socialism, communism, totalitarianism, commercialism, etc., which have been acutely brought to the forefront of the modern mind come up for a thorough-

going examination in the book. The chairman of the Book Society of America is stated to have expressed the view that this book should be read by every American. Sri Aurobindo Library, New York, has contemplated to print 1,00,000 copies of the book at the first instance."

The True Positive Stand

The Mahasabha proposes to build up a true democratic opposition, but its stand so far is more negative than positive. It points out the failings and defects of the Congress Government, but does not give any positive constructive suggestion. Thus it stands for Hindu Rashtra, but nowhere it has been made clear what sort of Rashtra that will be. The proposals of adult franchise, joint electorate, village panchayat—

all these have been incorporated in the Constitution accepted by the Congress. Then in Economics, the Mahasabha has leaned towards socialism; we wonder how they reconcile Marxist socialism with ancient Hindu culture; here again, the Mahasabha does not differ much from the outlook of the Congress which has a definite socialistic leaning. Does it expect to win the allegiance of the people simply because it calls itself Hindu and the Congress government calls itself secular? Here again if the Mahasabha turns to the writings of Sri Aurobindo, it will get the truly Indian view-point in politics and economics.

The Indian system of politics is fundamentally different from the so-

called democracy of the ballot box adopted by the Constituent Assembly and it will not certainly succeed in India. Sri Aurobindo has given in detail a description of the Indian genius in politics as distinguished from the Western in his book, *The Spirit and Form of Indian Polity*, and the Mahasabha will be well-advised to adopt that as its *shastra* in political reconstruction. In economics, India aims neither at capitalism nor at socialism but at something higher than both which can be called a spiritualised society. The method of stopping exploitation by depriving people of their freedom, as the socialists propose, is not the right method, for without freedom the individual cannot prosper and,

Continued on page 11

Vivid Approaches to the Creative Mind

Continued from page 9

Wright the City of Bath in connection with English Literature.

Modernist Poetry

"Live Dogs and Dead Lions" is a fine defence of modernist poetry by Professor V. de Sela Pinto in reply to the observation of Dean Inge: "In literature I prefer the dead lion to the live dog, and the scraps of modernist poetry which have come my way seem to sound the depths of vulgarity, ugliness and bad taste." Professor Pinto shows that this has been the attitude of mind of all elderly people when anything new came into being, and it has especially been so in literature and the fine arts in general. And yet many revolutionary movements had been ultimately good. Thus at the time of the Renaissance there was a breaking away from the Virgilian hexameters and Ovidian elegiacs, but the result was the production of *La Chanson de Roland*, *La Divina Commedia* and *The Canterbury Tales*. What is known as the Romantic Movement was another such revolutionary turn which produced the works of Wordsworth, Coleridge and others. It is interesting to remember in this connection the well-known passage in Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* in which he anticipated the shocked reactions of his readers. He wrote: "Readers, . . . if they persist in reading this book will perhaps frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy their attempts can be permitted to assume that title." Something like this is what is produced by modernist poetry. Mr. Pinto says well, "In the last thirty years something has happened to English poetry which has made it seem strange, incomprehensible and often repulsive to educated people above a certain age."

Most readers are surprised by what they find in some of the best known of modern poets. T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* is obscure and at first displeasing so that his admirers have written many explanations of it. The language is at first sight conglomerous and undignified, the metre loose and the ideas undeserving of refined attention. The same

may be said of Auden and others. This is especially so when they are read with the traditional ideas of poetry. Here again an observation of Wordsworth's deserves attention. He said in his Preface that those who are shocked by new poetic works "should not suffer the solitary word Poetry, a word of very disputed meaning, to stand in the way of their gratification." They should ask themselves if the poem contains a natural delineation of human passions, characters and human incidents. That will require an understanding of the conditions of the time, and it is this understanding that will reveal the meaning and significance of modern poetry.

Professor Pinto shows that the last thirty years have been a period of great wars and revolutions and especially of social and economic disturbances. Values have undergone great changes, and the quiet and equilibrium of an earlier period have been broken down. True poetry will have to be a reflection of these, and hence the breaking away of modernist poetry from the past traditions. A new poetic sensibility had to come into being, and it required a new means of self-expression. The vulgarized commercial world had to be turned into the material of poetry and presented in a new poetic expression. The first attempt in this direction was not made in England but in France by the Symbolists of 1880 to 1890. Their attempt was not quite satisfactory because in their anxiousness to find a proper poetic expression for the strange new situation they retired from the rough and tumble of actual life and took refuge in a sort of ivory tower. But they made clear the spiritual emptiness of the time and the coming into being of a new human situation. In Russia Alexander Blok in his *The Twelve* gave a better example of what the new poetry had to do. He took the subject of the Revolution of 1917 and exhibited the true reactions of the people.

