

# MOTHER INDIA

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"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

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## "THE MOST ABLE, SENSIBLE AND ENLIGHTENED STATESMAN IN ASIA"

Bernard Shaw is again in the news—but, we are afraid, without the full force of his usual wit and wisdom. We cannot, in the context of recent happenings, challenge his description of our Prime Minister as the most able, sensible and enlightened statesman in Asia, but there seems to be neither genuine wit nor authentic wisdom in coupling him with Stalin whom Shaw describes as the most able, sensible and enlightened statesman in Europe. Not that piquancy and paradox are quite absent in the Shavian pronouncement; for it came on the heels of Nehru's associating India with a Commonwealth of Nations which is ranged against the Soviet Union in no unclear terms. Nehru has done just what Stalin considers a most unprogressive action: his firm stand about India's right to be an independent republic and to practise neutrality as between the Western and the Eastern blocs does not take away for Stalin the sting of finding her within an anti-Soviet Commonwealth. Shaw seems therefore to have sprung a surprise on us by making Nehru out to be the Stalin of Asia and Stalin to be the Nehru of Europe. But generally such a surprise from Shaw would carry an unsuspected truth. Here, however, is only a strange superficiality of vision, as if a great point were scored by asking: Are not both Nehru and Stalin Marxists and believers in a classless society and champions of the Secular State?

### Nehru and Stalin

The fact, of course, is that Nehru is none of these things in exactly the same sense as Stalin. The personalities of the two men are entirely different and, therefore, their lines of thought and action cannot run parallel, even though they may seem to start from an identical source. Why is Nehru a Marxist? It is because a sympathetic chord is struck in his heart by the enthusiasm Marx displayed for the betterment of the under-dog, the abolition of wage-slavery, the removal of social inequality, the destruction of Church-religion's obscurantism and its support to the unjust ruling powers, the development of an outlook alive to physical and economic forces and not preoccupied with psychological and metaphysical factors. But when it comes to Marx's fierce recoil from everything in humanity's past and his insistence on a totally revolutionary re-ordering of society, his advocacy of class-hatred and ruthless violence, his intolerance of any other form of socialism than the one he preached, his apotheosis of physical and economic factors, his extreme dislike of all private enterprise and his desire to make all men uniform in a non-religious anti-metaphysical atheistic outlook—when it comes to all this poisonous stuff, Nehru can hardly be called a devotee of Marxism. Whatever in Marx negates Capitalist and bourgeois and Churchian malpractice is Nehru's creed, but whatever posits Communist and proletarian and materialistic dictatorship finds no echo. Nehru is a negative Marxist, not a positive one.

In this he stands in sharp contrast to Stalin. And, because of the contrast, he could stand in close association with Gandhiji. Even Gandhiji approached, although unconsciously, the Marxist system of sociology in some features of its programme of land-distribution, income-adjustment and local governance, but he was poles apart where the fundamental axioms and beliefs were concerned. The breath of his life was faith in God and in the inner intangible values that have nothing to do with economic forces and that are to be found only by the individual conscience. In Communist Russia he would have either been locked up in a lunatic asylum or made to rot in a concentration camp or else liquidated after a trial in which he would have confessed, as all defendants in Russia do, he had grossly gone against the illumined motherliness of the totalitarian State-machine. There is abso-

lutely no commensurability between Gandhiji's **Ram Raj** and Stalinist autocracy. And when at every step Nehru invokes the name of Gandhiji, how can he ever be the Stalin of Asia?

### Nehru and Gandhiji

The entire Nehru-ideal of statesmanship is coloured by Gandhiji's personality—in essential feeling as distinguished from essential conception. Gandhiji was clear-cut in his religious bent, he had definite ideas of God's existence; Nehru hesitates to make any intellectual assertion about religious truth, he keeps a detached non-committal attitude of mind which neither encourages religious philosophy as such nor discourages it in its pure and non-sectarian form. He is a sort of agnostic who would not run down genuine religion or set up aggressive irreligion. Intellectually he reserves his judgment: that is the position his rather modernised and westernised mind finds most comfortable when facing the strong Indian heart of him and its spontaneous, its intense, its unquestioning emotion of high ideals. Gandhiji attracted him and spellbound him not only because he had great love for mankind or possessed a rare capacity for service and sacrifice, but also and basically because he struck Nehru as charged with a dynamic sense of the absolute in truth and goodness. He himself calls Gandhiji's personality and influence "Socratic"; and what was Socrates if not a voice of the secret "daimon", the inner guide, the in-dwelling Godhead leading man to right perception and virtuous conduct? Gandhiji was not Socratic in the intellect: he was not a natural-born philosopher, but he did convey the impression of being inwardly urged and to the minds of most Indians he came as a successor of the Saints who have left luminous footprints on the path of India's long history. Gandhiji himself knew he was not precisely in the line of the utter Yogis and could not be classified as a Saint in the fundamental mystic sense; he lacked the concrete experience and realisation of the Divine, such as Ramakrishna or Vivekananda had; but he did possess a genuine religious instinct in a strong form—and it was this instinct and vaguely through fit the larger and deeper mystic consciousness of his beloved historical India that Nehru's heart felt as stirring in himself also the noblest and the bravest elements. Perhaps because Gandhiji was not either a Socratic philosopher or a Socratic practitioner of that trance of inner silence which on certain occasions used to visit the Master of Plato, Nehru's highly cultivated mind could remain non-committal and unconvinced in spite of the religious impact brought by Gandhiji. But, whatever the cause of his mind's humane agnosticism and despite his intellectual reservation of judgment, there is no denying that his emotional being is as far as can be imagined from the desires behind the political actions of Stalin.

Statesmanship is not only a matter of policy guided by intellectually accepted doctrine and dogma: it is also an expression of conscience and inspired by character and disposition and natural feeling. At least a statesman of the magnitude of Nehru or Stalin acts each in his own way from the whole being of him. And the heart of Nehru is so radically at variance with the heart of Stalin that nothing save sheer delusion by surface appearances can think the two alike in either quality or direction of statesmanship. The ability the two may have in moulding the destiny of their countries cannot help functioning differently by virtue of their own psychological make-up. The ability of the one can never be equated with that of the other in point both of the motive and the vision behind.

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# RE-EMERGENCE OF ASIA IN WORLD POLITICS

BY RAJANIKANT MODY

Until the end of World War II Europe and America dominated world-politics and even now there is a tendency among the Western nations to continue their domination over the Asiatic nations. But it is clear that the times have changed and the Eastern nations are reappearing to play their part on the stage of world-politics.

There is a general reawakening visible among the races of the East and although many of them are not as yet fully ready or up to the mark politically, signs are evident everywhere of a progressive revival of a new consciousness among them. This unreadiness or backwardness was inevitable so long as the majority of them were crouching under the yoke of foreign domination. But now that many among them have attained an independent status, circumstances have changed.

## The West and the East

Before the rise of Europe on the world-scene Asiatic nations were at the height of their glory, but the inevitable cyclic wheeling of time turned them into insignificant units of humanity. Now once again they are lifting up their heads and seeing the light of a new-born dawn. The new dawn that has arisen in the East will spread its crimson glow not only on the Asiatic nations alone but on the whole world. Asia has never stood for a political domination but only as a transmitter of higher values in human life.

The message of the West has mostly been one of material progress and scientific achievement. The West has hankered after physical and vital comfort and well-being and vital living. The Asiatic mentality, on the other hand, has generally been a handmaid to the inherent spiritual aspirations and achievements of its deeper soul. Hence, if there was an almost entire neglect of spiritual values in the West, there was a miserable poverty of material values in the East. It is only recently that the West has begun to awaken to these higher values and the East has begun to recognize that the external life too is a field, and a very important field, for the manifestation of the spirit.

This is the one good result of the holocaust of war—that the whole of humanity has now come closer together at least in idea or thought if not in actual life. But whenever Nature gives rise to such an idea or thought in the mind of humanity she always tries to fulfil it in some way or other. If humanity learns anything from the experiences of the two world-wars it will see that it is no use accepting the material and economic life as the sole preoccupation of mankind and will turn to the East for a higher spiritual guidance. On the other hand, the East will realise that the sole preoccupation with the spirit at the cost of material life is also an incomplete ideal. The

real solution lies in a changed outlook which synthesises the highest spiritual being with the richest material existence.

## Asia's True Role

Hence, it is clear, that if Asia is to re-emerge as a great power in the world, it should not be of the type of the West. Its message should indeed be one of world-unity, yet, not a unity that is obtained between the tiger and the goat he has devoured, but a free unity of the spirit. Until now the majority of mankind have believed that spirituality has nothing to do with politics and that the two should be kept entirely apart. But the time has come now when no such artificial line of demarcation can hold against the onrush of the new spiritually-guided thought that is emerging from the very depths of the world-soul. If science is wiping out the narrow geographical divisions of nations and continents on the material plane, it is only because this world-soul at the back of the human mind is working towards a deeper unity of mankind. The outer is only a field for the working of the inner, a garb and a reflection and a clue. Whatever is the hidden or secret will of the inner soul, will rise up to the surface. Whatever is not grasped at present by the limited human intelligence, will become clearer as the deeper soul gradually unfolds its inner and irresistible intention.

If Asia is to become the leader of mankind, she should be so only in a spiritual sense. For, if she attempted to become the leader politically alone, there would be only a repetition of pre-war conditions, with only an exchange of place between the East and the West. The futility of such an attempt is apparent to every thinking man. Into politics Asia should certainly enter, or rather re-enter, but not with the European mentality. She has got something to give to the world, something very substantial and constructive, namely her spiritual outlook and inlook. A new experiment of spiritually-guided politics and economy has yet to be tried in the present-day world. And Asia can positively take the lead and set an example. Able, selfless and devoted leaders should not be wanting who can work out such a unique experiment, and make the dream of a united and happy world come true.

# MOMENTOUS ISSUES AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

BY "CHANAKYA"

There are several momentous issues calling for the right decision by the Constituent Assembly. One is the formation of linguistic provinces, another the scope of the powers of the Central Government, and both are related vitally to the fundamental issue, the Constitution of India. The present tendency is to make the centre as strong as possible, and as the leaders of the party in power have practically no opposition in the Assembly, they can easily carry their point in this respect. But in our view that would be disastrous to the country.

The question of linguistic provinces has practically been shelved, though the findings of the three-man committee have been vigorously denounced by all parties concerned. Provincial autonomy is going only to be a name, a sham. Education, Health, Labour and Agriculture were handed over to the Provinces in 1921, as they would be in any Federal system; but the new Government in Delhi have established ministries for all these departments and the Central Ministers are clamouring for more powers and more encroachment on the affairs of the Provinces.

## Protest of the Provinces

The Provincial Ministers will not be willing parties to this. To give one example, Madras has already refused to be bound by the Central recommendations on medium of instruction. The Provinces are also

protesting about the sources of income. Thus Mr. B. Gopala Reddi, Finance Minister, Government of Madras, replying to an address presented to him by the Municipal Council of Fort Cochin, said: "We cannot tax industry, we cannot tax imports, because it will impinge upon Customs duties, nor have we the power to tax exports. Thus, exports, imports, production, income and capital, all these are Central subjects, and they have left only land revenue and excise (it has vanished as regards alcoholic liquors) and sale tax and sundry little taxes. Sanitation, medical aid, elementary education, rural road and irrigation matters are entrusted to Provincial Governments while the bigger revenues are allotted to the Centre."

