

MOTHER INDIA

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K. R. PODDAR

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K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

ALTERNATE SATURDAYS

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A HIMALAYAN BLUNDER

In recognising Red China the Indian Government has committed a mistake whose gravity beggars description. We have made a New Year's gesture which would rank as one of the stupidest in our history if its stupidity were not surpassed by its perniciousness. Again and again we have prated of our admiration for the U.N.O. and declared that this body is the high hope of a broken world. But we have ignored the glaring fact that the U.N.O. is still considering Chiang Kai-shek's case against Soviet Russia, a case purporting to prove that the Red regime of Peking is a sign of Russia's having violated the U. N. Charter by acts undermining the political and territorial integrity of China and that this regime cannot be looked upon as a spontaneous people's movement. Common decency and consistency should have stayed us from rushing into recognition till at least the "Little Assembly" to which the case has been sent had passed judgment. But we have been in a tearing hurry lest any other member of the Commonwealth should forestall us in recognition and make Mao Tse-tung suspect our much-vaunted independent foreign policy. We have acted in flagrant contravention of all rules of fair play to Nationalist China. We have kowtowed to Mao who appears to us the big bully at our borders. No doubt, we are entitled to an independent view and do not need to abide by the U.N.O.'s verdict. If the U.N.O. throws out the Nationalist charge, we still have the right to support Chiang, and similarly we can claim to support Mao in spite of that body's confirmation of Dr. T. S. Tsiang's "J'accuse." But we are in a most unholy haste and wish to weigh nothing and listen to nobody's opinion.

Why have we been so precipitate? Is it because we are convinced that the entire Chinese nation is behind Mao? Such can hardly be the case, since there is clear evidence of uprisings in China at various places where somehow or other Mao's grip has relaxed. And these uprisings have had little to do with the Kuomintang. They have been spontaneous and have condemned Communism on its own merits. They show that the Chinese, while being fed up with Chiang's incompetent and corrupt bureaucracy, are equally resentful of Mao's Marxist militarism. If granting or withholding recognition meant our siding with Mao or sympathising with Chiang and if we felt that on the ground of Chinese popular opinion we could do neither, the question that should have guided us is: How do Chiang and Mao stand respectively in terms of our own national life and culture? Here the answer depends entirely on whether Mao the Communist represents what is represented by the Indian Communists against whom our Government has issued a drastic charge-sheet and whom our Prime Minister has unequivocally labelled as enemies of India and subverters of all our values.

Connection Between Mao and the Indian Communists

In general, nobody in his senses can deny that Communism is a world force and, except for Yugoslavia, not a nationalist movement in each country. Every book in Soviet Russia intended for the indoctrination of the masses underlines with Stalin's explicit approval a Leninist principle which may be stated thus: "After consolidating Marxism in Russia, inspire revolutionary movements in other countries, help them to overthrow by violence the existing governments and in the event of necessity come out with even armed force against these governments until Marxism is established everywhere." The European Cominform is proof of this principle. And Peking Radio's broadcasts on November 28 confirmed the creation of a Far Eastern Cominform to support Communist-led movements in Southern Asia. Liu Shao Chi, Red China's spokesman at the Peking conference of Communist delegates from twenty countries including the Soviet European bloc and Asia and Australasia, said that the Chinese people must give their moral and material support to these movements. This sufficiently connects Mao with the Indian Communists.

But there is more than a general connection. We have proof positive of his hostility to the Indian Government and to Nehru in especial. Peking Radio, in preparation for the conference on a master-plan for revolution in Asia as well as in the Pacific, shouted against the "imperialism" of India and attacked Nehru no less than Dr. Hatta and hoped that both their governments might be swept away. Again, less than a week after Nehru's birthday, the New China Radio broadcasted a letter from Mao to the Indian Communist leader Ranadive, in which it was openly stated that India would not remain long under the yoke of imperialism and its collaborators. This leaves no shadow of doubt that if Mao were working in India he would be at the head of the Indian Communists. Hence he must be Enemy Number One of all the best in Indian life and culture.

The line this gives us in the matter of recognition is clear. If the Indian Communists occupied by force a part of our country and went on enlarging their hold, would we ever think of granting them recognition? Mao who is in fullest possible accord with them has the same standing in China as they have here. Is it not absolute suicide for us, both nationally and culturally, to have perpetrated the Himalayan blunder of making him a New Year's gift of recognition?

Our Prime Minister's personal sympathy with several of Mao's economic slogans is well-known. He has talked time and again of the Chinese Communists as being chiefly land-reformers, agrarian progressives. But would he call our Indian Communists, with whom Mao's sympathy lies, agrarian reformers? Would he say that they should be regarded chiefly as apostles of a better land-arrangement?

And if the Indian Communists are, as our government admits, anti-national, anti-cultural, the establishment of a Communist China Embassy within our midst and the opening wide of our gates to Mao's partisans will be a sure accession of strength to the party we have condemned. With every moment of their presence we shall be more and more digging our own graves. Already we have enough subversive activity: was there not sound sense in drawing a line somewhere and, in the face of unquestionable signs of Mao's intentions, refusing to sabotage further our vital interests and the interests of our civilisation?

The Specious Argument of So-called Realism

It is difficult to understand what exactly could have blinkered the Government's eyes. There is the specious argument of so-called realism. All over England it has been tricked out in one dress or another. Even Mr. Churchill, the champion of anti-Communism, has used it. But England's mind is easy to read. What weighed with it was commercial stakes—1000 million pounds invested in trade with China. It forgot that, as Christopher Buckley has said, throughout South-East Asia and especially in Malaya where the Communist party is banned and the British are fighting its armed rebellion for the last 18 months, recognition of Mao would be interpreted as a signal diplomatic defeat for the British—in fact, as a Far Eastern Munich—and lend an additional impetus to the rebels. All this forgetting is horrible to think of and we cannot believe England's great love of liberty will not sooner or later assert itself; yet we can find at least some show of an excuse in the reluctance to let a lot of money go down the drain. It is a kind of low realism to value money so worshipfully, and to let Mao be likely to seem a big enough reality. We have no excuse at all, either good or bad.

The mere fact of Mao's wide conquests cannot impress a sober intelligence with any finality rendering his regime radically real. No doubt, it is pretty solid as far as military strength can make it such. Yet it is not so

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solid as fatalists might imagine. Did not Major-General Claire Chenault, an "old China hand" who helped stem Japanese advances with his Flying Tigers, express his reasoned conviction that, with the help of an American military mission such as is aiding Greece and of an international air-force patterned after the Flying Tigers, China could still be saved? Another consideration diminishing the seeming solidity is that the Russian bloc is in no position to supply China's needs and without American economic assistance China's industrial backwardness would be almost perpetuated and the present bold façade reveal an interior crumbling from inherent weakness. But even if actually Mao's regime is a reality as solid as it appears to a first superficial glance, its lease of life is not quite independent of our inner acceptance of it, our installing of it within our consciousness. The British rule in India—hardly comparable to Communism, yet undesirable enough in its own context—was at one time the solidest thing conceivable and all efforts against it seemed doomed to failure. But we never gave it acceptance within our consciousness. If we had, we should never have got prepared to remove it when world circumstances tended in our favour. Because we refused it the last touch of subtle dynamism that comes only with the mind's and heart's surrender to a phenomenon, one of the most stone-solid realities in history fell to pieces and left us a free India.

The argument from realism is most inconclusive, to say the least. And when it is a matter of recognising, as impressively real, a regime based on principles absolutely opposite to India's—that is, principles of stark materialism blocking every move in the direction of spiritual and mystical experience of the Divine and the Eternal, principles of utter collectivism reducing the importance of the creative individual to a zero and regimenting the adventurous many-sided intellect of man—the realism involved is a shocking neglect of the finest and highest that our history has recorded and an encouragement to all that would militate against our future greatness and self-fulfilment. And, mind you, it is a wanton realism, for there was nothing compelling us. It may be both inadvisable and unfeasible at present to cut off relations with Stalin whose comrade-in-arms is Mao according to his own pronouncement during his recent visit to Moscow, but world conditions have not dug Mao to a more or less extent into the life of every country. Here we could easily have insisted on the triumph of our principles. Our failure, therefore, is supremely shameful.

False Alarm over Nepal

Alarmists might exclaim at the ugly shadow of Mao near our own frontiers. Mao has revived China's right of suzerainty over Tibet. The right is remote history and international jurists are not willing to concede it easily. But if there is the right, it can be said to belong to the legitimate ruler of China and if Tibet does not regard Mao as a legitimate ruler she cannot be blamed for resisting him. Unfortunately, except for her difficult terrain, she has no defence to speak of. It is quite on the cards that soon she will be added to Mao's territorial possessions. But the story is different with Nepal. Mao will perhaps wish to reach out through Tibet and interfere with Nepal's present status. Nepal has good defence-resources, though an out-of-date political structure, and India will be particularly interested in the security of this neighbour of hers, since there are sixteen railroads leading from the Nepalese border into our country and the Gurkha soldiers are an important part of our own army. An extension of Mao's rule to Nepal will lay India open to easy attack by him and consequently cannot under any circumstances be tolerated. It will mean definitely a prelude to a war between China and India. What the alarmists declare is that if we did not recognise Mao he would precipitate a military clash with us.

But the alarmists are mistaken in two respects. India's recognition of him will not stop his coveting Nepal if interference in Nepal is an item already included in the omnium plan for self-aggrandisement in Asia. Secondly, India will not be alone in her fight with him over Nepal. The influential British periodical, *The Manchester Guardian*, suggested in an editorial on November 18 that if Nepal's security was going to be in any way jeopardised India must forestall the danger. The editorial goes further and says: "If, in India's designs for the security of Nepal, British support is desired, it would doubtless be forthcoming." So there is not the slightest cause for fear that Mao would come to military grips with us. He knows too well that we shall have the strongest support possible from Britain and, if necessary, from the U.S.A.: the latter, we may recollect, established diplomatic relations with Nepal in 1947 and emphasised on that occasion the complete independence of this country. Most probably, any tampering with Nepal will be the signal for a world war and Mao will never be advised by Stalin to start such a conflagration. Perhaps he will be asked to desist even from attacking Tibet: as late as 1945 the British Government had informed China which was then in Chiang's friendly hands that it was interested in preserving Tibet's autonomy and wished to have direct relations with Lhasa through the Government of India, and the latest reports from London indicate that though Britain may acknowledge Chinese

suzerainty over Tibet she will do so only if the Tibetans are allowed to enjoy full local autonomy and if there is no disconcerting talk by Mao of "liberating" her. In any case, Nepal is safe in the present world context from Chinese military occupation: steps would immediately be taken to stop even infiltration tactics. By refusing to recognise Mao we ran not the least risk of a threat by his troops. We could have turned a deaf ear to the alarmists.