Modernist poetry in England has up to now presented itself, as it were, in three waves. The first was in the 1930's especially as seen in the work of Wilfred Owen. A new poetic sensibility and a new idiom are visible in his work.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, T. S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, the Sitwells, Robert Graves, and Herbert Read showed that poetry which so long had been regarded by respectable people as a genteel scholarly accomplishment might be something difficult, twisted, ugly, aggressive and uncomfortable. In their view, if poetry is to be a living force it has to represent the ugliness, the vulgarity, the confusion and the stupidity of our strange twisted period. The second wave of modernist poets were Auden, Spender, Day Lewis and McNeice. These were less bookish, and they used politics as the material of poetry. In the 1940's started the third wave of modernist poetry with Henry Treece, John Lehmann, Alun Lewis and Alan

Rook. In these there is a greater sense of harmony between the classes of society and within the individual too. But it is doubtful if as yet any modernist poet has arisen with the stature of a first-rate poet like Milton or Shelley. It is also to be seriously considered whether poetry is merely to reflect the contemporary situation. But it must be admitted that modernist poets have been the true products of the times and that their work, when appreciated without the prejudgements of tradition and use, reveal, a true criticism of life and produce inspiration out of the emotion and thought drawn by a new poetic sensibility from the conditions of the time.

P. L. STEPHEN

The Hindu Mahasabha and Politics

Continued from page 10

if the individual declines, the society cannot prosper. It is by raising man to a higher level of consciousness that human society can be based on love, thus leading to real harmony and perfection in human relations. All these have been explained in detail in the writings of Sri Aurobindo which alone can bring about a cultural unity of the whole of India, thus laying down the true foundation of political unity and the formation of a mighty Indian nation.

The Mahasabha, Politics and the Unity Party

The Mahasabha can do just so much politics as to give the true ideals and point out the defects of the Government in power. But if it enters active politics and begins to contest elections to capture power, it will not be able to carry on effectively the work of cultural reconstruction which is its proper role. It should deal with the grandeur of the Hindu religion, freeing it from defects and making it attractive to others. If it enters politics, there is every chance that it will be suppressed by the Government who have definitely declared that they would

not allow political activity by communal bodies. The contention of the Mahasabha that it is not communal will convince nobody; it says that it is ready to call a Muslim a Hindu if he accepts Indian culture; that is very good as an ideal but as yet the term Hindu has not acquired that connotation; the Mahasabha would have to work hard to realise that ideal. Then the Mahasabha has accepted the abolition of Pakistan as its foremost political programme; as that goes against the Inter-dominion Agreement, the Mahasabha can be suppressed even on this ground alone. So the wisest course for the Mahasabha would be to eschew politics and confine itself to the urgent work of social and cultural reconstruction, leaving the work of organising a democratic opposition to some other party. Such a party is being organised—the Unity Party which attempts, with a wider vision and a greater political acumen, the formation of an India based on the true genius of the country. The Mahasabha can lend its moral support to the Unity Party, thus helping it to form a powerful democratic opposition which has no doubt become an urgent need of the day.

TRAVEL
IN COMFORT BY
AIR : RAIL : SEA

BOOK THROUGH
INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS LTD.,
32, Rampart Row, BOMBAY
Phone: 22319.

WE ALSO ARRANGE:

- * TOURS, PILGRIMAGES, SHIKARS, CHARTERS, CRUISES, ETC., ETC.
- * LIFT FROM YOUR RESIDENCE TO AIR COMPANY'S OFFICE.
- * TRANSPORT OF PARCELS FROM YOUR GO-DOWN TO AIR COMPANY'S OFFICE.

Special Arrangements for people going outside India.

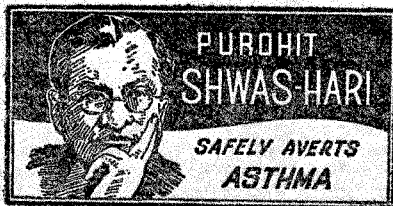
Apply for Particulars.

JEWEL CREATIONS

BY

TEL. 36321.

CHIMANLAL MANCHAND & CO.
NEW QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.