How Provincial Autonomy is working in India will be seen from a  
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# "The Most Able, Sensible And Enlightened Statesman In Asia"

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If the motive and the vision behind had been similar, Nehru would not have kept India within the Commonwealth. Nor would he, with the rest of his colleagues, have chosen as India's sovereign status the constitution of a Republic. He would have striven for a totalitarian constitution and he would have not safeguarded India by Commonwealth links against the menace of Communism from the Eastern bloc which now seems to have Mao Tse-Tung's China as a jumping-board in Asia and he would not have raised his voice against the anti-national activity of Communists in all South-East Asia, including his own country. In all these actions he is really Asia's most able, sensible and enlightened statesman.

## What Remains for Nehru's Fulfilment

What remains for him to do in order to be, in the field of Asian statesmanship, the most able, sensible and enlightened in an all-round way and in a context of the widest is to let the genius of historical India fully flower forth in his mind and thus permit also his heart to move unhindered to the fulfilment of its Indianness. In the first place, the efflorescence would be in the intuition that India is a living Nation-Soul whose distinctive character is inner communion with the Divine—the Cosmic Self and Consciousness, the Transcendental Being whose emanation is both the universe and the individual. In the second place, it would be in the conviction that the Divine manifests not by a grandiose unity annulling diversity but by a splendid play of the many within the one and that India with her foundation in spiritual communion can best grow to greatness in her political career by a less centralised government, an administration with more vitality in the provincial constituents, a harmonising co-ordination of a multitude of local linguistic cultural autonomies. Short of this efflorescence, no Indian with a sense of fine and profound values can make these values dynamic and creative to the full in statesmanship. Short of it, the socialism of idealists like our Prime Minister can scarcely bring to fruition the velleities and aspirations which take them far from the crude lopsided vehemence of the Marxist Manifesto but which yet move towards a classless society and a Secular State. For, the true classlessness is in the Godhead which remains one in the midst of all its diversity and the true secularity is in the Soul within us which is unfettered by credal forms and communal conventions and longs ever to turn the infinity and eternity of the Divine to the myriad uses of life and world and time.



# INDIA'S ECONOMIC POLICY

BY B. C. SEN  
Secretary, The Unity Party

It is high time the Government of India came out with a clear and definite statement of its economic policy as it has done in respect of its foreign policy through its Prime Minister. Even now Government spokesmen in the Centre as well as in the Provinces and States are contradicting each other.

## Confusion in the Union Government

Sardar Patel said sometime ago that those who talk of nationalisation are only seeking power. Mr. N. V. Gadgil, Minister for Works, Mines and Power, made a strong plea for co-operation of the industrialist, the labourer and the consumer for an organised and speedy industrialisation of India. While inaugurating the Fourth Annual General Meeting of the Delhi Board of the All-India Manufacturers' Organization on March 26, he said, "If the industrialist can prove that even under a system of private enterprise an equal distribution of wealth is possible, then nobody is dogmatic enough to be adamant on the nationalisation of industries."

At that very moment, the Military Governor of Hyderabad was telling a Press Conference that the present Hyderabad Government had decided to take over the control and management of the major industries in the State, namely, coal, sugar, paper, textiles and chemicals. What will then be left for private enterprise? About the same time when Mr. Gadgil was assuring the All-India Manufacturers' Organization that they need not worry about the possibility of their enterprises being nationalised, his colleague, Mr. K. Santanam, the Minister of State for Transport and Railways, was telling the Indian Colliery Owners' Association that "nationalisation and regulation of production are the urgent needs of the coal industry." In these examples of contradictory utterances we find proof of the confusion in the Union Government which is seriously affecting industrial development in the country. Mr. Gadgil complained of the shyness of capital; but unless the Government removes this confusion and stops such contradictory utterances it cannot expect capital to be enthusiastic.

## Socialism & Capitalism

It seems that the heads of the Union Government have made up their minds about nationalisation; they are not in a hurry about it and they are trying to give every facility to private enterprise. But why cannot they state it as a definite policy so that no minister, central or provincial, can contradict it? We find a clue in what Mr. Gadgil said: "The Government of India has allowed full scope for free enterprise in the country even at the risk of severe criticism." It is this fear not only of "severe criticism" but of what will happen in the next elections that makes the Government hesitate to make a definite statement on this point.

Socialism has become the fashion; people unthinkingly accept it as the panacea for all economic ills. The very term capitalism has come to mean something intrinsically evil, while the word socialism seems to be as sacred as the Vedic Om. Even Gandhiji was compelled to say that his programme was socialism, non-violent socialism. As long as this mentality persists, the Government has to say that it wants socialism and the eventual abolition of capitalism. Pandit Nehru has recently declared that India would ultimately be a Socialist State. But at the same time the Government has to reassure the capitalists; so it has

adopted the formula, "Socialism and nationalisation after a period, not now." This makes the private investor fear that the Government will come forward to take from him the reward of his enterprise just when it is beginning to bear fruit in the shape of profits.

But whatever be the outer appearances, we are sure that the masses in India, on whose votes henceforth all governments will have to depend, have not definitely committed themselves to socialism, it is not in the nature of the Indian people. If they show a turn towards socialism or communism, it is because they do not realise the implications; they have not been sufficiently educated to be able to choose intelligently between socialism and capitalism. And our educated community, that is, a large section of it, seems to be under a spell of socialism, no doubt created by propaganda and slogans, and also helped by certain modern tendencies. Thus there is a tendency towards totalitarianism everywhere, towards more and more centralisation of power, and our new State has not been an exception. Socialism is a symptom of this power-grabbing; so far the reading of Sardar Patel is quite true. And as such it must be resisted, as the individual is the key to social evolution and progress and his freedom must be safeguarded from the depredations of totalitarian socialism. Private enterprise, allowing freedom to the individual to use his resources and inventiveness to serve the community through commerce and industry must not be tabooed. And capitalism in essence is nothing but private enterprise, while socialism means nothing more than nationalisation.

We need not enter here into a detailed discussion of the merits of the two systems. It has not been proved that nationalised concerns are more efficient or give better values either to the labourer or the consumer. Both nationalisation and private enterprise have their uses and we should judiciously accept a mixed economy as our settled policy. But in order to induce the people to accept this, the stigma must be removed from the term capitalism. We must not consider all support to capitalism or capitalists a sin. For what is capitalism after all? People, mostly middle class and lower middle class people, save some money and invest it in commerce and industry for producing and supplying goods which the community needs and they take some profit as the reward. What is intrinsically wrong in this? Could civilisation have developed without this capitalism? No doubt it has been abused, but what good thing in this human world has not been abused? And what about socialism? Only those who deliberately shut their eyes will fail to see to what depths socialism in Soviet Russia has degraded humanity.

## Enlightened Capitalism in America

The remedy is not to put a ban on these things as something evil, but to free them from the abuses. Capitalism today is not the same thing it was when Marx wrote his Das Kapital. Through what change and transformation it has gone can be seen in the form it has now taken

in America. Many people still sneer at America as a nation of capitalists. We do not say that the American economy is the last word in economic and social organization, but in fact in the present world we do not find anywhere a better economic system. The main charge against capitalism is that it exploits the labourers: ask an American labourer about it and you will know the truth. They have found by experience that they can hold their own against any exploitation and that the capitalist system, properly controlled, is most favourable to labourers.

The American Federation of Labour says in a declaration of its faith: "American labour believes firmly in business unionism as one of our foundations. We know from experience that collective bargaining in a free enterprise economy without government interference brings the greatest progress for workers." The American Federation of Labour believes that labour can secure wage increase and a better standard of living "through union-management co-operation in a vigorous free competitive economy not hindered by Government controls." The view that the working class can get a fair deal only in a socialist system is utterly strange to the vast majority of American workers. On the whole they are interested in making the free enterprise system work well and getting the most out of it. That is everywhere recognised by intelligent employers who are making great efforts to confirm the workers in their co-operative attitude.

In the Pittsburgh area, for example, the president of one large company holds periodic meetings with workmen at each of the firm's plants in order to explain the financial position of the company, the trade outlook, and the trend of technical ideas. Another big employer said: "We are much franker with our men than most British firms. We give them information on finance, profits, and other management problems. Like many other American companies we issue a special version of our annual report to our employees, telling them in simple terms what the processes are on which they were engaged, how the end products are put together, to what use they are put by our customers. In addition we analyse our balance sheet

and income statement for the workers, telling them where the money comes from and where it goes. We are always ready to answer questions. The men appreciate it. We have much less trouble than we used to have when we thought we could not trust them."

## Need of Mixed Economy


The statistics published by the U.S.A. Bureau of Labour show that in the beginning of 1949 industrial labourers in the U.S.A. earned 55 dollars or about Rs. 183 per week. They have to work on an average 39.1 hours per week. Compare this with the condition that prevails in any other country and specially in Soviet Russia where the socialist system can be maintained only on the forced labour of millions of unfortunate human beings. Socialism has been given a fair trial in Britain under democratic conditions without the help of the Mauser pistol and the OGPU, and concentration camps. What is the outcome?

We need not accept the verdict of Mr. Churchill that the socialist system is somehow maintained in Britain only with the generous help coming from capitalist America. Summing up the results of the socialistic experiment in Britain a labour M.P. recently wrote in *The New Statesman and Nation*: "For all practical purposes, we must assume a mixed economy as the basis of our democratic socialism; and this means that the contribution of the non-socialised sector will remain, for so long as we can foresee, of decisive importance not only in agriculture and the distributive trades, but in productive industry."


On the basis of these facts cannot the Indian Government say definitely that though some concerns may have to be nationalised when we have men and money, private enterprise will never be abolished and will have ample and unhampered scope to serve the country? If the Government formulates such a policy and explains all its implications, we are sure Indians will accept it, communism and socialistic subversive activities will be effectively checked, and investors will enthusiastically come out with their money contributing to the rapid industrialisation of the country for which Mr. Gadgil is pleading.

**Here's what WORK HOURS WILL BUY**


<p><b>RUSSIAN WORKER</b></p> <p>1 hour, 18 minutes</p> <p>10 hours, 42 minutes</p> <p>More than three months</p> <p>Two weeks</p>	<p><b>AMERICAN WORKER</b></p> <p>10 minutes</p> <p>48½ minutes</p> <p>Three days</p> <p>Less than one day</p>
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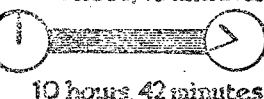
1 hour, 18 minutes




QUART OF MILK




10 minutes



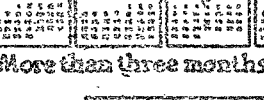
10 hours, 42 minutes




POUND OF BUTTER



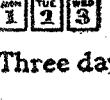
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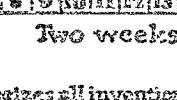
More than three months




WORSTED SUIT



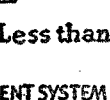
Three days



Two weeks



PAIR OF LEATHER SHOES



Less than one day

**RUSSIA** seizes all inventions, killing incentive. Result—standard of living is low, prices are high.

Source: U.S. estimates by Bureau of Labor Statistics... Latest Russian prices reported by Associated Press.