The Night Ahead and America's Light

However, short of military conflict, Mao's basic antagonism to democracies like India would do its worst, no matter how friendly we tried to be. Our friendliness can only give this worst a more subtle garb and at the same time immensely increase its possibilities of harm. Not to have grasped this fact is political puerility. And as a result of the puerility we stand today on the verge of disasters we can scarcely dream of. Once before in the near past we took a plunge down the precipice. That was when we rejected the Cripps proposals which seemed to come on the urge of a great inspiration and sudden change of heart. No doubt, they were imperfect, but we could have accepted their major substance and tried to ship-shape whatever was rough in them. No doubt also, a turn towards conservatism took place again in the Churchill cabinet and considerably hampered Sir Stafford Cripps's movements. But our own peevishness and distrust were mainly to blame for the break-down of the negotiations. The Muslim League in those days had not acquired the bluster of a year or two later and Congress's giving a "Yea" to Sir Stafford would have meant the establishment of his proposals. India would have had substantial swaraj without the flaw of partition which rendered the freedom won in 1947 so bitter-sweet. A close co-operation between all sections of India's peoples in an all-out endeavour to fight the Japanese who were knocking at our gates would have kindled a singleness of spirit that might have led to a united India for all time. We averted our faces from the God-given chance and created the horrible karma of the massacres that followed partition: even now we have not outlived the fruits of the unfortunate sowing. It is only by the grace of Providence that India is not a complete shambles of communal fury and also that in spite of our failing to show a united front to the Fascists of Japan they could not cross our borders to spread their odious slavery of mind and life under the guise of "co-operative prosperity." Grace of Providence alone can once more save us from the extreme penalty of missing a second crucial God-given chance of working for the benefit of our country and its culture by returning a decisive "Nay" to the question of recognising the monstrous growth of Red China.

One despairs of Indian leadership. Not that Nehru's government is particularly to blame: other parties, had they been in power, would not have acted differently. The Socialists were the most clamorous for establishing diplomatic and trade relations with Mao. There was hardly a leader of any effective party in India with vision and idealism enough to refuse recognition. India under Congress has at least three achievements to her credit in the international sphere. One is her dogged stand against either Kashmir's absorption into Pakistan or its partition. The second is her choice to be a republic without leaving the Commonwealth. The third is her close approach to the United States of America. Her Commonwealth ties and her American penchant are, for all her resolve not to join either the Western bloc or the Russian, salutary to civilisation in a world menaced by the heartless Hammer and the soulless Sickle. Parties in opposition to Congress would have taken, *vis-à-vis* Kashmir, no less firm a stand; but none of them would have done their bit so well for civilisation at large. Whatever its faults, Congress is the least blind of all the political parties in action today. So when we despair of leadership we are not starting a campaign against Congress. But being the least blind does not make Congress an illuminated party. Some of its acts of short-sightedness are ghastly and the recognition of Mao when every instinct of idealistic and spiritual culture as well as every instinct of self-preservation and peace-preservation should have dictated the contrary course is the ghastliest. Leadership is indeed at a low ebb if not one top-ranking member of our best party could raise his voice against the crowning folly. Surely our politicians have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. India will never come into her own until this country, famed in the past for her spiritual genius, finds a leader of true inner vision and true revelatory intuition.

At the moment, in the field of international politics, America remains the bulwark of freedom and civilisation. It is much to be hoped that Britain and the remaining Commonwealth countries will not follow in India's misguided steps but give hearty co-operation to Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson in their determination to boycott Mao at all costs. Even if the Commonwealth fails, America can still by single opposition undo a good deal of the damage caused by the defaulters. Land of the star-spangled banner, keep your brave eyes lifted to the light of your ideal and with your strong hands direct and defend the civilised world in the night that has gathered all around!

NEW YEAR THOUGHTS ON PACIFISM

By "LIBRA"

The conference, first at Tagore's Shantiniketan and then at Gandhiji's Sevagram, of about a hundred pacifists from thirty-four countries of the world, has struck a responsive chord in the heart of every Indian. All our ministers have shown willingness to co-operate with these pilgrims of peace in an age torn with innumerable and gigantic dissensions. For, the ideal of peace is felt to be as old as India herself and ingrained in her immemorial culture: one of our best known scriptural phrases is the ancient Vedic message, *sarva janah sukhino bhavantu*, "let all people live in happiness through peace." And we can hardly think of a better message for the New Year that has come to complete the first half of the twentieth century.

But "peace" is a veritable proteus of a word. There can be a dead peace as well as a living one. Was it not said by Tacitus about the conquest of Germany by the Romans: *Solitudinem faciunt et pacem appellant*, "They make a solitude and call it peace"? Nor is it necessary to put a country to the sword in order to create the peace that is dead. If a country is either efficiently emasculated or ruthlessly regimented, we have a certain passivity or uniformity of mind which has the appearance of peace but is really a state of death in disguise. Even the peace that can prevail among free peoples may not be a living one in the true sense of the word: it may be merely a temporary lull in which war is found to be inexpedient and a co-operative opportunism has play. Or else an open conflict may be absent and yet a selfish feud on the ideological level go on and a self-interested economic throat-cutting continue. Surely this is not the peace those one hundred and odd pacifists from far and near mean and the old phrase from the Rig Veda implies.

Should Pacifism Preclude War?

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, in a recent broadcast, defined peace as "goodwill in action." A fair working definition, we may grant, but also a bit of a platitude likely to be pretty impotent unless we go beyond the purely ideative plane. For, active goodwill, as commonly conceived, cannot exist by itself and cannot persist for long. Man, as he ordinarily functions, is a mixture of the rational, the infra-rational and the supra-rational. He tries to order his life according to his intelligence, but constantly the tiger and the ape in him break out, laying waste the neat and glittering tracts of his reasoning mind, and when there is not this reversal to animality there is often a sudden reaching forth towards something grand and godlike, some power more wide than the intellect, and "a light that never was on sea or land" upsets his reasoned arrangements of attitude and gesture, so that he behaves with a splendid strangeness which sets at nought his virtues no less than his vices, his philosophies as well as his fantasies. Goodwill in action is the voice of man's reason in its ethical aspect; but if reason is only the middle term between what is below and what is above, how shall this goodwill be a lasting and effective force? Not that it is an utter contradiction of the below and the above: there is in the former a certain instinct of mutual aid while in the latter is to be found a spontaneity of universal oneness, but the infra-rational has also a violent competitive impulse and the supra-rational brings at times a power of destruction at which the mere mind trembles and with which it can scarcely reconcile its principle of war-shunning pacifism. On one side, "Nature red in tooth and claw", on the other the dazzling devastation of Mahakali the Goddess who carries the Eternal Truth like a sword to cleave violently the darkness of ignorance and evil. No doubt, there is also Mahalakshmi the beneficent Goddess, but she does not exclude the divine Warrior of the worlds; a subtle identity is between the two, most difficult for the human reason to understand and most disturbing to its ideative apotheosis of goodwill in action.

Although the brute competitiveness of the infra-rational is to be curbed, the sword-sweep of the supra-rational cannot be rejected. The cry of Sri Krishna at the battle of Kurukshetra, "Fight and win a mighty kingdom" is too clear to be allegorised away, too insistent in one form or another down the ages, especially at their turning-points, to be drowned by any mellifluous sentimentalism. So we must stop contrasting peace to war: under particular circumstances war cannot help having justification, and not only defensive but also offensive war, since frequently the best method of defence is attack. A squeamish recoil from physical combat and destruction has no basis in the divine reality's method and movement *vis-à-vis* an evolving world in which truth and falsehood, right and wrong, beauty and ugliness are pitted against each other. Of course, every effort must be made to avoid such combat and destruction, compromise should go as far as is consistent with essential loyalty to the cause of civilisation, no mere convenience or superficial advantage should be cherished inordinately, yet a final resort to arms must not be looked upon as an evil. Consequently, from the highest point of view, absolute *ahimsa*, unmitigated non-violence goes by the board at the very beginning of a discussion of pacifism. And when our Ministers make the apology to the Conference of pacifists that they are keeping an army and navy and air-fleet because they are too weak to follow correctly the ideal of pacifism and that this weakness should not be construed as a total forgetfulness of the ideal, they are making a false fetish of *ahimsa* and completely confusing the issue. Most

of the pacifists seem to be themselves in no less confusion, for the name of Gandhiji as the apostle of non-violence is lavishly strewn in their speeches. If *ahimsa* signifies repugnance from shedding all blood except one's own even when one is confronted with Hitler's panzers or, to take a smaller yet sufficiently vicious example, the marauding tribesmen who with Pakistan's connivance broke into Kashmir, then *ahimsa* is just an unconscious collaboration with anti-civilisation forces and, far from being a merit, a pernicious mistake. To refuse to see in some collectivities of human beings on certain occasions of history a streak of the diabolic which cannot be mended but requires to be ended by physical attack is sheer blindness to facts. The last war threw these facts into so much relief that a host of sceptics, C. E. M. Joad the most prominent among them, who used to laugh at the idea of supernatural powers and principalities came to the necessity of faith in God by the curious road of finding themselves unable to overlook the existence of some sort of devilry acting from beyond the realm of Nature. Even in the absence of the markedly diabolic, we should be able to see the element of the infra-rational as quite likely at several times to need violent opposition on our part. *Ahimsa*, leading to an apologetic attitude towards our armed forces as if in keeping up the martial spirit we were defaulting from the ideal of the divine that India has always visioned, is an utter falsity. If the pacifists foregathered in India consider the avoidance of war by all means and the pedestalling of *ahimsa* at all costs to be the essence of their philosophy and their work, they are on a wrong track and, for all their good intentions, doing disservice to the world. Identify "goodwill in action" with extreme *ahimsa* and you immediately disqualify it from being a worthy pursuit.

What we have to pursue is noble effort to avoid war for selfish motives with their brood of hatred and greed: this is the only valid sense of pacifism in the context of international politics. Selfish motives: there is the arch-evil which pacifism should work to remove. As a result, the mere avoidance of war is not the *summum bonum* even if war be something wholly to be shunned. Hatred and greed can run riot without assuming the shape of tank and bomber. As a reminder of this truth, the phrase "goodwill in action" is genuinely useful and plunges towards the heart not only of what is meant by the various pacifists who are our visitors but also of what is implied by our own ancient culture. The heart of meaning here may be broadly put as: a state of consciousness unagitated by selfish motives and therefore, so far as these motives go, at peace with the world and expressing that peace in active relation with living creatures.

Goodwill and the Supra-rational

The question, however, remains: Can the active goodwill possible to rational man be quite clear of selfish motives, and function effectively in the interests of genuine peace? There is a strong tendency today to look on man not as a middle term between the infra-rational and the supra-rational but as the final term of the evolutionary process: all advancement is considered a further and further refining of man's rationality and of the contrast it presents to what is below it—the animal kingdom. Many an Indian is inclined to be an agnostic: he does not deny the greatness of saints and mystics and yogis, yet he sees their greatness to lie rather in their intense humanitarian activity than in their intense experience of the Divine and the Eternal. He even wonders whether this experience is not a kind of magnificent illusion and thinks that their humanitarian activity should be dissociated from it and set up as our goal. Here is an attitude almost akin to Bertrand Russell's, as declared in an interview several years ago with Dilip Kumar Roy. Said Russell: "I believe in ecstasies as data of definite experience, but when they imply visions of the highest reality I cannot accept them; for, the lofty principles you speak of are by no means the results of these mystic illuminations. As a matter of fact such ecstasies render the mystics distinctly self-centred and selfish. Through such transports they become more and more subjective and get more and more loth to lead a healthy life of varied activities and lose interest in things for themselves. Consequently their joys tend to become morose and more similar to the joys of the voluptuary and the drunkard."