MOTHER INDIA
IS AVAILABLE AT
WHEELER'S & HIGGINBOTHAM'S
RAILWAY BOOK - STALLS.

IF this is a specimen copy you are receiving, it is an invitation to subscribe. you find it significant and interesting, don't fail to avail yourself of the subscription form below. you can spare your copy, please pass it along to your friends. Else supply the names and addresses of those who will be really interested and we will post free copies of one issue to friends anywhere in the world.

: MOTHER INDIA :

Subscription: Rs. 6 for 1 year; Rs. 3/4 for 6 months; As. 4 single copy. Get your own copy by sending this form with remittance.

PLEASE ENROL ME:

NAME: (BLOCK LETTERS)

ADDRESS

As a Subscriber to MOTHER INDIA for Months.

MNEMOSYNE: MOTHER OF THE MUSES

BY K. D. SETHNA

Whatever in general might have been implied by the Greek conception of Mnemosyne, the Goddess of Memory, as the Mother of the Muses, we could scarcely ask for a more illuminating clue to some of the fundamentals of the poetic art.

Word-Music and Word-Painting

On its technical side at least, poetry can be best defined as a marked pattern of rhythm and measure: it secures its magical effects by a constant casting back of the attention to precedent sound-values with the help of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, metrical repetition—in short, by a system of simple or subtle harmonic recurrences. It makes each new cadence reminiscent in its own way of those that have gone before, so as to give language a sustained yet unmonotonous homogeneity of sweetness, power and elevation. And, rationally enough, it makes this appeal to the memory because what it strives after is the quality of ennobling memorableness—its aim being to seize and fill the mind of the reader, to become a haunting influence in his consciousness, by stimulating and delighting him infinitely. This quality is indeed one of the *differentiae* of true poetry which, after all, is the language of deep experiences creating by their very poignancy and duration a regular vibration in the soul, to render which the flat instability of commonplace speech is inadequate. These experiences demand for their right interpretation a medium sufficiently transparent to the light and heat of their great moments to give them the durable form, the perpetual outer body which their indelible exquisiteness or sublimity deserves as well as desires. For, the great occasions of life are like Cleopatra: they have "immortal longings" in them, and ask to die, crowned, in memorable splendour. Nothing short of the principle of rhythmic march to time, of recurrent tones, of verbal accordances, can ever completely fulfil them. Without it a perfect base and matrix would be wanting for the poetic spirit to represent faithfully in language the kindled trails which its ecstasies of emotion leave in the being.

Another indispensable element of poetry, in which the part played by memory is as significant as in word-music, is word-painting. The soul and source of word-painting is Imagination; and an image, as distinguished from an immediate sense-datum, is primarily of something that is past: it is a reconstruction, a recollection of either external or internal aspects of life. Selectively combining several such reconstructions, the poet makes his descriptions glow with an appealing beauty; brings to birth his delicate, fantastic, terrible or else superb idealities; and endows an object of experience with a worth and meaning overflowing its own bounds and assimilating the worth and meaning normally attached to other objects. In the last case, we get a striking figurative phrase in which the function of memory is especially suggestive. For, when Sarojini Naidu describes the crescent moon as

A caste-mark on the azure brows of heaven,

or Harindranath Chattopadhyaya exclaims in the first flush of Spring-intoxicated youth,

The Universal Beauty dances, dances

A glimmering peacock in my flowering flesh,

or Sri Aurobindo strikes the grand note in speaking of nightfall in the Arctic regions,

Like a wild beast the darkness stole

Prowling and slow,

Alarming with its silent march the soul,

what we notice in each instance is how in one fact the poet remembers other facts, so that the impression of the former is transformed through being permeated by and identified with the memory of the latter.

The Poetic Instinct about the World-Process

And this alchemic process of identifying the crescent moon with the caste-mark and the sky with the human forehead, the whole visible world with the variegated peacock and the human body in its moments of delighted sensation with the colourful growth of flowers, the approach of twilight with the stealthy-stepping carnivore and the menace of dumb darkness with the soul's fear of death—this process of regarding, in concrete images, an experience as if it were the recollection of several preceding ones is akin to what in abstract logic goes by the name of Universalisation, the discovery of the single type which is represented or expressed in diverse shapes, of the essence which makes separate and different entities identical in their inner nature. Similes and metaphors have their *rationale* in the poet's feeling of the sympathies and affinities in the inner nature of realities; his analogies are a perception of the manner in which these realities can be symbolic reminders of one another because all of them seem charged with an ultimately one though "many-splendoured" essence. To believe in such an essence is the most natural movement of his character, though he may not turn it into a set intellectual formula; for, it is as a Universal Beauty making all things kin, covertly present even in the