**U.S. PATENT SYSTEM** provides incentive for invention and the basis for highest standard of living—with quality of American goods and distributive services immeasurably ahead of all foreign countries.

Prepared by National Patent Council

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# THE SPIRITUAL EPIC OF ALIPORE

A portrait of Sri Aurobindo was unveiled in the Court Room of the District Judge of Alipore where forty years ago he, along with others, stood trial in the Manicktolla Bomb Case and was acquitted. It was in observance of the fortieth year of Sri Aurobindo's acquittal that the function was held, with the approval of the West Bengal Government and the Calcutta High Court. Mr. Justice Ramaprasad Mookerjee presided.

With grateful acknowledgement to Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, we are quoting from Professor K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar's biography, **SRI AUROBINDO**, the stirring and uplifting story of the great Case and of the profound spiritual significance it had in the life of one of India's most glorious sons and therefore in the life of our nation whose architect of spiritual destiny he is today.

## I

### THE ARREST OF SRI AUROBINDO

Curzon had divided Bengal and insulted and enraged a great nation; and by a strange irony of circumstance, Minto was now called upon to face the music. "Sedition" was rampant, so thought the chaste officers of the Government; Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutt, and others were hauled up before the court and some of them were awarded drastic sentences or expropriatory fines. Upadhyaya himself had died in the Campbell Hospital, before the case against him was concluded. For the rest, printer or publisher or editor or contributor, one was likely to be apprehended on the slightest pretext and tried for sedition.

These endless trials and the heavy sentences passed on the apprehended patriots seemed shocking to John Morley himself, and on one occasion he wrote to Minto in an outspoken manner:

"I must confess to you that I am watching with the deepest concern and dismay the thundering sentences that are being passed for sedition, etc. We must keep order, but excess of severity is not the path to order. On the contrary, it is the path to the bomb."

Morley had correctly glimpsed the consequences of "excess of severity". Some hot-heads wished to avenge the death of Upadhyaya by killing Mr. Kingsford, the District Judge of Muzafferpore, who had previously ordered the flogging of a young boy in the court. On the evening of April 10, 1908, a bomb was thrown by two mere boys at the supposed carriage of Mr. Kingsford; as a matter of fact, it really hit two wholly innocent people, the wife and the daughter of a certain Mr. Pringle-Kennedy. Whatever the provocation, the whole thing was utterly stupid and futile, as all such activities ultimately are. As Shyam Sundar wrote editorially in the *Bandemataram*:

"Outrages of this kind have absolutely no sanction in our ancient tradition and culture . . . Moderatism is imitation of British constitutionalism, this form of so-called Extremism, wherever it may be found to exist in this country, is imitation of European anarchism; and both are equally different from and absolutely foreign to the spirit of Nationalism which, though opposed by one and occasionally mistaken for the other, is bound in the long run to carve out the future of India, and realise the eternal destiny of her ancient and composite people".

But—most unfortunately under the circumstances—the Government lost their balance and sense of proportion and started arresting persons right and left. The miniature bomb-factory itself was soon enough located, and Barindra Kumar Ghose, supposed to be the chief brain of the revolutionary organization, was promptly arrested along with most of his associates. The situation was ominous and pregnant with sinister possibilities; and as the *Bandemataram* wrote editorially, it was the merest affectation to deny that the Muzafferpore outrage had "created a most critical situation in the country."

It was, perhaps, not wholly unnatural that the panic-stricken authorities should have suspected that Sri Aurobindo—wasn't he the elder brother of Barindra Kumar Ghose?—also was somehow or other connected with the revolutionary organization and the bomb-factory. Orders were therefore issued for his arrest also. Accordingly, on May 5, 1908, at about 5 a.m., the Superintendent, the Inspector and other police officers "entered Aurobindo's bedroom and, on opening his eyes, he saw them standing round. Perhaps, he thought himself in the grip of a nightmare, gazing on apparitions in the half-light of dawn. However, he was not left in suspense long, for he was arrested in bed and handcuffed . . . After securing Aurobindo, his bedroom was searched. 'Search' is not the word for it. It was turned inside out. The ransacking went on for three hours . . ." Sri Aurobindo himself has given a vivid account of his arrest and his subsequent prison experiences in his Bengali book, *Kara-kahini*. We learn from it that it was from his sister, Srimati Sarojini, who ran to his bedroom in a frightened condition, that he learned about the arrival of the police officers. As a result of the search, the officers found a number of essays, poems, letters, etc., which they took away from the house.

The arrest of Sri Aurobindo—and not alone the fact of it but also the manner of it—created a great sensation in the whole country. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* asked editorially: ". . . But why were they (Aurobindo and others) pounced upon in this mysterious manner, handcuffed, and then dragged before the Police Commissioner? Where was the necessity for this

outrage? . . . It served no other purpose than that of wantonly outraging public feeling". Besides Sri Aurobindo and Barindra Kumar Ghose, thirty-four others also were rounded up in connection with the Muzafferpore outrage, the bomb-factory at Manicktolla, and the supposed widespread revolutionary conspiracy of which these apparently were but startling symptoms.

Produced before Mr. F. L. Halliday, Commissioner of Police, at Lal Bazaar, Sri Aurobindo reserved his statement; Mr. Nolini Kanta Gupta stated that he "was unaware of the reason for which he was charged." When they were produced later before Mr. T. Thornhill, Chief Presidency Magistrate, the prosecution tried to make capital out of the fact that Sri Aurobindo was one of the proprietors of the garden where the bombs had been manufactured. Mr. Thornhill transferred the case to Alipore. The prisoners also, including Sri Aurobindo, were sent to Alipore and lodged in Jail there.

## II

### COUNTRY-WIDE SYMPATHY

The "Alipore" Case, as it henceforth came to be universally called, was the talk of the whole country for the next twelve months or so. It was known that the prosecution were straining every nerve to secure the conviction of Sri Aurobindo and thereby to cast a stain on the white flower of utterly blameless life he had so far held aloft through fair weather and foul weather alike. The eminent criminal lawyer, the late Mr. Eardley Norton, then at the height of his powers and reputation, was engaged by the Government to conduct the prosecution. It was therefore necessary to organize the defence of Sri Aurobindo on an adequate enough basis. His sister, Srimati Sarojini, appealed in the following terms to Sri Aurobindo's countrymen:

"I know all my countrymen do not hold the same political opinions as he (Sri Aurobindo). But I feel some delicacy in saying that probably there are few Indians who do not appreciate his great attainments, his self-sacrifice, his single-minded devotion to the country's cause, and the high spirituality of his character. These embolden me, a woman, to stand before every son and daughter of India for help to defend a brother, my brother and theirs too".

The appeal—which even to read today creates a tremor in our whole being, down to the inmost depths—was eloquently supported by the *Bengalee*, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, and other papers. Response to the appeal was not very slow in coming; and it came from the most unexpected places. A blind beggar—all honour to him!—gave Srimati Sarojini one rupee out of the alms he had assiduously collected, perhaps over a period of a month or even a year; a poor student, by denying himself his daily tiffin, gave a modest contribution; the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha bestirred itself to make collections for the Defence Fund. And other individuals and agencies also interested themselves in making proper arrangements for the defence of Sri Aurobindo.

While all this, no doubt, gave an indication of the amount of goodwill in the country towards Sri Aurobindo, the actual sum of money that was collected from week to week was by no means satisfactory. After two months, hardly Rs. 23,000 had been collected!

Meanwhile the preliminary trial was going on in Alipore before Mr. L. Birley, the Officiating District Magistrate. The trial commenced on the 19th May, 1908. At the outset, bail was refused to Sri Aurobindo. Mr. Kingsford, the intended victim of the Muzafferpore outrage, being summoned to give evidence, said somewhat complacently: "I was Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, from August 1904 to March 1908. I had to try many sedition cases . . . I acquitted as many as I convicted."

The preliminary trial was a long one. When Sri Aurobindo was brought before Mr. Birley on the 11th June, "a black ring was distinctly visible round Aurobindo Babu's eyes"; two days later—"Aurobindo Babu laughed heartily while conversing with his pleaders, only he looked a bit paler than before." And so with interesting vicissitudes the trial dragged on; in the early part of August, Sri Aurobindo was ill in jail; and at last, on the 19th August, Mr. Birley framed charges and committed to sessions Sri Aurobindo and the others.

Srimati Sarojini Devi had collected by then, as we saw above, only



# The Spiritual Epic Of Alipore

Rs. 23,000; she therefore appealed to her countrymen for another Rs. 37,000 since the defence costs were computed to exceed Rs. 60,000.

## III

### SRI AUROBINDO'S VISION OF KRISHNA

What were Sri Aurobindo's feelings when he found himself checkmated by this seemingly inexplicable bolt from the blue, which put an abrupt end to his political career? What did he think and feel, how did he bear the rigours of the imprisonment, the bad food, the inadequate clothes, the lack of books and journals, the lack of light and free air, and, above all, the strain of boredom and the creeping solitariness of the gloomy cell? Were there regrets, recriminations, or expostulations?

Sri Aurobindo has answered our questions, in language that often acquires wings and wafts us to the seventh heaven of radiant ecstasy and hope incommensurable, in his *Kara-kahini* and also in his Uttarapara speech, delivered a year later. We shall therefore answer our questions in his own words:

"When I was arrested and hurried to the Lal Bazar *hajat*, I was shaken in faith for a while, for I could not look into the heart of His intention. Therefore I faltered for a moment and cried out in my heart to Him, 'What is this that has happened to me? I believed that I had a mission to work for the people of my country and until that work was done, I should have Thy protection. Why then am I here and on such a charge?' A day passed and a second day and a third, when a voice came to me from within, 'Wait and see'. Then I grew calm and waited; I was taken from Lal Bazar to Alipore and was placed for one month in a solitary cell apart from other men. There I waited day and night for the voice of God within me, to know what He had to say to me, to learn what I had to do. In this seclusion, the earliest realization, the first lesson came to me. I remembered then that a month or more before my arrest, a call had come to me to put aside all activity, to go into seclusion and to look into myself so that I might enter into closer communion with Him."

On that occasion, however, he had proved weak and had refused to listen to that voice, politics and poetry were too dear to him then, and he could not give them up. Had he not, indeed, told Yogi Lele that he, Sri Aurobindo, would follow the path of Yoga only if it did not interfere with his politics and his poetry? So long as he was a free man, Sri Aurobindo would not break the bonds himself, and therefore God had to do it for him, though in His own way! God seemed now to whisper to Sri Aurobindo: "I have had another thing for you to do and it is for that I have brought you here, to teach you what you could not learn for yourself and to train you for my work".