Dilip Kumar Roy, unable to shut his eyes to the lop-sidedness apparent in such a statement which grossly exaggerated the incidence of perversity and morbidity in the annals of mysticism, opined that it was just a conversational emphasis and that Russell whom he found (and rightly) admirable in many respects did not really leave the boons of mysticism out of the picture, since he also made the fine pronouncement: "The organised life of the community is necessary but it is necessary as a mechanism, not something to be valued on its own account. What is of most value in human life is more analogous to what all the great religious teachers have spoken of." But Russell, we are afraid, did not make any authentic concession to mysticism. For, as his book *Religion and Science* proves, what he means by the message of great religious teachers is the equanimity and compassion, the radiant and healing atmosphere which the master mystics speak of but which are attainable, according to him, without mysticism and should be so attained rather than in conjunction with an erroneous belief and an aberrant psychology. To those who have even an inkling of true mystical experience of any type it is absurd to imply that Buddha's supreme equanimity and

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compassion are possible without his Nirvana or Ramkrishna's intensely radiant nature and healing atmosphere can be acquired without his realisation of the Divine Mother. Qualities of the soul reach their acmes only through the soul's awakening to its cosmic and transcendent source; and in any case it should be evident that selfishness would be subdued most effectively if one has the experience of an ever-peaceful infinity-enjoying state in which the small ego of man is utterly annulled and that unless a Divine Mother, a beatific and luminous Creatrix of the world, is realised by the heart no emotion of human brotherhood can attain an extreme life-transfiguring pitch. Call mysticism a holy hallucination, if you are bent on taking a superficial view of the testimony of the world's finest figures, but you cannot escape logically granting that nothing short of such an hallucination can give rise exceedingly to "what is", in Russell's own words, "of most value in human life." If you admit certain so-called moral virtues to be of paramount importance to rational man, you cannot by-pass the mystical quest of the supra-rational which renders them the most beautifully potent, the most widely practicable.

Gandhiji, whose name dominated the pacifist conferences, was not a mystic in the real sense in which Ramkrishna or Vivekananda, Raman Maharsi or Sri Aurobindo is, yet whatever intensity of fellow-feeling and unselfish behaviour he brought was born directly of his fervent faith in a God who was to him the perfect father of all creatures and the light of a stainless truth. To try to follow Gandhiji's ideal and example without sharing this faith is always to act under a strain, for the full sanction and support from within will be missing. And if anybody does follow them easily while withholding sympathy from Gandhiji's religion, he is acting according to a certain inner impulsion which is really rooted in the heart's intuition of the Divine even though the intellect may refuse to acknowledge it or to formulate it as a philosophy. So complex is our human nature that the Divine can sometimes be even divinely denied; but a scientifically coloured or else Marxian tinged intellect, running counter to a strong feeling towards absolute ideals and towards a law of compassionate righteousness independent of the material flux and temporal contingency which are predominant in a crude scientific or superficial Marxian world-view, must always hinder and often misguide this feeling. The cleavage within cannot help diminishing the chances of success for genuine pacifism.

And when the agnostic is the common variety and not the exceptional who divinely denies the Divine, the case is worse. Every man has a fund of moral energy, but mostly it is a very small fund and, if there is no direct lift in him towards the supra-rational and all the lift is indirectly through the refined sensibilities of art, the abstract impersonalities of philosophy, the pragmatic concentrations of scientific research or the ego-tempering calls of social relationship, he is likely at almost every step to feel the tug of the infra-rational. Hatred and greed will never be quite away from him, selfish motives will openly or subtly invade his moral nature. Where, in such circumstances, is any opportunity for the lasting play of active goodwill? In fact, what goes by the name of goodwill in the ordinary life of rational man is a kind of *ersatz* product: any moment it may break down and betray its fundamental frailty. The sole goodwill that can enable a man to deal with his fellows out of a mind peacefully clear of selfish motives is God-will.

Religion and Religionism

Pacifism, therefore, should identify itself with faith in the Infinite and the Eternal. More inspired in at least theory, than the conferences at Shantiniketan and Sevagram, appears to be the International Congress of World Fellowship of Faiths which is to take place at Delhi for three days from January 6. Delegates representing various countries and religious denominations, will be meeting to further world peace through the medium of religion. The International Congress has its origin in the second Parliament of Religions held in India in 1928-29 and opened by Rabindranath Tagore. In its sessions there will be an open acknowledgment of the supra-rational source from which alone the true, the beautiful and the good can flow to the earth. However, we must admit that a religious orientation of rational man is insufficient to transfigure life so long as there is no marked turn towards mystical experience. For, religion tends to degenerate into religionism. What should be a matter of soul-discovery and of living contact and communion with the divine depths and heights of our being stops with a narrow creed, a rigid ritualism, a bigoted churchianity. The rational mind, if not influenced powerfully by the beyond-mind, is disposed to cut up the truth of existence and erect one part or another as the total verity: it cannot hold many things together in a harmonious synthetising view, the utmost it does is to attempt the subsumption of everything under one particular aspect which it exaggerates out of proportion. In consequence, we have trenchant oppositions of limited doctrines and, at best, "catholic systems" which yet are sectarian by sweeping all existence into a formula unduly magnifying a particular facet of reality. Intolerance, fanaticism, obscurantism are bound thus to go hand in hand with religion if the profound religious impulses is not directly aligned to the supra-rational. Progress has to come often by an attack on religious systems and much of the modern world's intellectual and social development is due to its break with the religionism that was rampant up to the European Renaissance.

But this break, for all its benefits of reaction towards freedom and wideness, is a negative force and must sooner or later lead to an arrant

materialism and a shipwreck of precious values. Religion true to the depths and heights of being from which it is a shining visitor to rational man is what should replace the credal, formal, sectarian stuff that is so perilous to the bosom and weighs so heavily upon the dreaming and aspiring heart. The turn not in the direction of crass secularity but in that of mystical experience should be the sequel to the leap away from religionism. One of the first signs of the desirable turn is the intellectual attempt to find the common vital measure of the various denominations into which the world of believers is fragmented: a parliament of religions, an international congress of faiths, aiming at unity and peace, is therefore a right movement. And it is indeed a good auspice that the New Year should start with a concourse of religious representatives bent on discovering ways and means to establish brotherhood in mankind. It is also a significant and happy omen that such a concourse should take place in India. But the full force of the omen will be lost if we fail to understand the stress India has always laid upon spiritual realisation, upon direct experience of the Divine. The motto of the International Congress of World Fellowship of Faiths is *Omnia vincit amor*, "Love conquers everything." Beautiful words —yet liable to be mere tinkling cymbals until we break through the surface of their sentimental idealism and reach some meaningful *mantra* charged with the supra-rational. A gospel of "sweet reasonableness" set in a religious key cannot be the master-instrument of genuine pacifism. Although it will carry more conviction than any secular version of "goodwill in action", it will never, without the rhythm of mystical experience, re-tune the human heart to a divine harmony. There must be men in whom the rational has been absorbed and taken up into sainthood, seerhood, yoga—men who have inwardly opened to the Lord seated in the heart of hearts, the Cosmic Consciousness and the Transcendent Self and Master, men who are no moral preachers with an intellectually guided religious fervour but such as are at least on the way to realising the goal so integrally revealed in that fourfold *mantra* of Sri Aurobindo's:

*Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
An unvalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
Force one with unimaginable rest.*

Yes, it is the mystic and the yogi who alone can bring the secret of world unity, the love that will conquer everything because it burns with the direct consciousness of the immortal, the illimitable and the perfect, has at all times the fire-keen impulsion of the supra-rational truth and beatitude, and is no honeyed weakness of either the nerves or the emotions wedded to an unthinking and unqualified *ahimsa*, no syrup of goody-goodiness manufactured from a recipe of pleasant religious ideas and conventional prayers, not even the sincere yet unenlightened zeal of social service in the name of a distantly paternal God, nor the well-meaning missionary indoctrination content with a result of superficial assent and formal kneeling before the tables of the ten commandments or the eightfold path. If there is a God in whom are all beauty and harmony, an effort must be made to know Him as we know the sun of midday, feel Him as we feel our flesh and the flesh of those who are dear to us, live Him as we live our hungers and our desires, manifest Him as we manifest the weight and warmth and vigour of our bodies. In short, by setting forth on the *via mystica*, we must strive to reach in our lives an incarnation of the Divinity we worship. Congresses of faiths soon become, for all their speeches and resolutions, frail and futile memories unless the mystic and the yogi infuse life into them. Out of the great hum of holy words and high declarations that made famous in its own day the first Parliament of Religions at Chicago almost half a century back, only one creative cry has remained—the voice of Swami Vivekananda. It has remained because it broke from a living realisation of the Infinite and the Eternal. Vivekananda uttered his message with the actual mystical experience glowing within him of the one supreme Self of selves present everywhere and the mighty Mother-Spirit from whom the entire universe has sprung.

His message may not be quite complete since with its superb dynamism it still mingled the feeling that man's fulfilment is ultimately outside earth and that physical existence, the life-force and the mind-energy have to grow great and work magnificently for only a while and in the end serve as a stupendous bow shooting the soul out of the cosmos into some absolute Peace. Not a supra-cosmic quiescence is the supreme peace we need, any more than we need a cessation of the warrior, the hero, the *kshatriya* in us, or an outward political and social co-operation among earth's peoples precariously sustained with the help of a sort of liberal universal religion veneering with a reasoned goodwill our brute brain. The integral Godhead must be "force one with unimaginable rest," and our earth-being and its members must find perfection of themselves here and now in the multiplicity-in-unity of that supra-rational Power from whom this being and its members have originated because of some truth or archetype of them existing there. A divine creative and all-transforming peace is our prayer in the New Year commencing the second half of the twentieth century. But, though we may look even beyond Vivekananda, his name is the most appropriate in connection with the endeavour to establish world peace through religion. Without men like Vivekananda this endeavour will find little more than a glow-worm illumination, and neither moon nor star will shine for it, much less will dawn the day of truth.

UNIVERSITY REFORM

By K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

Reform is in the air. There is no lack of plans and panaceas. The trouble is with Man—not the Plans. Commissions get busy, look round, take evidence, produce voluminous Reports. Argument acquires warmth even when it emits no light. The still small voice of sanity is more often than not hushed up by the propagandist iteration of the faddist, the Utopian, the political strategist. Conflicting cries confuse the unwary, and passion and prejudice wax supreme. Like many other things, education too is in the "melting pot"—not least, university education. Our present educational system—if "system" it can be called—is a legacy of British rule. The foreigner no doubt meant well; he did what he could; yet the fact remains that we are very much ill at ease with the legacy he has left behind.

National independence is now more than a vague hope or a vain longing; it is here; and it is for us to make good this independence so that it may make us a new people, with the flame of knowledge in our souls, and the light of freedom in our eyes. Education too should become national, it should flourish freely and fruitfully on our own soil, drawing sustenance from the stored-up munificence of our racial traditions, our age-long values and verities, but not rejecting the breath of free air from without, and answering to our unique human needs and national objectives but in no humourless mood of arrogant self-satisfaction. The trying war-years and the exasperating after-war years forced upon us the need to give a new orientation to our education. But if the blister of slavery was scalding, the first taste of freedom has by no means been an unalloyed sweetness. Freedom has its trials and privations no less than slavery. The price of freedom is a constant alertness, a perpetual readiness to meet the challenge of each phoenix hour when death and renewal are both involved. Life is a dynamic becoming, and we must not be therefore afraid of change; but the change should be implicit in the situation, not artificially imposed from without. As the education of the youth is part of the base of the state, if we mean to renovate the edifice of the state, we should really begin by strengthening the foundations. Education is indeed a vital portion of the problem of our national regeneration. If here we fail ourselves and fail the country, we shall have endangered the issue of the battle of our future.