midst of the most ugly disorder and discord, it is as a supreme progressively self-revealing essence of Loveliness which, being single through all the play of its multiple possibilities, must be also the being of his being, the Self of his self, that he instinctively regards the world-process. This indeed appears to be the reason why he can, with the breath of his fine frenzy, convert even the horrible and the tragic into forms of ravishing poetic beauty, catching, as it were, a glimmering and an echo of the inmost creative magic and joy of a cosmic Spirit of which they are but superficial inarticulate translations. His is not the work of the philosopher—to explain why and how Light and Loveliness at times assume such grotesque phenomenal masks. His is only to enshrine the radiant secret of everything in the medium of aerial or sonorous language. His is only to make words pattern themselves in response to his quick intuition of that secret. All poetry, whether explicitly spiritual or not, is, in this sense, at its source a veiled Platonic reminiscence of the divine dreams of some infinite, eternal "self-subsisting Life".

The Psychology of Poetic Creation

This reminiscence may be said to take place through a mystical mother-motive in the poet. Like all art, poetry derives from layers of consciousness which lie behind the superficialities of our being: the strange phosphorescence which plays about its rhythmic flow has its origin in the realms of dream. Common parlance has, from the earliest times, justly regarded the poet as a visionary; his work is a soar from the rigidities of the conventional world into a more plastic, more intense, more mysterious atmosphere shot with the perplexing lights and shadows of "brave translunary things"—translunary especially in the sense in which Rabindranath Tagore with that turn for verbal felicity which is his peculiar genius, addresses the moon as boatman betwixt the worlds of waking and sleep, carrying the poet's soul into a beyond of free phantasy. The forces of the subliminal consciousness become openly active in his compositions and bring with them a new accent into his speech, pregnant with immeasurable suggestions. Poetry is to him a mode of open-eyed dreaming, facilitated by his pre-occupation, as an artist, with the medium of words: his medium comes as a sort of screen between his eyes and the waking world, inhibiting all the more his usual reactions, rendering him absorbed, putting his mind into a condition of remoteness, of abstraction during which the subliminal easily projects itself into his work. Speaking then from his own depths he seems to lay bare the depths of the objects upon which his selective meditation centres and thereby creates on us that impression which we deem one of the unique effects of poetry—namely, that he has seized in language the subtle pulsating core of meaning in objects, as in those terribly magnificent lines by Blake, the often quoted yet never to be hackneyed

*Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forest of the night,*

or in Stephen Phillips's quieter but in imaginative penetration no less unerring

*Trees,
Motionless in an ecstasy of rain.*

Now, the function of true poetic dreaming is to produce a new orientation in the poet's "psyche", to enrich his consciousness with a hitherto unrealised beauty, to recreate in him the image of a light that is not borrowed from the ordinary day. All great poets have attested that luminous rebirth of the self, or at least of a part of it, in poetic experience. The vitality as well as the aesthetic perfection of a poem lies in the psychological fact that the poet has, through it, achieved a kind of *vita nuova*; and it is in its ability to transmit to the reader this experience of rebirth into light and loveliness that its supreme value consists. It becomes a formative influence: it helps the inner man in us to renovate himself more ideally, to be reborn aesthetically into the glory of the Spirit. In the psychology of the poetic art, with its definite motive of rebirth by reversion to the creative subliminal recesses, there is a going back as though to the wondrous womb of a vast Unknown and a renewing of oneself in its paradisiacal profundity.

Mnemosyne the Mother of the Muses, therefore, is, according to the highest interpretation possible, the poet-soul's implicit memory of the basic quintessential beatitude of a universal Mother-Being from whom the whole phenomenal manifestation has issued. A haunting presence is here of a Divine Delight on a cosmic scale, at once intense and calm, many-motivated yet preserving for all its incessant overflow into creation its stability and unity, its undiminished and undisturbed vastness—a Divine Delight by aesthetically intuiting which the poet is enabled to alembicate all experience into substance of poetic beauty. Thus understood, the conception of Mnemosyne indicates to us the ultimate goal of the evolution of the poetic faculty in the human race: to provide us not merely with what Wordsworth wanted all elevating poetry to be, an overflow of powerful emotion recollected in contemplative tranquillity, but with what he himself almost achieved at his most inspired, the ecstatic tranquillity of some deepest Spirit in us recollected in the form of powerful emotion.