Meanwhile Sri Aurobindo had been permitted by the authorities to send for books, and thus it was that he started reading the Bhagavad Gita. "His strength entered into me and I was able to do the sadhana of the Gita". Sri Aurobindo had already tried over a long period to apprehend the true inwardness and glory of the Indian religion and spiritual tradition, Sanatana Dharma, and to accept it in its entirety; now it all became, not so much a matter of intellectual comprehension, but a fact of intimate realization; he thus saw by direct illumination the eternal truth of "What Sri Krishna demanded of Arjuna and what He demands of those who aspire to do His work, to be free from repulsion and desire, to do work for Him without the demand for fruit, to renounce self-will and become a passive and faithful instrument in His hands, to have an equal heart for high and low, friend and opponent, success and failure, yet not to do His work negligently". The constant reading and re-reading of the Gita, ceaseless meditation on its undying truths, made it possible for Sri Aurobindo to seize in an act of undivided attention "the core of the Gita's teaching"; the Gita seemed to tell him in friendly, yet unambiguous and peremptory accents:

"Slay then desire; put away attachment to the possession and enjoyment of the outwardness of things. Separate yourself from all that comes to you as outward touches and solicitations, as objects of the mind and senses. Learn to bear and reject all the rush of the passions and to remain securely seated in your inner self even while they rage in your members, until at last they cease to affect any part of your nature. Bear and put away similarly the forceful attacks and even the slightest insinuating touches of joy and sorrow. Cast away liking and disliking, destroy preference and hatred, root out shrinking and repugnance. Let there be a calm indifference to these things and to all the objects of desire in all your nature. Look on them with the silent and tranquil regard of an impersonal spirit."

The doubts—the few that had persisted yet in prison—were now a thing of the past; Sri Aurobindo's soul already experienced a calm and rich lucidity and—lo and behold! Sri Aurobindo opened his eyes and saw:

"I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer

by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell, but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door, and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana, who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arm of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover. This was the first use of the deeper vision He gave me. I looked at the prisoners in jail, the thieves, the murderers, the swindlers, and as I looked at them, I saw Vasudeva, it was Narayana whom I found in these darkened souls and misused bodies."

Incarceration, then, far from breaking Sri Aurobindo, only remade him in the hallowed mould of God's desire; the prison did not cramp his movements, but proved rather a temple of liberation and fulfilment; even in confinement he experienced neither peril nor shortcoming, but only the soul's utter joy and freedom; and even when he inhabited but an area of forty-five square feet, he sensed the splendours of the Infinite and learned to lose himself in the "vast of God."

## IV

### CHITTARANJAN DAS'S HISTORIC DEFENCE

While thus all was felicity within, the world outside continued to be agitated by the imprisonment of Sri Aurobindo and the protracted and sensational trial that followed it. The case commenced in the Sessions Court in October, 1908. Mr. Beachcroft, the District and Sessions Judge who tried the case, had been with Sri Aurobindo in Cambridge, and had stood second in Greek, while Sri Aurobindo had stood first. He had now the by no means pleasant task of "trying" the chained and handcuffed Sri Aurobindo on a charge of waging war against the King. Mr. Eardley Norton appeared for the prosecution (who obviously didn't want to take any chances whatsoever); after the first few days, Chittaranjan Das—the "Desabandhu" of a later day—appeared for Sri Aurobindo. Srimati Sarojini Devi and her friends thus succeeded in avoiding the "sharks" of the legal profession and found in Chittaranjan a true "Defender of the Faith". At that time, Chittaranjan was known to be a rising criminal lawyer; a sensitive poet, and above all, an unflinching idealist and an adoring son and servant of the Mother. He came,—and the prospect brightened at once all around!

Chittaranjan, although he was not then the power in the legal world that he became soon after, gave his whole heart and soul to the organization of the defence, and for the next six months dedicated himself to the sacred task of defending Sri Aurobindo. We learn that "in this case 206 witnesses were examined, 4,000 documents were filed, and the exhibits consisting of bombs, revolvers, ammunition, detonators, fuses, poisonous acids, and other explosive materials, numbered 5,000". Poet, idealist, patriot, Chittaranjan enthusiastically came to his brother poet's rescue, put away from him "all other thoughts and abandoned all his practice" and "sat up half the night day after day for months and broke his health"—and all to save Sri Aurobindo; and he did succeed in saving him. But Sri Aurobindo knew all the time that, though his friend Chittaranjan was the instrument, Vasudeva alone was the prime mover and doer!

It is not necessary here to go over the whole ground once again. Well, the prosecution—though they sought to move literally heaven and earth—failed to prove their case against Sri Aurobindo. Asked by the Court, Sri Aurobindo said that he would leave the case entirely to his lawyers; he himself did not wish to make any statement or answer the court's questions. The case for the defence was that it was perfectly true that Sri Aurobindo had taught the people of India the meaning and the message of national independence; if that in itself was a crime, Sri Aurobindo would willingly plead guilty to the charge. There was no need to bring in witnesses to prove this particular charge; Sri Aurobindo readily and gladly would admit it and he would be willing to suffer to the uttermost for having propagated the message and elucidated the meaning of national independence. But let not the prosecution charge Sri Aurobindo with things he had never even dreamed about, which were wholly repugnant to his entire philosophy of life and conduct; he had taught the people of India how the ideals of democracy and national independence could be translated into realities in terms of Vedantic self-discipline and self-realization. He had never had any part or lot in the terrorist movement, he had never countenanced it, he had never approved of the actions of the people who had implicated themselves in the movement. He was a Vedantic Nationalist, not revolutionary terrorist!

Chittaranjan's speech for the defence was spread over eight days and it was an eloquent epic of forensic art. What was Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of action,—what was it in the individual and national planes? Just this, affirmed Chittaranjan: Vedantism. Sri Aurobindo was not a politician in the ordinary, Western sense, but one to whom politics was as spiritual an experience as was religion itself. Chittaranjan continued:

Continued on page 8

# THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA

BY  
"Synergist"

## VIII: PHILOSOPHIES OF LIFE

In the essay *Consciousness and Culture* it was shown that a man's religion and philosophy are his answers to the Sphinx Riddle and that these answers depend upon his knowledge of God, Man and the Universe, which again is determined by the nature of his consciousness; it is according to the particular psychological mould and cast of his being, and the type and level and range of his consciousness that he answers the eternal riddle — the particular philosophy of life he creates is determined by his own inner and outer nature, and it is only in conformity with his philosophy of life, that is, his beliefs and convictions about the nature of the Ultimate Reality and the world, that he forms his ideas of good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice, these ideas ultimately influencing his attitude towards other men and governing his conduct. This means that his ethic arises out of his world-view.

It should not, however, be construed from all this that every man acts out of a philosophical conviction; most men are guided or rather misguided by their lower nature, it is the "desire being" in them that rules their entire personality, the mind playing only a subservient role; in their case "thought's the slave of life" — but a general statement can be made that certain philosophical conceptions govern a man's actions, especially when he attempts to act deliberately. Even common sense, by which the majority of men act, has often behind it metaphysical ideas silently supporting it: as Coleridge would say, "Common sense is intolerable when it is not based on metaphysics". It will also be found that often man's every day actions reveal his metaphysical convictions — whether he believes in free-will or predetermination, in the immortality of the soul or in the utter dissolution of the entire being at death: whether he is a hedonist or a stoic, a God-worshipper or an atheist. The philosophy of life he will embrace will be the one with which his being has an affinity. The "ultra-violet types", to use a phrase of Koestler's, will be instinctively drawn towards seers, and spiritual and religious teachers like Krishna, Christ and Buddha, and the intellectual and the mystical types will find their affinity in Plato or Plotinus. At the lower end of the spectrum we have the mundane "infra-red types" who will most probably be attracted by Marx, Dewey or McCabe, with Freud supplying the gospel that gives the sanction. Between the two extremes we have those who have an attraction for one or the other group to a greater or a lesser extent — the Transcendentalists and the Idealists, the Humanists and the Altruists, the Utilitarians and the Hedonists. We see in all ages mental affinities drawing thinking men to different philosophies. Dante is drawn towards St. Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle, A.E. towards the Upanishadic seers, Emerson towards Plato and the Gita, Mill towards Bentham, Carlyle towards Goethe and Fichte, while Shelley emphatically writes, "For my part I had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon, than go to heaven with Paley and Malthus!"

### Influence of Philosophies on Conduct

A man's philosophical beliefs and convictions mould or mar his being; they give him a right law of action, a dharma, and lead him on to a greater life, or they create in his mind a false sense of values and retard his evolutionary progress. If, for example, a man implicitly believes in the theory of the "Survival of the Fittest through Natural Selection", and is convinced that it is only through struggle that he can grow and develop and attain mastery, he will find it perfectly natural to follow the law of the jungle, because biologically he will be justified in doing so — he cannot possibly love his neighbour when he is expected by natural laws to subjugate him. Or again, if he seriously believes with Freud, that sex is the motive force of man's actions, that the "pleasure-principle" governs his life, that his conscience is only a sentry posted in his being by society, that he secretly harbours incestuous feelings for his mother, and that religion is "the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity", it is quite possible that he may behave like a sex-starved neurotic. If he asserts that matter is the Ultimate Reality, that to believe in a Supreme Being, whether He be called God, Ishvara or Allah, is a sign of cultural decadence, that religion is the opium of the people, and that the end justifies the means, it will be irrational to expect him to act like, say, St. Francis of Assisi. Or if he says like the hedonist Eustace in Huxley's *Time Must Have A Stop*, "Let me not put off till tomorrow the pleasure I can have today", he will not act in the same way as the stoic who agrees with Carlyle when he says, "..... Art thou nothing other than a vulture then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to eat; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy Byron, open thy Goethe..... On the roaring billows of Time thou art not engulfed but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure, love God. This is the Everlast-

ing Yea, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whose walks and works, it is well with him!"

### Values Have Lost Sanction

We have stated that a man forms his laws of conduct in conformity with his philosophy of life and acts in the world according to its dictates — that his ethic arises out of his metaphysic; but we find that certain philosophies of life do not give rise to an ethic at all, because moral and spiritual values are left without a sanction. This happens when partial truths valid only under certain conditions and circumstances, that is, for a certain order of reality or on a particular level of organisation, or only in a particular field like physics, biology or psychology, or at a certain evolutionary stage of man's development, are exaggerated into universal truths and made to appear as if they were valid under all conditions and at all times, and philosophies of life are erected on them. "Fear not the new generalisation", says Emerson; if he had been alive today, after studying the ultimate implications of Darwinism, Marxism, Behaviourism and Freudianism, he would have added, "But beware of the false generalisation". It is the false generalisations, which are nothing but exaggerated applications given to partial truths, that have destroyed sanctions behind moral and spiritual values. When a man cannot find a single satisfactory reason why he should love his neighbour, and not use him as a means to an end, or subjugate him, or even destroy him; when he is told by Freud, that his conscience which stops him from doing things which have been condemned as evil by all saints, sages and prophets, is only a psychological formation in his consciousness artificially created by his upbringing and education, and that ethical restraints are unnatural demands put upon him by social conventions which contradict his real instinctual nature, he finds it quite natural to prey on his weaker fellow-beings and to behave like a murderous maniac at the slightest provocation. This is the plight in which the West finds itself; its ethics have no sanction, because its world-views based upon the findings of science do not give rise to an ethic. It cannot give a satisfactory answer to David Hume's poser—"There is no reason why I should prefer the pricking of my finger to the death of one thousand fellow-beings."