The education of the people of independent India is a problem to be viewed as an organic whole, and not piecemeal under a system of priorities. There are not wanting vehement politicians who parrot the extreme view that primary education is alone the state's primary concern. There are others who would, if they could, make real education secondary in so-called "secondary education", and cram the school curriculum with all sorts of odds and ends. As for university education, the feeling is general, if not universal, that it is a costly luxury, a laced turban which tyrant custom demands but which you can easily do without. The university man, teacher or pupil, is almost suspect—he is half a parasite and half a humbug—and therefore on him no speech! Colleges and universities are castles of indolence at their best, and hotbeds of political action (or reaction) at their worst! It is sad, though not surprising, that such views should be held at such a time as this, for our universities and colleges have indeed a lot to answer for. But, while the criticism is understandable, it is nevertheless without real substance, and we can no more conceive of a body without

a head, or a head without a brain, than an educational system without the universities, or universities without advanced research. Our universities should remain, and they should grow in puissance and usefulness, at once directing and receiving support from the lower grades of education, receiving abundantly from and giving largely to the state, being the state's need more than its gift, at once the light of the nation and its many-chambered armoury.

The Various Reports

While the war was still going on, the Central Advisory Board of Education issued, in January 1944, its Report on Post-War Educational Development in India, now generally known as the Sargent Report, after Mr. John Sargent, formerly Educational Adviser to the Government of India. It was a compact yet comprehensive document, and its principal virtue was that it surveyed the Indian educational structure—ramshackle as it was and still is—as a whole, covering the various stages from pre-primary to University, and also glancing at adult education, technical, commercial, and art education, and other cognate problems such as health, recreation, and unemployment. Although by no means as voluminous or weighty as the monumental Sadler Commission Report of 1919, the Sargent Report too has rightly evoked a great deal of comment and criticism and raised Himalayan hopes which have not materialized so far.

The Sargent Report devoted a valuable chapter to university education, and among other things recommended, as the Sadler Report had done twenty-five years earlier, the institution of a three-year degree course and the relegation of the Intermediate course to the secondary grade of education. The three or four years following 1944 were a period of uncertainty, and so long as the political situation continued to be fluid—sometimes even fraught with explosive potency—no determined forward move could be taken. The birth of independence, however, changed the complexion of affairs. At first misguided enthusiasm wished to meddle with education in a high-handed fashion, but presently more sober counsels came to prevail.

The Government of India appointed, late in 1948, the Universities Commission "to report on Indian University Education and suggest improvements and extensions that may be desirable to suit present and future requirements of the country". The Commission was headed by Professor Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, and included two Americans, Dr. A. E. Morgan and Dr. John Tigert, an Englishman, Dr. James Duff of Durham, and six other educationists of standing like Dr. Tara Chand, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Dr. Lakshmana-

swami Mudaliar, Dr. Meghnad Saha, Dr. K. N. Bahl, and Prof. N. K. Sidhanta. An exhaustive and exhausting questionnaire spread over sixteen folio pages was prepared, and nearly 3000 copies were sent out to publicists, legislators, educationists, administrators and "other important men"—and "about 600 replies were received from the people addressed", which shows a wastage of only 80%! The Commission enterprisingly spread its net far and wide and caught plentiful fish, if not in the shape of written answers, then in the form of oral evidence. The Commission had besides other documents like the mimeographed Report of the Scientific Man-Power Committee, recent publications like the Harvard Report on General Education in a Free Society and McGrath's Science in General Education, and an over-all American Council on Education, to guide them or to base their conclusions upon. It was a formidable task, and perhaps a thankless task as well; but the Commission persevered, toured the country, and digested the evidence.

In the meantime, the Government of Mysore had appointed Dr. C. R. Reddy, an educationist of vision and of wide and varied experience extending over half a century, to report on education in the Mysore state, and his excellent Report, based on a personal examination of the problem in all its aspects, was published a few weeks ago. The first Part of the Report of the University Education Commission—a bulky document of 750 pages, about three times as voluminous as the Reddy Report—has also been just issued by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. The almost simultaneous publication of these two Reports, associated respectively with the names of Dr. C. R. Reddy and Prof. Radhakrishnan, both former Vice-Chancellors of the Andhra University,—an interesting coincidence,—gives us an opportunity to study them side by side in the urgent context of university reform in India.

The Reddy Report and the Radhakrishnan Report

Dr. Reddy's Report has the merit of clarity, cohesion, and individuality; it is a one-man's job, and hence embodies convictions forged over a stretch of several decades; and, although in the main bearing upon conditions in Mysore, it has necessarily a wider application. Dr. Reddy had taken a leading part in the organization of the University of Mysore in 1916, and he is in consequence able to contrast the ideals of the founders with the actualities of the hour, and even to restate the values of university education in the light of his own experience at Andhra and his recent contacts with the universities of Great Britain. The Reddy Report, then, is clear and lucid and forthright, there are no confusions and compromises, no loose ends and lacunae. You may not agree with Dr. Reddy, but at any rate you know where you are with him.

The Radhakrishnan Report is at once less inclusive and more comprehensive than Dr. Reddy's—less inclusive because it confines itself to university education alone, and more comprehensive because it reports on each of the universities

in India (including Mysore) and also because its detailed recommendations cover almost every aspect of collegiate and university education. Ten determined individualists, drawn literally from the ends of the world, constituted the Commission,—yet they have achieved the miracle of a unanimous Report. How did the miracle happen? While not disavowing "variations of opinion, outlook and emphasis", the authors of the Report explain that it "expresses a sincere effort to get at the essence of the issues in a spirit of mutual respect and tolerance, and not an attitude of indifference on the part of individual members to their own personal views and convictions. The Report is not a compromise between various opinions. We jointly and unanimously adopted the conclusions reached". A unanimous Report carries with it the force of unqualified and unique authority. It could be made the basis of an immediate and fruitful beginning of action, and there should now be no justification whatever for the Ministry of Education to go on with their somnambulist meanderings and pettifoggish postponements. Yet, while unanimity is an obvious blessing, it is a nice question whether, after all, the search for unanimity, the craving for agreed formulas, may not have reduced the Report to an intellectual hotch-potch, a bedraggled mass without unity and without integrality, and especially without a soul of its own.

Again, the feeling is not to be escaped that the Report has been somewhat hastily made up—that most of the reports on individual universities are so scrappy as to be almost useless and even misleading—that the mountain of accumulated material has been imperfectly digested—that the drafting of the Report, though competent enough, is undistinguished and without character. The bibliographies are neither full nor really "select"; some of the appendices, while they throw some light on the pet enthusiasms of the American members of the Commission, have little material relevance to the conclusions of the Report; and the figures supplied by the Ministry of Education regarding the budget estimates of the various universities in India constitute an unpalatable commentary on the efficiency of the Statistical Section of the Ministry of Education, and of the Ministry generally. One would suppose that, having obtained the figures from the universities, the Statistical Section would have tabulated them in a way that might facilitate comparison. For example, with reference to the Allahabad University, the percentage of government grants to total income is given as 52.88 in 1946-47, 72.58 in 1947-48, and 26.8 in 1948-49. These violent fluctuations are unintelligible and offer no scope for comparative study unless recurring and non-recurring grants are shown separately and only the former are taken into consideration in computing percentages. But apparently the Statistical Section is unequal even to these elementary tasks. Notwithstanding these limitations the Radhakrishnan Report is an impressive and meritorious document, sending out its roots into the immemorial past and stretching courageously into the future. In its own

Continued on page 8

SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION

PART II OF "THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA"

BY "Synergist"

SECTION III: THE NEW WORLD-VIEW

(1) THE CULTURAL CRISIS AND THE PROBLEM OF THOUGHT

Continued from previous issue.

The need of such a complete philosophy of life, of a world-view that can sanction higher values, has been strongly felt by philosophers for a long time. Since the nineteenth century, physics, biology and psychology have, as we have seen, contributed towards the creation of a materialistic interpretation of life, with the result that the existing metaphysical and theological structure of European thought finally collapsed, and together with it moral and spiritual values lost their ultimate sanction. Since then various attempts have been made to effect a transvaluation of values, for those resulting from the traditional world-view could not be grafted upon the new materialistic one. This axiological difficulty which has become the central problem of the cultural crisis of Europe has given rise to two distinct tendencies in its thought. Those who are concerned with giving a new world-view generally take up one of two philosophical attitudes.* There are first those who believe that values are independent of the existing world-view based upon the hypotheses employed to co-ordinate and harmonise the findings of physics, biology and psychology, and that radical changes in it in no way entail their revaluation—that they depend upon our emotional intuitions. Though this interpretation vaguely and imperfectly expresses a certain truth, namely, the influence and action of the inner soul on the outer nature, it does not go to the root of the difficulty; it only succeeds in subjectivising and relativising values instead of giving them an ultimate status. Others maintain that values are grounded in reality and manifest in the working of the cosmic process. This tendency has given rise to idealistic and spiritual philosophies of life. Some of the finest minds have concerned themselves with this axiological problem, and have strongly advocated the creation of a new world-view based upon a metaphysic having as its first postulate the Spiritual Reality—a Divine Being or an Absolute beyond time, space and casuality, an undifferentiated Divine Ground, That by which all exists but which exists by none, a Reality whose existence alone can give a meaning to man's spiritual aspirations and ideals and in which values find their highest absolutes. They feel that only such a philosophy can give a meaning to life. It also satisfies the enlightened philosophical reason of man for it has a verifiable hypothesis—not verifiable in the daily experience of the unregenerate and the spiritually untrained, but verifiable in spiritual experience of those who have transcended their narrow ego-selves to attain communion with the Divine Self. Maritain, Ouspensky, Heard, Huxley and others have all made admirable attempts, each in his own characteristic way, to destroy the materialistic view of existence and to pave the way for a spiritual one. Heard, whose writings generally have a great theodicic value, speaks of a new Cosmology with its consequent ethic and a psycho-spiritual discipline by practising which one can grow into a greater consciousness and attain mystic union with the Divine Reality, and Huxley speaks of a new Metaphysic which can show the oneness of all beings in the Divine Ground, and successfully answers, in his *Ends and Means*, Albert Schweitzer, who is of the opinion that a mystical world-view cannot yield an ethic as it is supra-ethical. Not only philosophers, metaphysicians and mystics, but also social philosophers and historians have made valuable contribution towards this end, the most notable among them today being Sorokin and Toynbee.

It is interesting to note in this connection what Sri Aurobindo wrote in 1918 in the *Arya*, the journal of philosophy he was then editing. He not only saw the need for a complete philosophy of life that can explain the eternal problems of existence, give a meaning and purpose to life on earth, and show humanity the goal towards which it is proceeding, but actually wrote six major works, each a classic in its own particular field, to meet this need. His three great works, *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, and *The Psychology of Social Development** are landmarks in the history of human thought. *The Essays on the Gita*, *The Secret of the Veda*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and a number of essays together with *A Defence of Indian Culture* were his other contributions in this journal. Needless to say, all that he wrote was from the heights of his unique spiritual realisation, the Light of the Divine Gnosis illumining his writings and giving them the stamp of the highest Truth; they were not just philosophical speculations of a great intellect. Rather, they were the creations of a great intellect transcending its narrow boundaries and opening itself through a spiritual ascension into the summit light of the Supreme Divine Intelligence, the Supermind.