It must be here clearly understood that it is not our intention to undermine the findings of Biology and Psychology. On the contrary we have shown in the fifth essay that Darwin's theory expresses a biological truth, though only a partial truth, for there are other factors besides struggle which contribute to the evolution of man. We can say the same about Freud, Pavlov and Watson who have made substantial contributions to Psychology and Psycho-physiology. Our main contention here is only this, that many of the ruling concepts of these branches of Science are valid only in a particular frame of reference and cannot be made to yield a philosophy of life. If there is to be a comprehensive world-view, it must be based upon a spiritual metaphysic which alone can sanction an ethic, a dharma, a law of right action capable of governing man's relations with his fellow-beings. A complete philosophy of life must take into account the whole of man's nature, not only his lower animal but also his higher spiritual nature, not only the urges of his mental, vital and physical outer natural being, but also the Godward aspiration and mystic longings of his inner soul-being. Merely to declare, after an examination of a particular part of man's being, that he is nothing but a bundle of conditioned reflexes, that his consciousness, if he has any, is only a by-product of bodily processes, that he has no soul or spirit, is to evolve theories from insufficient data. Man not only possesses a consciousness, he also has many ranges of consciousness in his being which he can command through a spiritual growth; consciousness is the fundamental fact of his personality. Again, the turbid, obscure and sexual "Unconscious" is not the only region in the inner depths of his being of which he is directly not aware; his being is many-dimensioned — just as there are infra-normal dark ranges in his inner consciousness, so also there are supra-normal luminous ranges, which can be called the "Superconscious." These points as well as the validity and limitations of the findings of Pavlov, Freud and others will be discussed later. For the present we shall restrict our enquiry to their effects on higher values and their sanction.

We have up to now examined only the psycho-biological reasons for the crisis in man's consciousness and its consequent effect on his economic, political and social life. In the next essay we shall briefly examine how concepts which have helped to explain certain facts of human existence in a particular frame of reference, when exaggerated into universal truths have been instrumental in giving man a wrong world-view, a false philosophy of life, a philosophy which instead of helping him to evolve further has only helped to sidetrack his evolutionary growth.

\* Later Freud did admit the existence of other collateral instincts.

# LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(8)

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 based on Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q: 1. Most of the religious and other popular beliefs of ancient times have been discarded as mere superstitions by the scientific-rationalistic mind of the modern man. Was there no truth in these beliefs?

A: The word "superstition" has been habitually used as a convenient club to beat down any belief that does not agree with the ideas of the materialistic reason, that is to say, the physical mind dealing with the apparent law of physical process and seeing no further. It has also been used to dismiss ideas and beliefs not in agreement with one's own idea of what is the rational form of supraphysical truths as well. For many ages man cherished beliefs that implied a force behind, which acted on principles unknown to the physical mind and beyond the witness of the outward reason and the senses. Science came in with a method of knowledge which extended the evidence of this outer field of consciousness and thought that by this method all existence would become explicable. It swept away at once without examination all the ancient beliefs as so many "superstitions"—true, half-true or false, all went into the dust-bin in one impartial sweep, because they did not rely on the method of physical Science and lay outside its data or were or seemed incompatible with its standpoint. Even in the field of supraphysical experience only so much was admitted as could give a mentally rational explanation of itself according to a certain range of ideas—all the rest, everything that seemed to demand an occult, mystic or below-the-surface origin to explain it was put aside as so much superstition. Popular beliefs that were the fruit sometimes of imagination but sometimes also of a traditional empirical knowledge or of a right instinct shared naturally the same fate. That all this was a hasty and illegitimate operation, itself based on the "superstition" of the all-sufficiency of the new method which really applies only to a limited field, is now becoming more and more evident. The word "superstition" is one which should be used either not at all or with great caution. It is evidently an anachronism to apply it to beliefs not accepted by the form of religion one happens oneself to follow or favour.

Q: 2. But surely it can't be denied that there are a number of beliefs which are only blind superstitions!

A: We cannot go so far as to deny that there is such a thing as superstition—a fixed belief, without any ground, in something that is quite unsound and does not hang together. But the human mind readily claps on such names to belief in things which can be or are in themselves true, and this is a mixture which very badly confuses the search for knowledge. But precisely because of this mixture, because somewhere behind the superstition or not far off from it there is very usually some real truth, one ought to be cautious in using the word or sweeping away with it as a convenient broom the true, the partly true and the unfounded together and claiming that the bare ground left is the only truth of the matter.

Q: 3. Belief in magical and occult practices was common to all humanity before the advent of modern Science. What are the real nature and function of occultism?

A: Occultism is in its essence man's effort to arrive at a knowledge of secret truths and potentialities of Nature which will lift him out of slavery to his physical limits of being, an attempt in particular to possess and organise the mysterious, occult, outwardly still undeveloped direct power of Mind upon Life and of both Mind and Life over Matter. There is at the same time an endeavour to establish communication with worlds and entities belonging to the supraphysical heights, depths and intermediate levels of cosmic Being and to utilise this communication for the mastery of a higher Truth and for a help to man in his will to make himself sovereign over Nature's powers and forces. This human aspiration takes its stand on the belief, intuition or intimation that we are not mere creatures of the mud, but souls, minds, wills that can know all the mysteries of this and every world and become not only Nature's pupils but her adepts and masters. The occultist sought to know the secret of physical things also and in this effort he furthered astronomy, created chemistry, gave an impulse to other sciences, for he utilised geometry also and the science of numbers; but still more he sought to know the secrets of supernature. In this sense occultism might be described as the science of the supernatural; but it is in fact only the discovery of the supraphysical, the surpassing of the material limit,—the heart of occultism is not the impossi-

ble chimera which hopes to go beyond or outside all force of Nature and make pure phantasy and arbitrary miracle omnipotently effective. What seems to us supernatural is in fact either a spontaneous irruption of the phenomena of other-Nature into physical Nature or, in the work of the occultist, a possession of the knowledge and power of the higher orders or grades of cosmic Being and Energy and the direction of their forces and processes towards the production of effects in the physical world by seizing on possibilities of interconnection and means for a material effectuality. There are powers of the mind and the life-force which have not been included in Nature's present systematisation of mind and life in matter, but are potential and can be brought to bear upon material things and happenings or even brought in and added to the present systematisation so as to enlarge the control of mind over our own life and body or to act on the minds, lives, bodies of others or on the movements of cosmic Forces. The modern admission of hypnotism is an example of such a discovery and systematised application,—though still narrow and limited, limited by its method and formula,—of occult powers which otherwise touch us only by a casual or a hidden action whose process is unknown to us or imperfectly caught by a few; for we are all the time undergoing a battery of suggestions, thought suggestions, impulse suggestions, will suggestions, emotional and sensational suggestions, thought waves, life waves that come on us or into us from others or from their universal Energy, but act and produce their effects without our knowledge. A systematised endeavour to know these movements and their law and possibilities, to master and use the power on Nature-force behind them or to protect ourselves from them would fall within one province of occultism: but it would only be a small part even of that province; for wide and multiple are the possible fields, uses, processes of this vast range of little explored knowledge.

Q: 4. What was the essential difference between occultism as practised in the West and in the East?

A: Occultism in the West indulged too freely in the romance of the supernatural or made the mistake of concentrating its major effort on the discovery of formulas and effective modes for using supernormal powers. It deviated into magic white and black or into a romantic or thaumaturgic paraphernalia of occult mysticism and the exaggeration of what was after all a limited and scanty knowledge. These tendencies and this insecurity of mental foundation made it difficult to defend and easy to discredit, a target facile and vulnerable. In Egypt and the East this line of knowledge arrived at a greater and more comprehensive endeavour: this ampler maturity can be seen still intact in the remarkable system of the Tantras; it was not only a many-sided science of the supernormal but supplied the basis of all the occult elements of religion and even developed a great and powerful system of spiritual discipline and self-realisation.

Q: 5. In the popular mind occultism is usually associated with magic and magical formulas like the mantras. The rationalistic mind considers these as fraudulent tricks intended to deceive credulous people. Is there no effective truth in these formulas?

A: This is only one side of occultism but it is not altogether a superstition as is vainly imagined by those who have not looked deeply or at all at this covert side of secret Nature-Force or experimented with its possibilities. Formulas and their application, a mechanisation of latent forces, can be astonishingly effective in the occult use of mind-power and life-power just as it is in physical Science, but this is only a subordinate method and a limited direction.

Q: 6. What should be the highest and most important aim of the occult or magical practice?

A: Its most important aim must be the discovery of the hidden truths and powers of the mind-force and the life-power and the greater forces of the concealed spirit. The highest occultism is that which discovers the secret movements and dynamic supernormal possibilities of mind and life and spirit and uses them in their native force or by an applied process for the greater effectivity of our mental, vital and spiritual being.



# THE SPIRITUAL EPIC OF ALIPORE

Continued from page 5

"As in the case of individuals you cannot reach your God with extraneous aid, but you must make an effort — that supreme effort — yourself before you can realize the God within you; so also with a nation. It is by itself that a nation must grow; a nation must attain its salvation by its unaided effort. No foreigner can give you that salvation. It is within your own hands to revive that spirit of nationality. That is the doctrine of nationality which Aurobindo has preached throughout, and that was to be done not by methods which are against the traditions of the country . . . the doctrines he preached are not doctrines of violence but doctrines of passive resistance. It is not bombs, but suffering. . . . He says, believe in yourself; no one attains salvation who does not believe in himself. Similarly, he says, in the case of a nation".

How Chittranjan proved that the letter purported to have been written by Barindra Kumar Ghose to Sri Aurobindo was no more than a forgery—"as clumsy as those Piggott had got up to incriminate Parnell after the murder of Lord Cavendish in Phoenix Park"—is among the most thrilling denouements in the history of Indian criminal cases.

Having thus ably demolished what had initially appeared to be a piece of damning evidence against Sri Aurobindo, Chittaranjan, in his peroration, made a fervent appeal to Mr. Beachcroft the Judge and two Assessors in the case :

"My appeal to you is this, that long after the controversy will be hushed in silence, long after the turmoil, the agitation will have ceased, long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and re-echoed not only in India, but across distant seas and lands. Therefore, I say that the man in his position is not only standing before the bar of this court, but before the bar of the High Court of History."

Prophetic words — and more than prophetic words! On April 13, 1909, the two Assessors returned a unanimous verdict of "Not guilty". Nearly a month later accepting the Assessors' verdict, Mr. Beachcroft acquitted Sri Aurobindo. But many of the others among the thirty-six accused were awarded various sentences, though it is not to our purpose to follow their fortunes any further.

## ON THE PILGRIMAGE OF ETERNITY

While still in the Alipore jail (the Government Hotel at Alipore, as Sri Aurobindo once humorously called it) he had composed a few poems revealing the strength of his new-found faith. The true path that God wishes His devotee to tread is not the proverbial bed of roses; it is studded with sharp thorns and steely brambles; it is punctuated by the shocks of circumstance. He ever tells His devotee in no ambiguous terms the hazards that he should bravely face and overcome:

With wind and the weather beating around me  
Up to the hill and the moorland I go,  
Who will come with me? Who will climb with me?  
Wade through the brook and tramp through the snow?  
Not in the petty circle of cities  
Cramped by your doors and walls I dwell;  
Over me God is blue in the welkin,  
Against me the wind and the storm rebel.  
I sport with solitude here in my regions,

Of misadventure have made me a friend.  
Who would live largely? Who would live freely?  
Here to the wind-swept uplands ascend.  
I am the lord of tempest and mountain,  
I am the Spirit of freedom and pride;  
Stark must he be and a kinsman to danger  
Who shares my kingdom and walks at my side.

In another poem, THE MOTHER OF DREAMS, written in long lines of linked sweetness and interior double-rhymes, Sri Aurobindo's Muse rides triumphantly on the crest of a complicated rhythm and achieves a memorable articulation in eloquent praise of the Mother — "home-of-all, womb-of-all", in Hopkins's pregnant phrase — who in myriad ways manifests Herself to terrestrial men and women. What visions are these what sights are these, what sounds are these, what are these images, what is this bliss profound, — what are these that thus implicate us in their grandeur and impenetrable mystery? Sri Aurobindo's imagination and his spiritual fervour weave a velvet magic about these meandering and soul-enchanting lines; the poem is itself a dream world of incomprehensible beauty and felicity. One must read and chant the whole poem slowly and reverently — for truly is it endowed with something of the mantra sakti of the revealed word — and then only one will be able to gain entrance into the deathless world of its making. We can but quote the concluding lines here, as inspired a piece of utterance as any in the whole body of Sri Aurobindo's poetry:

Open the gate where thy children wait in thy world of a beauty un-darkened.  
High-throned on a cloud, victorious, proud I have espied Maghavan ride when the armies of wind are behind him:  
Food has been given for my tasting from heaven and fruit of immortal sweetness;  
I have drunk wine of the kingdoms divine and have heard the change of music strange from a lyre which our hands cannot master;  
Doors have swung wide in the chambers of pride where the Gods reside and the Apsaras dance in their circles faster and faster.  
For thou art she whom we first can see when we pass the bounds of the mortal.  
There at the gates of the heavenly states thou has planted thy wand enchanted over the head of the Yogin waving.  
From thee are the dream and the shadows that seem and the fugitive lights that delude us;  
Thine is the shade in which visions are made; sped by thy hands from celestial lands came the souls that rejoice for ever.  
Into thy dream-worlds we pass or look in thy magic glass, then beyond thee we climb out of Space and Time to the peak of divine endeavour.

From the fullness of such poetic revelation, it is sacrilege to detract anything — and mere exegesis must only end in detraction. Suffice for us to know that Sri Aurobindo had become, while in the Alipore jail, the sort of man who could peep into Infinity and render its untranslatable wonders in such streams of vibrant melody. Sri Aurobindo — and this alone matters to us — has safely and purely come through the devouring coils of adverse circumstance; he has baffled the Everlasting No and affirmed the Everlasting Yea; he has ceased to be a "traveller between life and death" and become instead a Pilgrim of Eternity!

## MOMENTOUS ISSUES AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Continued from page 2

recent statement made by the Premier of Madras in a Press Conference. Referring to the Communist terror in the Kistna district, Mr. P. S. Kumarswami Raja, the Madras Premier, said that wherever he went the people cried: "If you do not do something, our lives are not safe." He assured them that necessary action was being taken by the Government and they need not have any fear. "Why do you not ban the Communist Party?" was the question put to the Premier by the Pressmen. The Premier said that the India Government at present wanted to be consulted on every matter including agriculture which had become an all-India subject. So they could not think of banning the Communist Party without consulting the Central Government.

The Centre, no doubt, makes big contributions to the Provinces—Rs. 450 crores were estimated in 1948; but that inevitably implies control and supervision by the Centre which

reality. Instead of the Centre making grants, it is the Provinces which should have all the incomes accruing in the Provinces out of which they can make contributions to the Central Government for certain specified works delegated to them. That would be real provincial autonomy, and the Constituent Assembly must decide clearly whether the country will have it.

### Centralisation a Folly

As we have said, the tendency is to nullify it altogether. Not only the Central Government as a whole, each Minister of that Government wants to have absolute power over the Provinces in his own department. Sardar Patel has already given the hint that some of the acceding states may have to be governed by administrators. The way in which the Provinces are being treated shows that the ultimate fate of all the States and Provinces is to

lose their popular assemblies and be governed by administrators appointed by the Central Government, as indeed it is being already advocated by some on the ground of efficiency and the consolidation of the unity of India. In that way lies destruction.

Those who are shouting for a centralised government in the name of efficiency and unity are not only neglecting the lesson of India's long chequered history, but also that of the condition of our neighbours, China and Burma. It is the attempt to bring all China under a unitary government, ignoring the peculiar genius of the Asiatic people, that led to the devastating civil war in China which has now brought her to the verge of ruin. The same has been the case with Burma. And, in ancient India, all attempts at unification by a centralised administration failed again and again, leading ultimately to the slavery of India. makes Provincial autonomy an un-

### Recast the Whole Constitution

Now is the time to rectify those mistakes by following the true spirit of Indian Polity and making a complex system of autonomies the basis of the construction; that would inevitably imply the redistribution of the provinces on a linguistic basis and also prepare the ground for the removal of old dissensions and divisions. But this would mean the recasting of the whole constitution so far enacted by the Constituent Assembly and the rejection of the Parliament form altogether. It seems to be a far cry. If only our legislators feel that in the next election the country will not favour those who do not stand for a really Indian constitution, then they may yet change their mind. The people are not sufficiently awakened to the supreme importance of the issues that are being decided in a hurry; but let no one expect that they will remain so apathetic for long.



# NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT

## PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN ARCHITECTURE

By ANTONIN RAYMOND

*Technology Review*

*Continued from previous issue*

In America no real taste of modern architecture has yet been experienced. In this country the commercialist was swift in seizing upon it and offering it as an additional style over the architect's bargain counter, thus thwarting at birth any chance it might have had of a natural development. Because Modern architecture is founded on truth, however, it is finally outwearing the faddists. It is belatedly coming out here and there in its true form, not as a white cube but as common sense, livability, aptness, excellence of plan, space and light. It is taking hold at a time when the country is in a state of confusion socially and financially.

The clientele has changed, the wealthy individuals abandoning the field to the masses and their housing problem to the government and corporations and their projects, all of which will some day have to be wrested from the hands of the mere materialists. In part cause, and in part result, of the state of social and financial confusion, over-emphasis upon selling has hampered Modern architecture in America, not merely through the commercial exploitation which I have mentioned but—more seriously—through its effect on students. When almost every attempt to create is perverted into a method for increasing sales, young people with good intentions and intelligence lose their direction and drift off with the rest, devoured by the same consuming anxiety to sell. Many of them think that, where earning power is prime consideration, they must of necessity divorce themselves completely from higher values. Most of the students leaving the universities and preparing to practise architecture have vision and idealism. They are able to understand the realities of which I have been speaking.

### The Modern Architect's Difficulties and Problems

But they come into a world which is incapable and unwilling to understand all that they have learned to cherish. They find that architectural practice is mostly in the hands of interior and exterior decorators belonging to the past era, and that these are well entrenched with the jobgivers, including the government and industries. They find that they will have to work either for the reactionaries of the old guard or the false prophets or, again, on other purely commercial projects. Yet if they keep in mind that the people at large want and need good things and values, that the obstacles are false and therefore must fall under

pressure, they will have the courage which will enable them to live through their difficulties.

Always they must take every opportunity to further their cause. If, for instance, the proposition is one calling for the production of cheap houses that must look expensive, to be built of poor materials simulating better kinds, in fancy forms to attract the vulgar, the problem should be faced squarely. It is true that the houses must sell, that money should be made. But wits can be used to foil an ugly plot. One can scheme and manoeuvre and, by wise planning, slip into these buildings something that was not bargained for: a rational, pure construction which, like the bones of the body, is not apparent but upon which depend all exterior and interior harmony; or an efficient and unpretentious kitchen, the refining influence of which may some day spread to other apartments.

### Cultural Values and Material Existence

Le Corbusier said that Americans were timid. I think their timidity is due, first of all, to an inordinate fear of poverty, and then to a lack of faith that faithfulness to an idea will carry them through. My firm belief is that solid or stable material existence can be reached only through spiritual realities. In fact, ideas are the basis of material existence. Loss of faith in spiritual realities in this country has been followed by material and social insecurity.

For instance, when a carpenter asks \$10, \$12, \$14, a day for his work and works only about one-third of the days that he might work, even a motor car and an electric icebox will not make him happy. The matter is that his monetary powers of accumulation have been raised too fast. He is, according to the Hindu sage, fourth in rank after the

master builder. Yet today, although in name and knowledge he is still subservient to the architect, the architect is in no position to command him. Recently, when I put up an exhibition at Rockefeller Center, I found that I could not afford to employ a carpenter, and that even had one been willing to work for nothing, I should not have been allowed to avail myself of his services. Therefore, with the help of architect associates, I did the work myself. That, according to the Hindu sage, would be a reversal in the order of nature. All are brothers only when the distinct duties to be performed and the individual places allotted in the universal scheme are recognized and accepted. A rise in the material standards of living should be preceded and accompanied by a rise in spiritual standards; it should be founded on a deepening sense of responsibility. Not only guns and mustard gas but over-stuffed arm-chairs and rich food wreck the race. For matter provides us with the instruments and tools that become dangerous weapons in the hands of the unwise. Material power is "like a two-edged sword in the hands of a maniac!"

Now you may well ask what this seeming lengthy digression has to do with Modern architecture. The answer is to be found in the argument that a great architecture must express the spirit of a great age. Our age is only now finding its spirit. It seems to me that people are revealing a growing desire for air, for space, for freedom from encumbrances. Greater simplicity and nearness to nature will help to open their eyes to real values. They must discover that the culture which they seek so ardently is a thing not merely to be appreciated but to be lived. In this country people are moved by a great curiosity—a desire to understand the arts and music, for instance—but that alone cannot be called culture.

### True Culture

That is why an Eastern peasant may actually be more cultured, in the true sense, than a well-informed New Yorker. The former is living and embodying the experience of his race. His knowledge is in his bones; he daily enacts, it, practices

it. His politeness is based on a law of human relationships; the beauty of the things he makes comes from a very precise knowledge of materials, of their aptness for the execution of the form; and the form which he fashions realizes a purpose which adequately expresses the order of his life. His life itself is beautifully related to the greater life of the universe that envelops him. His life represents the careful, well-balanced interweaving of spirit and matter. In comparison with his standard of living, the standard of the average American is low, however absurd that statement may seem. The Oriental peasant has the sensibility of the artist. He sees and appreciates the beauty of his fields which so perfectly retain the water for the growing of rice and reflect the sky like a mirror. He has no word for beauty; in fact, in Japanese that word does not exist. But he understands the excellent relationship between the field and his own needs and the laws of nature which have brought them together. That excellent proportion between supply and demand represents great art and beauty to him. No one could claim that he misapplies the laws of nature, the laws of economics, of cycles, of causes and effects, as is so flagrantly done in this country. The result of this profound love for, and collaboration with, nature brings with it beauty to which we also must ultimately return, since before us are open, I believe, the gates of a new cycle of civilization.