*Actually there are three philosophical positions taken up by axiologists: (1) Subjectivism, (2) Logical Objectivism, and (3) Metaphysical Objectivism. Here, the reference is made to generalisers of knowledge.

*This work is now published in book form for the first time under the title *The Human Cycle*.

The following extracts taken from the *Arya* indicate the nature of the task he set before himself when he started editing it. He writes in *The Ideal of Human Unity*: "The surfaces of life are easy to understand; their laws, characteristic movements, practical utilities are ready to our hand and we can seize on them and turn them to account with a sufficient facility and rapidity. But they do not carry us very far. They suffice for an active superficial life from day to day, but they do not solve the great problems of existence. On the other hand, the knowledge of life's profundities, its potent secrets, its great, hidden, all-determining laws, is exceedingly difficult to us. We have found no plummet that can fathom these depths; they seem to us a vague, indeterminate movement, a profound obscurity from which the mind recoils willingly to play with the fret and foam and facile radiance of the surface. Yet it is these depths that we must know if we would understand existence; on the surface we get only Nature's secondary rules and practical bye-laws which help us to tide over the difficulties of the movement and to organise empirically without understanding them her continual transitions.

Nothing is more obscure to humanity or less seized by its understanding, whether in the power that moves it or the sense of the aim towards which it moves than its own communal and collective life. Sociology does not help us, for it only gives us the history of the past and external conditions under which communities have survived. History teaches us nothing; it is a confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions. We do not seize the real sense of all this change and this continual streaming forward of human life in the channels of Time. What we do seize are current or recurrent phenomena, facile generalisations, partial ideas. We talk of democracy, aristocracy, and autocracy, collectivism and individualism, imperialism and nationalism, the State and the commune, capitalism and labour; we advance hasty generalisations and make absolute systems which are positively announced today only to be abandoned perforce tomorrow; we espouse causes and ardent enthusiasms whose triumph turns to an early disillusionment and then forsake them for others, perhaps for those that we have taken so much trouble to destroy. For a whole century mankind thirsts and battles after liberty and earns it with a bitter expense of toil, tears and blood; the century that enjoys without having fought for it, turns away as from a puerile illusion and is ready to renounce the depreciated gain as the price of some new good. And all this happens because our whole thought and action, with regard to our collective life is shallow and empirical; it does not base itself on a firm, profound and complete knowledge. The moral is not the vanity of human life, of its arduous and enthusiasms and of the ideals it pursues, but the necessity of a wiser, larger, more patient search after its true law and aim."

The results of this patient search are manifest in the works enumerated above. Then he goes on to describe the scheme of his writing—the structure of his *Weltanschauung*:* "We had not in view at any time a review or magazine in the ordinary sense of the word, that is to say, a popular presentation or criticism of current information and current thought on philosophical questions. Nor was it, as in some philosophical and religious magazines in India, the restatement of an existing school or position of philosophical thought cut out in its lines and needing only to be popularised and supported. Our idea was the thinking out of a synthetic philosophy which might be a contribution to the thought of the new age that is coming upon us. We start from the idea that humanity is moving to a great change of its life which will even lead to a new life of the race,—in all countries where men think, there is now in various forms that idea and that hope,—and our aim has been to search for the spiritual, religious and other truths which can enlighten and guide the race in this movement and endeavour. The spiritual experience and the general truths on which such an attempt could be based were already present to us, otherwise we should have had no right to make the endeavour at all; but the complete intellectual statement of them and their results and issues had to be found....

Our original intention was to approach the synthesis from the starting-point of the two lines of culture which divide human thought and are now meeting at its apex, the knowledge of the West and the knowledge of the

*Here the reader is advised to refer to a previous essay: *Sri Aurobindo's Ideal*, (Section II: The Spiritual View of Existence).

VISION and REALISATION

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

O THOU whom I can call my God, Thou who art the personal form of the eternal Transcendent, cause, source and reality of my individual being, who throughout the centuries and the millenniums hast slowly and subtly kneaded this Matter that one day it might consciously be identified with Thee and no longer aught else than Thou; O Thou who hast appeared to me in all Thy divine splendour—this individual being in all its complexity offers itself to Thee in an act of supreme adoration; it aspires in its entirety to be identified with Thee, eternally Thou, merged for ever in Thy reality. But is it ready for that? Is Thy work wholly accomplished? Is there in it no longer any shadow, ignorance or limitation? Canst Thou at last take definitive possession of it and, in the most sublime, the most integral transformation, extricate it for ever from the world of ignorance and make it live in the world of Truth?

Or rather, Thou art myself divested of all error and limitation. Have I become integrally this true self in every atom of my being? Wilt Thou bring about an overwhelming transformation, or will it still be a slow action in which cell after cell must be torn out from its darkness and its limits?

Thou art the Sovereign ready to take possession of Thy kingdom; dost Thou not find Thy kingdom yet sufficiently ready for Thee to unite it definitely to Thyself and become one body with it?

Will the great miracle of the integral Divine Life in the individual be accomplished at last?

THE MOTHER
Prayers and Meditation's

January 15, 1946.

* * *
As so he grew into his larger self,
Humanity framed his movements less and less,
A greater being saw a greater world.
A fearless will for knowledge dared to erase
The lines of safety reason draws that bar
Mind's soar, soul's dive into the Infinite.

Even his first steps had broken the earth-bounds
And loitered in a vaster, freer air.
In hands sustained by a transfiguring Might
He caught up lightly like a giant's bow
Left slumbering in a sealed and secret cave
The powers that sleep unused in man within.
He made of miracle a normal act
And turned to a common part of divine works
Efforts that shatter the strength of mortal hearts,
Aims too sublime for Nature's daily will:
The gifts of the spirit crowding came to him;
They were his life's pattern and his privilege.
A pure perception brought its lucid joy:
Its intimate vision waited not to think;
It enveloped Nature in a single glance,
It looked into the very self of things;
Deceived no more by form he saw the soul.
In beings it knew what lurked to them unknown;
It seized the idea in mind, the wish in the heart,
The motives which from their own sight men hide.
He felt the beating life in other men
Invade him with their happiness and their grief;
Their love, their anger, their unspoken hope
Entered in currents or with pouring waves
Into the immobile ocean of his calm.
He heard the inspired sound of his own thoughts
Re-echoed in the vault of other minds;
The world's thought-streams travelled into his ken;
His inner self grew near to others' selves
And bore a kinship's weight, a common tie,
Yet stood untouched, king of itself, alone.

SRI AUROBINDO
Savitri: Bk. I, Canto 3.

THE NEW WORLD VIEW—Continued from page 6

East; but owing to the exigencies of the war this could not be fulfilled. The *Arya* except for one unfinished series has been an approach to the highest reconciling truth from the point of view of the Indian mentality and Indian spiritual experience, and Western knowledge has been viewed from that standpoint. Here the main idea which has governed our writing, was imposed on us by the very conditions of the problem. All philosophy is concerned with the relations between two things, the fundamental truth of existence and the forms in which existence presents itself to our experience. The deepest experience shows that the fundamental truth is truth of the Spirit; the other is the truth of life, truth of form and shaping force and living idea and action. . . . Our view is that the antinomy created between them is an unreal one. Spirit being the fundamental truth of existence, life can be only its manifestation; Spirit must be not only the origin of life but its basis, its pervading reality and its highest and total result. But the forms of life as they appear to us are at once its disguises and its instruments of self-manifestation. Man has to grow in knowledge till they cease to be disguises and grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its perfect instruments. To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution. This is the fundamental tenet of the philosophy of the *Arya*.

This truth had to be worked out first of all from the metaphysical point of view; for in philosophy metaphysical truth is the nucleus of the rest, it is the statement of the last and most general truths on which all the others depend or in which they are gathered up. Therefore we gave the first place to *The Life Divine*. Here we start from the Vedantic position, its ideas of the Self and mind and life, of Sachchidananda and the world of Knowledge and Ignorance, of rebirth and the Spirit. But Vedanta is popularly supposed to be a denial of life, and this is no doubt a dominant trend it has taken. Though starting from the original truth that all is the Brahman, the Self, it has insisted in the end that the world is simply not-Brahman, not-Self; it has ended in a paradox. We have attempted on the contrary to establish from its data a comprehensive Advaita. We have shown that mind and life and matter are derivations from the Self through a spiritual mind or supermind which is the real support of cosmic existence and, by developing mind into that, man can arrive at the real truth

of the spirit in the world and the real truth and highest law of life. The Self is Sachchidananda and there is no incurable antinomy between that and the world; only we see the world through the eyes of the Ignorance and we have to see it through the eyes of the Knowledge. Our ignorance itself is only knowledge developing out of its involution in the apparent nescience of Matter and on its way to return to its conscious integrality. To accomplish that return and manifest the spiritual life in the human existence is the opportunity given by the successions of rebirth. We accept the truth of evolution, not so much in the physical form given to it by the West as in its philosophical truth, the involution of life and mind and spirit here in matter and their progressive manifestation. At the summit of this evolution is the spiritual life, the life divine.

It was necessary to show that these truths were not inconsistent with the old Vedantic truth, therefore we included explanations from this point of view of the Veda, two of the Upanishads and the Gita. But the Veda has been obscured by the ritualists and the scholiasts. Therefore we showed in a series of articles, initially only as yet, the way of writing of the Vedic mystics, their system of symbols and the truths they figure. Among the Upanishads we took the Isha and the Kena; to be full we should have added the Taittiriya, but it is a long one and for it we had no space. The Gita we are treating as a powerful application of truth of spirit to the largest and most difficult part of the truth of life, to action, and a way by which action can lead us to birth into the Spirit and can be harmonised with the spiritual life. Truth of philosophy is of a merely theoretical value unless it can be lived, and we have therefore tried in *The Synthesis of Yoga* to arrive at a synthetical view of the principles and methods of the various lines of spiritual self-discipline and the way in which they can lead to an integral divine life in the human existence. But this is an individual self-development, and therefore it was necessary to show too how our ideal can work out in the social life of mankind. In *The Psychology of Social Development*, we have indicated how these truths affect the evolution of human society. In *The Ideal of Human Unity*, we have taken the present trend of mankind towards a closer unification and tried to appreciate its tendencies and show what is wanting to them in order that real human unity may be achieved. . . ." (July, 1918).

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way it is as important, it is as rich in suggestion, and it is as much the outcome of steady vision and rich experience, as was the Sadler Report of thirty years ago.