I have drawn what may seem a rather idealized picture, but it is a real one. I have spoken of the peasant to show a way of approach to the solution of the complex problems that are before us in the world today. People are confused; architecture is confused. The sincere effort of Modern architecture is an effort toward order. The architect therefore must seek to deepen his understanding of a world which is neither past, present, nor future, but eternal. He must use all the experience of the past, embodying its principles, not its forms. On the other hand, he must take things as they are—materials and people; he must face the present facts.

*Concluded.*

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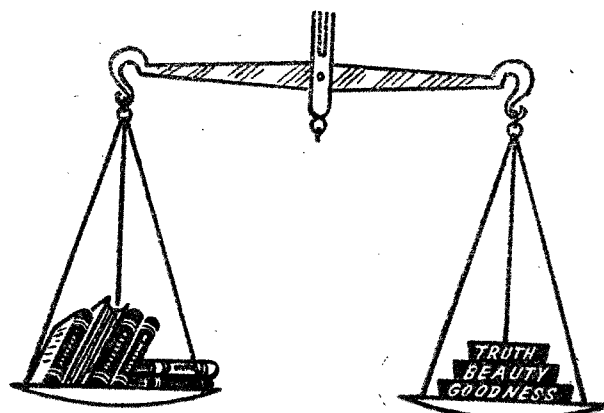


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# BOOKS in the BALANCE

The books that will be reviewed here are not only those recently published. Those published some time ago but still deserving special attention will also be "in the balance".



## WILL THE ATOM BOMB PREVENT WAR ?

**MILITARY AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF ATOMIC ENERGY.** By P. M. S. BLACKETT (Turnstile Press, London). Rs. 10/15.

Mr. Vishinsky and his supporters have apparently been greatly heartened by Professor Blackett's book. As this publication seems calculated to impair the prospects of reaching agreement with Russia on the Atomic Energy Commission, it may be desirable to examine some of its premises and conclusions a little more closely than would normally be worthwhile.

### Prof. Blackett's Thesis

Professor Blackett's book sets out to prove:

That strategic bombing is ineffective;

That the Germans would gladly have refrained from bombing our cities had they not been forced to do so as a reprisal against our attacks;

That atom bombs do not add very much to the bombing power of a nation;

That their use by the Western Allies was quite unnecessary as the Japanese were prepared to surrender anyhow;

That our hurried employment of atom bombs can only be attributed to the wish to make sure Japan should surrender to us so that the Russians should get no credit for their collapse;

That the industrial use of atomic energy is enormously more important for an under-developed country like Russia than for America or Britain; and

That the Soviet authorities are therefore quite right to refuse to have anything to do with the Baruch plan for its control, since this would enable the Western Powers to interfere with their intention to develop atomic power for peaceful purposes, and would prevent them keeping secret the location of their arms factories without giving them any immediate military compensation.

### Value of Strategic Bombing

No one who remembers the attacks on Warsaw or Rotterdam will consider the allegation that it was Britain who started bombing open cities worthy of notice. But the assertion that strategic bombing played little or no part in the defeat of Germany may be worth a few words of refutation, absurd though it must seem to anyone who has read the Goebbels diaries or seen the state of Germany since the war.

When we recall the effect on our production of the mere 6,000 tons of bombs dropped monthly on England during the blitz, we are entitled to demand very clear evidence before we accept the view that the 50,000 tons a month dropped on Germany in 1944 made comparatively little difference to her output.

Diagrams in Chapter 2 of the book purport to establish the case. Though plausible at first sight they prove entirely unconvincing on closer examination. The first shows

a rise in the alleged German production, the third a rise in the number of aircraft turned out despite increasing bombing on our part.

These curves are unsatisfactory for various reasons. Not only was our bombing very inaccurate in the early stages of the war, but it was relatively light; more than two-thirds of the total tonnage of bombs on Germany was dropped in the last year. As the output curve in both diagrams conveniently breaks off about a year before the end of the war, the effect of this heavy, accurate bombing is not shown.

Moreover, the fact that Germany had hoped to win the war on her stocks, and only started mobilizing industry, working double shifts, calling upon women, and so on, in 1942, would automatically cause a rise in output which might well outweigh and conceal the effect of the small amount of inaccurate bombing which was inflicted on her before the summer of 1943.

As to the aircraft, there is the further point that effort in the German factories was notoriously turned over largely from bombers to fighters in the latter half of the war—in itself evidence that our bombing was hurting them.

Since it takes at least five times as many man-hours to make a bomber as to make a fighter a rise in the mere numbers of aircraft turned out, which is all that is shown, was only to be expected when labour was transferred to the cheaper type.

These factors are, of course, mentioned in the text of the book. If they could be taken into account quantitatively some useful conclusions might emerge. But the uncorrected curves prove nothing; and, worse, they are apt to mislead the ordinary reader.

That our bombing caused 4.5 million workers in Germany to be diverted from other activities is surely a much more revealing piece of evidence as to the effect of strategic bombing on the German war effort than these elaborate diagrams.

### Effects of Atom Bombs

Another point is the claim that the Japanese were ready to capitulate even before the atomic bombs were dropped—indeed, this is the gravamen of the complaint, against our having used them.

This may or may not be true. If it is not, a large part of the book goes by the board. But if it is true, surely any normal person must attri-

bute their collapse, at least in large part, to the only experience they had of war in their own islands, namely strategic bombing by the Americans.

The argument intended to prove that atomic bombs are not very much more effective than ordinary bombs is vitiated among other things by the fact that it is based entirely upon the observed result of a bomb exploding a quarter of a mile above the ground.

The effects of an atomic bomb—very likely improved by a far greater factor than the author suspects—exploding on the ground and hurling great blocks of concrete and clouds of radio-active dust in all directions are never considered. The appalling difficulty of saving anything from the wreck, let alone repairing or rebuilding, if approach within a mile of the point of impact is barred for months after the explosion by the presence of lethal radio-active substances, is scarcely mentioned.

The immense difference between destruction by ordinary bombing spread over a period of years and destruction inflicted all over the country simultaneously by a few hundred bombers armed with atom bombs is brushed aside on the plea that such concentrated attacks perhaps would not be worth while.

To omit these vital considerations and to conclude on the strength of some rather superficial calculations that atom bombs cannot prove decisive in war is surely very rash. The Russians evidently do not share these delusions.

In any event, even were it true that atom bombs cannot decide who will win a war, no one can deny that they may often decide whether there will be a war. For the knowledge that most of their principal cities are apt to be destroyed within a week of the outbreak of the hostilities must act as a considerable deterrent on would-be aggressors, even in totalitarian States.

### Why Were Atom Bombs Dropped?

The claim that the main reason that atom bombs were dropped as soon as they were ready was in order to finish the Japanese war before the Russians could get into it is really rather naive. If the Western Allies were so anxious to deny the Russians any share in the war against Japan, why ever did they press Stalin at Yalta and at Potsdam to start hostilities in the Far East at the earliest moment?

The long and the short of it is that the use of these bombs was intended to hasten the end of the war. Even the author of this book would, I hope, not consider this aspiration very wicked.

### Russia and the Baruch Plan

The pretence that Russia would be ill-advised to accept the Baruch plan

for the control of atomic energy because this might delay the installation of plants for peaceful purposes which she so badly needs is as unconvincing as the other arguments.

To build a million kilowatt atomic plant is a major effort even for a highly industrialized country. And to make any impression on Russia's need for extra heat and power, scores, if not hundreds, of millions of kilowatts would be required.

Even if atomic power could be produced economically, the capital investment and industrial effort needed to add even a fraction to Russia's existing supplies within a measurable period would be altogether beyond her resources. It is therefore preposterous to say that the fear that she might be hampered in her plans to develop Siberia by the use of atomic energy is a valid reason for refusing any form of control.

### An Unfortunate Book

Everyone knows that an echo from the West reverberates much more convincingly behind the Iron Curtain than home propaganda. It is therefore unfortunate that a book should have been published in England which inculcates the view that Russia has little to fear from the Western Air Forces in case of hostilities and, worse still, which encourages her absurd suspicions about the sinister intentions of the Anglo-American Allies.

All patriotic people surely share the wish that Russia should agree to some form of control of atomic weapons which would prevent an arms race almost inevitably culminating in war. It is because this book seems calculated to diminish our hopes of agreement that it seemed worthwhile to expose the fallacies in some of the specious arguments which form its main theme.

—LORD CHERWELL in  
"World Digest".

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# The Owl's Banquet

BY "MINERVA"

The world regards Swinburne, Emerson, Carlyle, Lamb, Shelley, Gladstone, Herbert Spencer, Daniel O'Connell and Disraeli as great men. But some of the great men themselves had a different opinion about several of this group. Here is what Swinburne says of Emerson on the latter's daring to make a criticism of Carlyle: "A gap-toothed and hoary-headed ape carried at first into notice on the shoulder of Carlyle and who now in his dotage spits and chatters from a dirtier perch of his own finding and fouling." Carlyle has many hits to make. This is at Lamb: "A more pitiful, rickety, gasping, staggering, stammering Tomfool I do not know." This is at Shelley: "A poor creature who has said or done nothing worth a serious man being at the trouble of remembering—a poor, thin, spasmodic, hectic, shrill and pallid being." This is at Gladstone: "He appears to me one of the most contemptible men I ever looked on." And this is at Herbert Spencer: "The most unending ass in Christendom." Daniel O'Connell has the following compliment to pay Disraeli: "England is degraded in tolerating or having upon the face of society a miscreant of his abominable, foul and atrocious nature."

What is the most beautiful sentence in the English language? According to Havelock Ellis it is Temple's on Life: "When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child that must be played with and humoured a little, to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

What is the most magnificent sentence? Ellis thinks it is Raleigh's on Death: "O eloquent, just and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched great-

ness, all the pride, cruelty and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, HIC JACET."

Many students of language have objected to the capricious way in which words with similar spelling in English have a different pronunciation. But there is a subtle instinct in the race-soul forming a language and its sounds. Perhaps in English the words that have similar spelling come often together, so that a uniformity of pronunciation would create an unpleasant effect. G. H. McKnight tells us: "Suppose one were to give a uniform pronunciation to the letters 'ough' in the combination of words 'Though he brought a bough large enough to put through the trough.' The resulting jargon would be as absurd in sound as in sense." For instance, if the letters "ough" were sounded as in "enough," we should have the cacophony: "Thuff he brufft a buff large enuff to put thruff the truff."

What used to be called Babu English is now almost extinct. But that is rather a pity. For, where ordinary matters are to be communicated, correctness has little flavour, and the absence of the exhilaratingly outrageous Babuism has diminished "the gaiety of nations." What loss that no more now do we have a letter ending: like that addressed to an English official by one desirous of being appointed to a clerkship in that gentleman's office: ". . . It is with fervency I solicit your Majesty's hand and heart in moving this petition, and will pray long and continually for your honour and your honour's gracious lady and all your posthumous children to follow up." Or take that priceless petition to Colonel Sir Evan Smith which commenced: "Honoured Enormity." Or the other addressed gratefully to an English benefactor, which closed: "May God please your worship."

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## THE MIND OF LABOUR IN THE WEST

Mr. William Green, veteran leader of the largest Trade Union Federation in the United States (A. F. L.) with more than 7,700,000 members, told members of the Central Committee of the International Metal Workers Federation in Washington on May 8 that "the enslavement of workers anywhere endangers freedom everywhere", and he condemned Soviet treatment of Labour Unions.

We quote here the speech of Mr. Green as it eloquently expresses the mind of the labourers in the West at this critical juncture in world affairs. He said: "As we survey the world situation today, we are forced to conclude that any threat of aggression facing us comes from only one source, Soviet Russia. The record of the past few years is so shameful that Russia can no longer hoodwink intelligent people by prating about peace. The Communist brand of peace propaganda does not square with the facts. Because of Russia's refusal to co-operate with other countries, the U. N. has failed to fulfil our hopes that it would become an effective instrument to safeguard peace. Because of Russia's rejection of generous and humanitarian efforts to place atomic bombs under international control, and to develop atomic energy solely for the constructive benefit of humanity the threat of atomic warfare with all its horrors still exists. Because of Russia's fifth column movements, all liberty was extinguished in Czechoslovakia, and other nations of Europe are still menaced by the same fate. No so-called peace meeting that the Communists and their fellow travellers may stage in any city of the world can erase the shameful record of Soviet duplicity, treachery, and lust for power from our minds.

"We, in the labour movement, have had our own experience with Communists in the trade union field. I need not go into their attempts to infiltrate the trade unions here in America at this time, but they did not fail in Czechoslovakia. They gained control of the labour movement there, and used it as an instrument for revolution which resulted in smothering the freedom and democracy of that gallant country under the Iron Curtain. In France, Italy, and in countless other countries of Europe, Asia and South America, the Communists are actively engaged in promoting the same revolutionary aims today. They are not trying to help the workers. They are trying to take advantage of their misery to further the ambitions of the Kremlin for world power. In these ambitions, the so-called World Federation of Trade Unions was destined by the Soviet Leaders to play an outstanding role. The Soviet domination of the W.F.T.U. has been clearly exposed, and free and democratic labour organisations formerly affiliated to it have withdrawn in dis-

gust. It should be obvious to all by now that the W.F.T.U. is a dangerous fifth-column of the new Soviet dictatorship and that it is working overtime to promote social, industrial and political chaos in countries which Russia eventually hopes to absorb. Therein lies our opportunity to discharge our responsibility as free trade unionists.

"The time is ripe for the non-Communist, democratic labour organisations of the world to join together into a new and clean world organisation of free trade unions which can, and will, challenge the W.F.T.U. in the domain of labour. Such an international federation of free and democratic labour, free from Government domination and free from manipulation by political parties and political ideologies can accomplish great good for our modern world. The cause of democracy can have no stronger or more effective ally than an alert Trade Union Federation, which upholds the dignity of man and seeks to improve the conditions under which he works and lives in a peaceful world. We who believe in letting in light, rather than letting blood, we who revere justice, rather than brute force, we who insist, as free men, on judging as well as being judged, we who love peace but are willing to fight to protect our basic freedom—all of us, standing united, can keep our principles forever invincible."

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# NEED FOR SPIRITUAL RE-ORIENTATION OF INDIA'S EDUCATIONAL POLICY

BY DR. HARIDAS CHAUDHURI

The National Government of India is quite alive to the manifold responsibilities that political independence has brought in its train. It is fully aware that the problem of education must have an important place in the scheme of all-round re-construction of our national life. Now, the question is, what should be the guiding principle in the shaping of the educational policy of Free India?

There can be no doubt that India must quickly assimilate the rich gains of modern scientific development, industrial progress, and technological advancement, and bring herself to the level of the world's most advanced countries. There is no doubt that in rebuilding her national life she must transcend all forms of mediaevalism and discountenance the spirit of chauvinism or militant nationalism. But does it follow from this that she can do no better than imitate the West, and allow her national system of education to be dominated by the purely secular and materialistic outlook of the latter? That would be ruinous for India as a force in the upward march of human civilization. India has a distinctive national genius and a cultural heritage of her own. It would be suicidal to ignore the fundamental trend of her cultural development in planning a genuinely national system of education. It is not enough for her to follow a negative policy of taboos all forms of mediaevalism, separationism and isolationism. India has a definite contribution to make towards the moral and spiritual re-orientation of the world with a view to meeting the challenge of the present age.

## Education According to the National Genius

The educational policy of India signed to serve that country's purpose. Quite naturally, it was not inspired by the motive of enlightening the masses. It was not calculated to produce national heroes or international luminaries. It was specifically designed to manufacture tools and instruments for the colossal administrative machinery of the vast sub-continent of India. If, in spite of that, India has been able to produce a large number of first-rate leaders of thought and action of whom any nation of the world can quite legitimately be proud, it is to be attributed to the irrepressible genius of this ancient land. But the attainment of political independence has imposed the great necessity of providing the fullest scope for the free development of the national genius of India. Now that India has succeeded in throwing off the foreign yoke, the problem of a thorough re-organization of her educational apparatus with an eye to her peculiar national genius should by universal consent be given the topmost priority.

Now, what is the peculiar national genius of India? What is the fundamental trend of her culture and civilization? What is that outlook on life, that attitude to the world's affairs, which India has striven through the centuries to foster and develop? If the answer is to be given in one single word, that word is 'spiritual'. The dominant note of Indian civilization has indeed been her single-minded devotion to the fundamental spiritual values of life. To know the Spirit, the Atman, and to live the life of the Spirit: that has always been her one over-

mastering impulse, her all-determining ideal. Not even the darkest reverses of fortune have succeeded in extinguishing the steady flame of her spiritual aspiration. In the ages of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the spiritual quest was of a syncretical and all-embracing nature inasmuch as the Atman was sought to be realised not only above the turmoil of life but also in the midst of life's creative advance. In consequence, ancient India could very well combine material prosperity with a high degree of spiritual inwardness.

But in the middle ages, an extreme eagerness to realise the Spirit in its full purity produced a sort of indifference to the affairs of the world and to the values of social existence. That was responsible for the fact that in spite of her brilliant achievements in the domain of cultural pursuits India had during a long past to submit to social degradation political disorganisation and foreign domination. But renaissance India has felt the necessity of reviving the sound synthetic outlook of the Upanishads and reconciling the apparently conflicting demands of Life and Spirit. It is clearly realised by the leaders of the Indian renaissance that just as Life can obtain its full fruition only in the Spirit, so also the Spirit seeks the increasing self-expression in and through life. It is not, therefore, enough to know the Spirit, it is also necessary to dynamise the Spirit in renaissance India has an importance not only for the re-emergence of India as a unique force in international affairs but also for the solution of the present crisis of human civilization. To ignore this fact in rebuilding the educational structure of India would indeed be a profanation of the sanctuary of her soul.

## Education On A Spiritual Basis

While giving a message to Andhra University on December 11, 1948, on the occasion of the presentation of the Sir C. R. National Prize, Sri Aurobindo sounded a note of warning to the political leaders of India. He reminded them of the danger that by following certain tempting directions India might think it enough to become a nation like many others, "practising power politics with a high degree of success, guarding and extending zealously her gains and her interests, dominating even a large part of the world." But, Sri Aurobindo points out, "it would be a tragic irony of fate if India were to throw away her spiritual heritage at the very moment when in the rest of the world there is more and more a turning towards her for spiritual help and a saving Light."

This is a very important point for us to remember at the present juncture of human evolution. India has a definite mission to fulfil in the world. This mission lies in giving a new light to the world so that the night of continuous calamity and collapse may end in a new dawn of abiding peace, progress and harmony, so that the nightmare of power politics may yield place to a

unique rhythm of harmonious living. While addressing the first session of the U.N.E.S.C.O. at Paris in December, 1946, Sir Radhakrishnan observed: "What is essential today is not so much the rehabilitation of schools and libraries, or shops and factories, as the rehabilitation of man. We must re-create man if we are to re-create a new world community." India has a dominant part to play in achieving this rehabilitation or re-creation of man. So it is imperatively necessary that the educational system of India should be reorganised with an eye to such fruitful consummation of the spiritual heritage of India.

In ancient India the period of education centred round what was known as *Brahmacharya* which was the stage of intense self-preparation for a life of dedication to the fulfilment of the divine purpose in the world. *Brahmacharya* essentially consisted in self-control, self-purification and self-realisation under the close personal guidance of a man of living realisation. What is essentially needed today is to re-affirm the ancient ideal of education as an intense self-preparation for living a life attuned to the Infinite consistently with the enormously altered circumstances of modern times. There is no doubt that much emphasis has got to be laid today on technical education and specialisation in different branches of science. There is no doubt that the inculcation of a spirit of enterprise and a spirit of organised and concerted action must count today as important aims of education. But it is at the same time necessary to remember that what is of fundamental importance is the reconstruction of education on a sound spiritual basis and not on a materialistic and rationalistic basis, so that there can be no mistake about the ultimate purpose of life and about the deep significance of human evolution.

Modern India certainly requires front-rank statesmen and generals, first-rate scientists and technicians, doctors and engineers, and so on. But modern India also requires Rishis or masters of illumined life who can function as radiating centres of divine love and creative truth. Not only that. Free India demands that all her children in the different spheres of life—her statesmen and generals, scientists, and technicians, doctors and engineers—should be imbued with the true spirit

of Indian culture. Right from the beginning they should be made to realise that all their attainments are of little importance if they cannot be pressed into the service of Mother India and towards the fulfilment of the Divine purpose in the world.

The Constituent Assembly of India decided some time ago that the type of education to be imparted in Government Institution should be entirely secular. In so far as this decision was inspired by an anxiety to keep away from Government Institutions all forms of religious sectarianism, it is quite praiseworthy. But, in order to keep free from religious narrowness, is it necessary that the educational policy of the State should be formulated on a purely materialistic and rationalistic basis? That would fail on the one hand to prevent the growth of religious dogmatism encouraged by private initiative, and amount on the other hand, to a throwing away of the spiritual heritage of India. The best way to strike at the root of religious parochialism is not to leave religion to private bodies, but to provide for the best form of religious or rather spiritual instruction in all educational institutions.

## Some Practical Suggestions

Spirituality is the quintessence of all the historical religions of the world. It teaches that the world's religions are but so many different avenues leading to the same goal, namely, the realisation of the ineffable One, and that the ultimate purpose of our life in the world is to fulfil the One through selfless works. Now the basic principles of spirituality are declared in a very clear and luminous form in the Gita and the Upanishads. The Government can, therefore, do well to introduce in all educational institutions the study of the Gita or selections from the Upanishads as a prelude to everyday's work. But since the study of Shastras is only a fragment of real spiritual training, it is for educational authorities to determine in what other ways they can give a sound spiritual basis to the educational set-up. Provision for a brief period of silent meditation or some other form of prayer, closer and more intimate contact between student and teacher, increasing association of men of living realisation with educational institutions, and the like, are some important factors to consider in this connection.

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