The Integral View Of Education

Both the Reddy Report and the Radhakrishnan Report—the former succinctly or through implication, the latter in greater elaboration and with due emphasis—stress the paramount need today to relate the educational problem to the social problem, and both to the spiritual and material needs of a modern democratic community like ours. Having secured independence, we have now to shoulder the responsibility for our security—and this involves, says Dr. Reddy, “uptodate preparedness from the point of view of Defence Organization, Industries and Communications, and Education”. Security comprehends the Rooseveltian “four freedoms”, both internal peace and prosperity and freedom from external aggression; hence university education cannot afford to be either purely literary or nakedly utilitarian; our energies should, on the contrary, “flow through various channels and in many directions to fertilize the entire field of national life and progress”. The Radhakrishnan Report further elaborates and underlines this integral view of education:

“Democracy depends for its very life on a high standard of general, vocational, and professional education. Dissemination of learning, incessant search for new knowledge, unceasing effort to plumb the meaning of life, provision for professional education to satisfy the occupational needs of our society, are the vital tasks of higher education. There must be a sufficient unity of purpose in all this diversity to produce a community of values and ideas among educated men... We may use various institutional forms as time and circumstances may require but we must be steadfastly loyal to the abiding elements of respect for human personality, freedom of belief and expression for all citizens, a deep obligation to promote human well-being, faith in reason and humanity”.

The sciences are dynamic, of course; but to measure movement we need a fixed frame of reference. Change has meaning only in relation to what is changeless. “In all societies and at all times”, says Mr. Charles Morgan, “there are both constants and variables, and what gives to an age its distinguishing character is the relationship, the friction, between them”. If the constants and the variables reach a harmonious understanding, the emergent agreement ensures the well-being of the society, its good health, both moral and physical; if the friction becomes chronic and progressively more and more virulent, collapse is inevitable. “In all life”, says Sri Aurobindo, “there are three elements, the fixed and permanent spirit, the developing yet constant soul, and the brittle changeable body. The spirit we cannot change, we can only obscure or lose; the soul must not be rashly meddled with, must neither be tortured into a shape alien to it, nor obstructed in its free expansion; and the body must be used as a means, not over-cherished as a thing valuable for its own sake”. Our com-

plex industrial civilization needs a variety of specialists—but even specialists should begin by being men, and remain men all along. We should therefore firmly refuse to acquiesce in the antithesis of Arts vs. Science, and look upon both as inter-related modes of purposive humanism. The revolutions of science, the achievements of technology, have to be set on the abiding ground of the spirit, lest we should turn giddy through the mad whirl of seeming success, and so destroy ourselves. On the one hand, we have to accept the fact of the atomization of knowledge, the multiplication of subjects, the craze for specialization; on the other hand, we have to devise means that will ensure that, in spite of everything, our students will be initiated into a sane and worthy view of life derived from literature, philosophy, art, history and religion. Accordingly, the Radhakrishnan Report recommends, not only that “general education and specialized or vocational education should proceed together”, but also that “some elements of general education should continue to the end of the period of college or university training”.

“If “general education” is provided for—even in technical and professional courses like Engineering, Agriculture, and Law—a place is also given for “religious education”. The Sargent Report pointed out that “religion in the widest sense should inspire all education and that a curriculum devoid of an ethical basis will prove barren in the end”. The Radhakrishnan Report amplifies the hint and recommends that (1) all educational institutions should start work with a few minutes of silent meditation; (2) lives of the great world teachers, Socrates, Jesus, the Buddha, Confucius, Sankara, Muhammad, and others, should be taught in the first year of the degree course; (3) selections of a universalist character from the great scriptures of the world should be taught in the second year; and (4) the central problems of the philosophy of religion should be studied in the third year. The curricula of studies at different levels for general education and for religious education should, however, be devised as coherent wholes, capable of giving light no less than zest, making the beneficiary wise and earnest as well as adventurous and self-confident. It is fatally easy to seize the shell and miss the kernel,—and this warning is pertinent in regard to the organization of courses in general education and more especially in religious education.

Like the Sadler Report and the Sargent Report, the Radhakrishnan Report too favours a three-year post-Intermediate degree course, both at the pass and honours level. The Intermediate grade is to merge with the High School course, which will give twelve years of schooling to the pupil before he enters upon a university course. The Master's degree is to be given to pass students after two years of post-graduate study and to honours students after a year's post-graduate study. Thus students would be required to study for a year more than at present to be able to take the Bachelor's or Master's degree, but even with this additional year, the Report argues, our graduate will undergo a period of study “shorter by one year than the graduate of a university in the United States.” The Report also

urges that the academic year should have a minimum of 180 working days, exclusive of examination days, with three terms each of about 11 weeks' duration. The additional year and the increased number of working days are meant to take in the extra load consequent on the provision for general education and religious education courses and consequent also on the strengthening and modernizing of existing courses in Arts, Science, Technology and other faculties. If we are to restore standards and maintain them at a reasonably high level, we shall be obliged, however unpalatable they may appear to be, to accept the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Report. Dr. Reddy would appear to prefer the system prevailing in the Southern universities of a two-year pass and a three-year honours course after the Intermediate. But his warning that pass and honours students should not be combined is pertinent no less to the three-year courses.

The Issue Between Teaching and Research

The false antithesis between Arts and Science referred to above is but the first fork on the road. The antithesis between pass and honours is another, and when both are of three years' duration, the present disparity in their public estimation will tend to disappear. The pass courses should aim at breadth, the honours courses at depth, and they will thus appeal to two different types of students. A third fork on our road is the issue between teaching and research. The view is often expressed—though not as frequently now as some years ago—that research is an “extra”, an expensive luxury, not a necessary item in the equipment of the university teacher. Teaching is one thing, research is quite another thing, and rarely is the same person proficient in both! The assumption here is that one could teach efficiently at the highest levels without continually researching at the same time, at any rate without a mind keenly alive to the movements in the world of ideas, a mind insatiably curious and avid for knowledge and yet more knowledge. It is forgotten that the researcher is akin to a flowing stream, the mere teacher—static in his knowledge and mechanical in his efficiency—being no more than a pool of brackish water. Prof. Raleigh declared that “a university is an institution for guarding and increasing our inheritance of knowledge, and above all (because knowledge increases only by process of natural growth) for keeping knowledge alive. Life implies decay and renewal; a university must be perpetually able to discard superseded methods and to detect the importance and significance of new studies and new ways of approach”. Education at all grades should be a cooperative adventure where pupil and pupil, pupil and teacher, and teacher and teacher come together with wide-awake minds, willing and ready to explore new avenues, lay out new gardens, annex new territories. The university teacher, to be worth the name, should himself be a centre of creative self-expression, radiating an influence on the young minds that they in turn will help to spread, thereby giving phenomenal distinction and vitality to the university as a whole. In a vivid and memorable passage in his Report, Dr.

Reddy insinuates the meaning and method of research, and stresses the key place that should be given to research in our colleges and universities:

“...men anxious to do post-graduate courses cannot get the necessary background and still less the requisite inspiration in sterile surroundings where growth is absent, even if matter is not dead... Under such conditions the tendency is to pile up lecture course on lecture course based on written text-books and to reduce the whole thing to a more or less routine learning and mass production process. Initiative, uptodate-ness, originality, quest for truth, doggedness of purpose—these are at an end. Birth is always a sacred exhilarating moment whether it be in an humble household or the King's Palace, in a human habitation or in a bird's nest, in the material world or world of ideas. And an institution where the Faculty and the students are not consciously acting their part in the creation of new things and the revelation of new ideas and have, so to speak, run dry, has still to reach the foot of a university.”

Nor should we run the risk of succumbing to the lure of mere novelty, forgetting the fact that research is a special type of discipline and adventure for which all and sundry may not be qualified. Promiscuous and pettifogging research is as easy as it is cheap, and as cheap as it is useless; genuine research grows on other soil, nurtured by a life of severe austerity and stern endeavour, breathing the free and pure air of disinterested knowledge. The Radhakrishnan Report therefore rightly insists that researchers, whether teachers or students, “must not be mere compilers, chroniclers or technicians, but scholars and scientists who possess breadth of vision, imagination and ability to assimilate and integrate facts and communicate their findings”. The edifice of research should as a rule be reared on the secure foundations of accurate knowledge, and hence it would not be advisable to institute masterate research degrees. Two research degrees, the Ph.D. and the D.Sc. or D. Litt., the former obtainable under the guidance of a teacher two or three years after the Master's degree, the latter obtainable on the basis of independent published work giving evidence of conspicuous distinction and originality, ought to be quite sufficient for purposes of grading research achievement in all our universities. The Radhakrishnan Report records the fact that, although some headway was made in research in the twenties and thirties, “there are signs of a steady decline in the quality and quantity of research at our universities”. The rot should be stopped at once, and conditions favourable to research—such as inspiring guiding teachers, modern laboratory and library facilities, an atmosphere free from fret and the fever of insecurity, and the institution of research fellowships on an adequate scale—should be ensured in our universities. If we fail in this urgent endeavour, our research departments will become rotten without ever having been ripe. Such a national disaster should be prevented at all costs.

To be concluded

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(22)

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

Q. 1: Modern psychology which is still either completely under the influence of the objectivist view of life or superficially subjective in some of its branches considers all subjectivism, whose very principle is to turn within, as unhealthy introversion leading to morbidity and abnormality. The external reality is to its view the only safe province for human thought and action and so its advice is to be as extrovert and objective as possible. Is this not an evident exaggeration?

A. "The materialistic thinker, erecting an opposition between the extrovert and the introvert, holds up the extrovert attitude for acceptance as the only safety: to go inwards is to enter into darkness or emptiness or to lose the balance of the consciousness and become morbid; it is from outside that such inner life as one can construct is created, and its health is assured only by a strict reliance on its wholesome and nourishing outer sources,—the balance of the personal mind and life can only be secured by a firm support on external reality, for the material world is the sole fundamental reality. This may be true for the physical man, the born extrovert, who feels himself to be a creature of outward Nature; made by her and dependent on her, he would lose himself if he went inward: for him there is no inner being, no inner living. But the introvert of this distinction also has not the inner life; he is not a seer of the true inner self and of inner things, but the small mental man who looks superficially inside himself and sees there not his spiritual self but his life-ego, his mind-ego and becomes unhealthily preoccupied with the movements of this little pitiful dwarf creature. The idea or experience of an inner darkness when looking inwards is the first reaction of a mentality which has lived always on the surface and has no realised inner existence; it has only a constructed internal experience which depends on the outside world for the materials of its being. But to those into whose composition there has entered the power of a more inner living, the movement of going within and living within brings not a darkness or dull emptiness but an enlargement, a rush of new experience, a greater vision, a larger capacity, an extended life infinitely more real and various than the first pettiness of the life constructed for itself by our normal physical humanity, a joy of being which is larger and richer than any delight in existence that the outer vital man or the surface mental man can gain by their dynamic vital force and activity or subtlety and expansion of the mental existence. A silence, an entry into a wide or even immense or infinite emptiness is part of the inner spiritual experience; of this silence and void the physical mind has a certain fear, the small superficially active thinking or vital mind a shrinking from it or dislike,—for it confuses the silence with mental and vital incapacity and the void with cessation or non-existence: but this silence is the silence of the spirit which is the condition of a greater knowledge, power and bliss, and this emptiness is the emptying of the cup of our natural being, a liberation of it from its turbid contents so that it may be filled with the wine of God; it is the passage not into non-existence but to a greater existence. Even when the being turns towards cessation, it is a cessation not in non-existence but into some vast ineffable of spiritual being or the plunge into the incommunicable superconscience of the Absolute."

Q. 2: Bertrand Russell in his book *The Conquest of Happiness* says, "we are all prone to the malady of the introvert, who, with the manifold spectacle of the world spread out before him, turns away and gazes upon the emptiness within." Is this not a completely misleading statement?

A. "The word 'introvert' has come into existence only recently and sounds like a companion of 'pervert'. Literally it means one who is turned inwards. The Upanishad speaks of the doors of the senses that are turned outwards absorbing man in external things (for their own sakes, I suppose?) and of the rare man among a million who turns his vision inwards and sees the self. Is that man an introvert? And is Russell's ideal man 'interested in externals for their own sakes'—a Ramaswami the chef or Joseph the chauffeur, for instance—*homo externalis Russellius*, an extrovert? Or is an introvert one who has an inner life stronger than his external one,—the poet, the musician, the artist? Was Beethoven in his deafness bringing out music from within him an introvert? Or does it mean one who measures ex-

ternal things by an inner standard and is interested in them not "for their own sakes" but for their value to the soul's self-development, its psychic, religious, ethical or other self-expression? Are Tolstoy and Gandhi examples of introverts? Or in another field—Goethe? Or does it mean one who cares for external things only as they touch his own mind or else concern his own ego? But that would include 999,999 men out of every million.

"What are external things? Russell is a mathematician. Are mathematical formulae external things even though they exist here only in the World-mind and the mind of Man? If not, is Russell, as mathematician, an introvert? Again, Yajñavalkya says that one loves the wife not for the sake of the wife, but for the self's sake, and so with other objects of interest or desire—whether the self be the inner self or the ego. In yoga it is the valuing of external things in the terms of the desire of the ego that is discouraged—their only value is their value in the manifestation of the Divine. Who desires external things 'for their own sake' and not for some value to the conscious being? Even Cheloo, the day-labourer, is not interested in a two-anna piece for its own sake, but for some vital satisfaction it can bring him; even with the hoarding miser it is the same—it is his vital being's passion for possession that he satisfies and that is something not external but internal, part of his inner make-up, the unseen personality that moves inside behind the veil of the body."

Q. 3: Why is it so difficult for the materialist thinker to concede substantial reality to the subjective and supraphysical orders of existence?

A: "The objective and the physical order of reality is convincing to the physical or externalising mind because it is directly obvious to the senses, while of the subjective and the supraphysical that mind has no means of knowledge except from fragmentary signs and data and inferences which are at every step liable to error. Our subjective movements and inner experiences are a domain of happenings as real as any outward physical happenings; but if the individual mind can know something of its own phenomena by direct experience, it is ignorant of what happens in the consciousness of others except by analogy with its own or such signs, data, inferences as its outward observation can give it. I am therefore inwardly real to myself, but the invisible life of others has only an indirect reality to me except in so far as it impinges on my own mind, life and senses. This is the limitation of the physical mind of man, and it creates in him a habit of believing entirely only in the physical and of doubting or challenging all that does not come into accord with his own experience or his own scope of understanding or square with his own standard or sum of established knowledge."

Q. 4: In recent times this attitude of the common physical mind has been raised into a valid standard of knowledge. It has been held that all truth must be referred to the judgment of the personal mind of every man or else it must be verifiable by a common experience in order to be valid. Is not this standard quite inadequate and even false?

A: "Obviously this is a false standard of reality and of knowledge, since this means the sovereignty of the normal or average mind and its limited capacity and experience, the exclusion of what is super-normal or beyond the average intelligence. In its extreme, this claim of the individual to be the judge of everything is an egoistic illusion, a superstition of the physical mind, in the mass a gross and vulgar error. The truth behind it is that each man has to think for himself, know for himself according to his capacity, but his judgment can be valid only on condition that he is ready to learn and open always to a larger knowledge. It is reasoned that to depart from the physical standard and the principle of personal or universal verification will lead to gross delusions and the admission of unverified truth and subjective phantasy into the realm of knowledge. But error and delusion and the introduction of personality and one's own subjectivity into the pursuit of knowledge are always present, and the physical or objective standards and methods do not exclude them. The probability of error is no reason for refusing to attempt discovery, and subjective discovery must be pursued by a subjective method of enquiry, observation and verification; research into the supraphysical must evolve, accept and test an appropriate means and

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BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

THE WEST'S RECOGNITION OF SRI AUROBINDO'S SIGNIFICANCE

SRI AUROBINDO: POET, PHILOSOPHER AND MYSTIC

By G. H. LANGLEY (David Marlowe Ltd. London).

The Royal India and Pakistan Society merits distinction as the first body in England to bring out a special study of Sri Aurobindo's work, and to recognise publicly the significance and importance of his spiritual Light in the present-day world. The author of this book, Professor G. H. Langley, is no stranger to the Indian outlook and mode of thought, since for many years he was the Professor of Philosophy and, until his retirement, the Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University. There is also a short and concise Foreword to the book by the Marquess of Zetland, which shows the latter's sympathetic and thorough understanding of the main purpose and principles behind Sri Aurobindo's spiritual development. Indeed it is probable that Lord Zetland, as the President of the Society, possessing as he does the rare quality of combining an authoritative knowledge of Indian affairs and cultural traditions with a deep insight and aesthetic appreciation, was the principal guiding hand and motive-force behind this present evaluation of Sri Aurobindo's spiritual work. Altogether this frank and unstinting support of Sri Aurobindo must be met with the highest respect by all open and fairminded people, both in England and elsewhere.

Although this study of the greatest of our spiritual Seers is primarily intended as an introduction for the Western reader, it will equally interest and enlighten the Indian public by presenting a new angle on Sri Aurobindo's thought. But we must remember that it represents the attitude of the sincere intellectual seeker of the West, confronted with a different though significant order of knowledge from that prevalent in his own traditional thinking. Whereas in India Sri Aurobindo's comprehensive exposition of the divine destiny of human life, as fully treated in *The Life Divine*, can readily be approached through the great traditional channels of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the Gita and the main principles of Yogic discipline, there is no such avenue open to the average westerner. For him the ancient spirituality of the East is largely a strange uncharted sea, which appears to be full of heterogeneous beliefs and otherworldly illusions. Such an attitude is largely the result of two barriers which stand in the way of his possible understanding. Firstly there is the current traditional outlook and way of life, which has clung exclusively to the Greco-Hebrew cultural root as the principal authority and source of knowledge. And secondly there is the barrier of the contemporary outlook, largely fashioned by the overwhelming development of science and materialism, which sees only the outer forms and processes as the sole reality. Hence the inner and spiritual spheres which lie beyond our ordinary sensory awareness, have been relegated to the realm of fantasy, imagination or merely the abnormal. It is a good indication, however, of the changing attitude of the contemporary West, that these limiting barriers of the mind are beginning to be broken down, with the consequent realisation that other sources of knowledge exist which can restore the lost balance and harmony to modern life.

Beyond Sectarian Creeds and Schools of Thought

It is not surprising therefore, that we should now find a growing feeling for the need of a deeper and wider vision than is possible from the strictly scientific viewpoint. And to serve this urgent need the more completely this present study of Sri Aurobindo's works is introduced to the West. In face of the many difficulties, both of the re-

calcitrant attitude still prevalent in the West and of the complex and organic nature of Sri Aurobindo's thought which does not lend itself very easily to an intellectual analysis, we appreciate all the more the task which Prof. Langley has undertaken. For he has produced a book which is comprehensible to the average Western mind seeking for higher values, as well as being a faithful interpretation of the basic factors in Sri Aurobindo's spiritual revelation. It is no mean achievement to have attempted to bring the living structure of *The Life Divine* into the mould of our ordinary thought and outlook, and yet retained the essence of the work,—somewhat like reducing a whole symphony to a few simple notes. Naturally there are many points—knots and problems—and also several vistas of vision which have not been dealt with, but to have attempted a larger work would, one feels, have deviated overmuch from the main purpose of this present monograph, which is serving primarily as an introduction to Sri Aurobindo's works themselves. It is for these reasons that only the more basic and salient points of Sri Aurobindo's exposition—those which impinge directly upon the western outlook—are brought out. Hence we are shown, for instance, that there are important divergences between Sri Aurobindo's vision and the old orthodox and religious mode of thought which formed the pattern of medieval—and later—India. And also an instructive comparison is drawn between Sri Aurobindo's spiritual philosophy and the rationalistic philosophy of the contemporary West.

Although, as Prof. Langley shows, Sri Aurobindo's thought structure has sprung from and is largely based on the principal orthodox scriptures of India,—especially the Rig Veda, the Gita and certain of the older Upanishads—yet his integral vision completely transcends all mere sectarian creeds and philosophical schools of thought. His comprehensive synthesis, having taken up the ancient Spirit inherent in these current Hindu scriptures, has brought them into a universal sphere of thought which embraces the whole of mankind. This is the secret of Divine Knowledge,—a knowledge which lights and reveals, which penetrates and embraces, and at the same time stands above all intellectual modes, surveying Reality as it really is,—an integral whole and a Unity.

Sri Aurobindo and the Current Western Philosophy

The opening chapter of the book gives a brief biographical sketch of the main events in Sri Aurobindo's life. There is sufficient data here to indicate to the general reader how even Sri Aurobindo's early life, through the current nationalistic movement of that day, was but a preparation for his revelation of the Divine Reality and Truth. It would naturally have been superfluous for the present study to give more than an outline of Sri Aurobindo's life, when we already have a full and ample biography by Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. What is sketched here is clearly written and adheres to the facts. In the succeeding chapters Prof. Langley enters into the metaphysical thought of Sri Aurobindo, and in particular as it unfolds itself in *The Life Divine*. It is, however, only the foundation, the fundamental ground of that work, rather than the full integral height which is here presented. But it is quite enough for a beginning—especially for the Western seeker of spiritual Knowledge.

Among the most interesting arguments which Prof. Langley brings forward, is the chapter which shows the validity of Sri Aurobindo's thought as against that of the current western philosophy and outlook, taking as example Bertrand Russell's most recent work. Thus Russell's statement that "whatever can be known can be known by means of science" places rather a heavy strain on the present scientific methods, even with their most modern refinements. For this can only be true, as regards spiritual knowledge, if science will stretch its boundaries to include spirituality as subject for scientific investigation,—respecting of course the conditions already laid down by established spiritual truths. It is clear, however, that the whole basis of Russell's philosophy rests solely on Reason as the ultimate criterion of Knowledge and Truth. It is natural, therefore, that to those who thus accept Reason as the absolute law, and the limit of human understanding, such things for example as aesthetic appreciation and ethical values (not to mention any higher spiritual truths) will appear to belong wholly to the feelings, and so lie beyond the pale of rational thought as well as of universal knowledge,—since such values belong primarily to personal experience. To be universally valid, knowledge must be capable of being tested by rational thought; such is the rule and condition which Reason imposes. But spiritual Truths can equally well be tested by intellectual investigation and reasoned enquiry. This is clearly shown in the whole presentation of *The Life Divine*, where the highest spiritual Truths are not given just as a matter of blind acceptance, but are built up step by step on a basis of reasoned argument. As in the case of scientific knowledge, however, where one must approach the subject by employing the recognised methods of science, so in an enquiry into spiritual knowledge it is necessary to follow the conditions laid down by

a long succession of path-finders throughout the ages. And this, of course, entails a new orientation by the modern mind in its approach to spirituality.

It is a significant feature of Langley's book that the author constantly indicates the need of God's guidance, and of our utter surrender to His Will. Especially in this age of of unbelief and blind rationalism there is all the greater need for the Presence and Reality of God to be openly declared. Thus Prof. Langley writes: "Dependence on the Divine at each step in our spiritual progress brings unity of spirit both into our personal life and into human relations." It is in fact the expression of that deep religious sense which brings out the conviction in him that in a world of shifting and relative values God is the one abiding and permanent Reality,—He Who is the Ground and Sustainer as well as the Substance of all things. This central conception of a One Omnipresent Reality, as Sri Aurobindo shows, must necessarily form the whole basis and focal point of a widening knowledge of the world and of man. It must be remembered that Langley's chief difficulty is to convince the Western mind, prejudiced by its own traditions and current outlook, that Indian spirituality does indeed contain the universal truths which are fundamental and significant for all humanity. Nevertheless, he has brought out a work which must at least stimulate and stir any latent urge in western man, to seek and experience for himself the real spiritual Light and Truth. And he has also indicated the direction in which these greater Truths can be found, even in the present-day world.

Sri Aurobindo's Poetry

The very last chapter of the book is devoted to the poetical works of Sri Aurobindo, as represented in *The Collected Poems and Plays*. After traversing the steep intellectual gradients of the metaphysical thought, and the fog created by our own mental formulations, it is refreshing to come at last to the pure living breath of the Spirit, as embodied in that poetic utterance. It is fitting that Prof. Langley has quoted copiously from the poems, for it is only the word-utterance itself that can really convey the true spiritual expression which is characteristic of all Sri Aurobindo's poetry. Such poetry in particular must be read—and re-read—rather than read about. An essay on it primarily serves to introduce the reader to the real living expression. It is important also to accustom the ear to the sound of the words and the flow of the language, for therein lies the true music and soul of the utterance. English being a naturally rich and varied field in the world's poetical expression, it is appropriate that the first appreciation of Sri Aurobindo's poetry—outside India—should come from England. But at the same time we must see that this poetry will also meet with and confront the natural pride of England in its own poetic achievement.

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LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(Continued from page 9)

methods other than those by which one examines the constituents of physical objects and the processes of Energy in material Nature.

"To refuse to enquire upon any general ground preconceived and *a priori* is an obscurantism as prejudicial to the extension of knowledge as the religious obscurantism which opposed in Europe the extension of scientific discovery. The greatest inner discoveries, the experience of self-being, the cosmic consciousness, the inner calm of the liberated spirit, the direct effect of mind upon mind, the knowledge of things by consciousness in direct contact with other consciousness or with its objects, most spiritual experiences of any value, cannot be brought before the tribunal of the common mentality which has no experience of these and takes its own absence or incapacity of experience as a proof of their invalidity or their non-existence. Physical truth or formulas, generalisations, discoveries founded upon physical observation can be so referred, but even there a training of capacity is needed before one can truly understand and judge; it is not every untrained mind that can follow the mathematics of relativity or other difficult scientific truths or judge of the validity either of their result or their process. All reality, all experience must indeed, to be held as true, be capable of verification by a same or similar experience; so, in fact, all men can have a spiritual experience and can follow it out and verify it in themselves, but only when they have acquired the capacity or can follow the inner methods by which that experience and verification are made possible. It is necessary to dwell on these obvious and elementary truths because the opposite ideas have been sovereign in a recent period of human mentality,—they are now only receding,—and have stood in the way of the development of a vast domain of possible knowledge. It is of supreme importance for the human spirit to be free to sound the depths of inner or subliminal reality, of spiritual and of what is still superconscious reality, and not to immure itself in the physical mind and its narrow domain of objective external solidities; for in that way alone can there come liberation from the Ignorance in which our mentality dwells and a release into a complete consciousness, a true and integral self-realisation and self-knowledge."

K. G.

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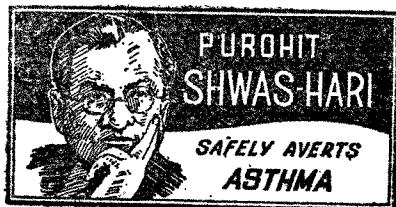
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THIS REALISM!

SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON INDIA'S RECOGNITION OF RED CHINA

By "THINKING INDIAN"

As far as India is concerned, the recognition of Red China is a *fait accompli*. It has been averred by some that this recognition was unavoidable—that the facts of the case demanded the taking of a "realistic" attitude towards the problem. This means in simple language that it was politic to ignore the obvious fact that Mao's regime was set up by Moscow in order to have a firm operating base in Asia, and to deliberately overlook the equally obvious falsehood that this régime represents the people of China. When the American Press showed astonishment at the fact that India which so forcefully put down Communism within her own doors should show such alacrity in supporting it in China, they were promptly answered that the two were quite separate issues—that the subversive activities of the Indian Communists necessitated the taking of strong measures against them, whilst the problem in China was like "the flowers that bloom in the spring, which have nothing to do with the case"—that there were no grounds for believing that Stalin plays the tune to which his sapajou Mao dances. To talk like a Chinaman on matters Chinese may be pardonable when it is difficult to see one's way clearly, but it is certainly not realism. If it is, then it is of the same brand that refused the Cripps Proposals, strengthened Jinnah's hand, led to the final division of the country, and refused to help Britain in fighting Hitler. This brand of realism is notorious for its lack of vision and its weak grasp of fundamentals. It is indeed strange that any responsible leader should hold the opinion that the hirelings of a foreign government should be put down when they create trouble in his country, but that when they do the same in another country and capture power their actions should be condoned and their Party recognised as representative of the people. It is like raising Cain when someone runs away with your own wife, but giving glib psychological explanations à la Freud and being "realistic" when you see him running away with your neighbour's. May one very pointedly ask these "realists" what their attitude would have been towards Soviet Russia if Stalin, instead of handing over to Mao the military equipment of one million men, captured from the Japanese, had given it to the Communists in India, and what their reaction would have been if the ammunition which was part of this equipment had been used to blow up New Delhi, Calcutta and other important centres making the leaders run for shelter to Tibet? If someone had then remarked to one of the escaping leaders, "Come, come, sir, be realistic. The Communist Party in India represents the people, because it happens to be the Party in power," what would the leader have replied? These are questions which the Chinese Nationalist Foreign Minister Dr. George Yeh should have asked.

It is a question America and Britain have to answer now. From the way things are moving it is not very difficult to guess what Britain's final decision will be—but one never can tell with Britain. Whether she will rise to the occasion and stand up for the ideals for which she so valiantly fought only recently, or whether she will become prone to a psychological regression and come out once again as a nation of shop-keepers with one eye fixed on business interests in Hongkong, is a thing time alone can reveal. It is imperative for her to realise that this time the stakes are even higher than they were last time, and that Stalin is even more dangerous than Hitler. Hitler, with his Cathedral-bombing was the dog of the devil gone mad; Stalin, with his underground prowling in the sewers of the world, with his mask of bonhomie hiding his neophronic propensities, is verily the devil himself posing as the benefactor of the human race and the champion of the under-dog. America can be relied upon to stand firm and make all efforts within reason to checkmate Stalinism in Asia as she has so ably done in Europe.

As far as India is concerned, the deed is done; but she must now be

alert and fully prepared to face the consequences of opening her flanks to Communist infiltration. Soviet Russia will now have a firm foothold here which will considerably help her in bringing about cultural domination of India by Communism. A greater effort than ever before will be made to thrust her God-denying ideology down the throats of the Indian people. It has been noticed that not only the uneducated but also the half-educated are very susceptible to the influence of Marxism. Of course the hard-headed practical realists are not worried about these things. "After all, what does all this transcendental nonsense amount to! Your God-realisation, and spiritual rebirth, and mukti!" they declare. Of course to them these are only words that have their existence in a dictionary which is lying on somebody else's table. With the hauteur of a grand seigneur they question, "What has all this to do with life? Let us be secular, modern and up-to-date". The fact that Stalinism stands for the greatest organised force of God-denial in history, and that India stands for spiritual values, does not seem to matter to them at all. No doubt one cannot expect a thyrus-bearer to talk like a mystic, or an "up-to-date modern" Indian to know the difference between brahmanvidya and dialectical materialism, but one does not have to be a seer to see through the game of world-domination played by Soviet Russia. Only "thick serene opacity, thicker than amaurosis" can veil this truth from men's eyes. In this connection I would like to quote the eminent Russian philosopher-mathematician, Ouspensky. He writes in *A New Model of the Universe*:

"The man of logical mind who demands proofs for everything, at the present time, for instance, looks for the cause of the world economic and political crisis everywhere except where it actually lies. And even if he were told that the causes of the crisis lie in the existence of the Soviet Government in Russia, and in the recognition and support of the government by other governments, he would never understand it. He is accustomed to think in a certain way and he is unable to think differently. For him the bolsheviks are a 'political party' like any other party, and the Soviet Government is a 'government' like any other government. He is unable to see that this is a new phenomenon different from anything he knew before. Where are the proofs of this? he would ask. And he will never see that this needs no proofs. Just as no proofs are needed of the inevitable appearance of the plague in his house when there is a plague in the house opposite against which no steps whatever have been taken on the spot. But a man of logical mind cannot see that Soviet Russia is a plague-house. He prefers to believe in the 'biggest social experiment in history,' or in the 'evolution of bolshevism,' or in 'bolsheviks giving up propaganda'; as though plague can give up 'propaganda' and as though negotiations and treaties and 'pacts' with plague were possible."

These words are worth bearing in mind when Soviet issues come up for discussion.

Regarding the repercussions of India's recognition of Red China on Asia, Dr. Yeh very emphatically said, "It must now be clear to the democratic world that this regime is only a creation of a foreign power. It lacks not only many of the attributes of a sovereign State but also the spontaneous support of the greater majority of the Chinese people. This act of the Indian Government will no doubt contribute to the further spread of Communism in Asia and the Pacific area." What Dr. Yeh says is perfectly true, for as soon as the representatives of Mao will get settled in India, we shall have more Communist propaganda and more underground work, more subversive activity, more dislocation of essential services, more discontent in the country, more arrests and imprisonments, and the next day more speeches on "moral force and ahimsa" from the orators.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE (Continued from page 10)

This has, at least in the past, created the difficulty of accepting English poetry written outside England,—especially from the remote-seeming East,—as being at all equal to the home product. Prof. Langley's chapter, brief though it is, admirably transcends all national prejudice, and invites us to read Sri Aurobindo's poetry, not as an alien expression, but as the intimate and

eternal yearning of the human soul seeking for Perfection and the Divine Reality,—a universal expression which entirely breaks the bounds of petty national boundaries. In the brevity and conciseness of his presentation Langley has concentrated the essential points of Sri Aurobindo's poetical development from his earliest published works of 1898 to the purely mystical poetry

published up to 1941. He ends by quoting in full that superb poem *The Rose of God*.

We must note that Sri Aurobindo's major poetical work *Savitri*, has apparently appeared too late—except in parts—for inclusion in the present study, but of course this epic, of which the first three Books only have so far been published, is

not yet completely available. Only a foretaste of the magnitude and sublime grandeur of what the completed *Savitri* will be like has thus far been given to us. But certainly enough of Sri Aurobindo's poetry has already been published to establish him fully as a true Poetic Master—as well as the great Yogi he assuredly is.

N. PEARSON.