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"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

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## PANACEA OF "ISMS"

By NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

### COMMUNISM

Communism cannot save humanity. For if it means the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, well, a healthy normal society will not bear or tolerate it long—no Dictatorship, whether of one or of many, is likely to endure or bring in the millennium. In that sense Communism is only a *fascismo* of small people fighting against a *fascismo* of big people. A society is not normally made up of proletarians only: it does not consist merely of lotus-eaters nor does it consist of hewers of wood and drawers of water (peasants and labourers) alone. Even a proletariat society will slowly and inevitably gravitate towards a stratification of its own. In its very bosom the bureaucracy, the military, the officialdom of a closed body will form a class of its own. A Lenin cannot prevent the advent of a Stalin. Even if the proletarians form the majority, by far a very large majority, even then the tyranny of the majority is as reprehensible as the tyranny of the minority. Communism pins its faith on struggle—the class struggle, it says, is historically true and morally justifiable. But this is a postulate all are not bound to accept. Then again, if Communism means also materialism (dialectical or any other), that also cannot meet and satisfy all the needs and urges of man, indeed it leaves out of account all the deeper yearnings that lie imbedded in him and that cannot be obliterated by a mere denial. For surely man does not live by bread alone, however indispensable that article may be to him: not even culture—the kind admitted by Communism, severely intellectual, rational, scientific, pragmatic—can be the be-all and end-all of human civilisation. Communist Russia attempted to sweep away all traces of religion and church and piety; the attempt does not seem to have been very successful.

As a matter of fact, Communism is best taken as a symptom of the disease society suffers from and not as a remedy. The disease is a twofold bondage from which man has always been trying to free himself. It is fundamentally the same bondage which the great French Revolution sought most vigorously and violently to shake off—an economic and an ideological bondage, that is to say, translated in the terms of those days, the tyranny of the court and the nobility and the tyranny of the Church. The same twofold bondage appears again today combated by Communism, viz., Capitalism and Bourgeoisie. Originally and essentially, however, Communism meant an economic system in which there is no personal property, all property being held in common. It is an ideal that requires a good deal of ingenuity to be worked out in all details, to say the least. Certain religious sects within restricted membership tried the experiment. Indeed some kind of religious mentality is required, a mentality freed from normal mundane reactions, as a preliminary condition in order that such an attempt might be successful. A perfect or ideal Communism may be possible only when man's character and nature has undergone a thorough and radical change. Till then it will be a Utopia passing through various avatars.

### SOCIALISM

Nor can Socialism remedy all the ills society suffers from, if it merely or mainly means the abolition of private enterprise and the assumption by the State of the entire economic and even cultural and educational apparatus of the society. Even as an economic proposition State Socialism, which is only another name of Totalitarianism, is hardly an unmixed good. First of all, however selfish and profiteering the individual may be, still, one must remember that it is always the individual who is adventurous and inventive, it is he who discovers, creates new things and beautiful things. A collective or global enterprise makes for massiveness and quantity, but it means also uniformity, often a dead uniformity: for variety, for originality, as well as for the aesthetic tone and the human touch, the personal element

is needed, seems to be indispensable. Education in such a system would mean a set routine and pattern, an efficient machine to bring out consistently and continuously uniform types of men who are more or less automatons, mechanical and regimented in their make-up and behaviour. An all-out Socialist Government will bear down and entomb the deeper springs of human consciousness, the magic powers of initiative and creativity that depend upon individual liberty and the free play of personal choice. We do not deny that Socialism is an antidote to another malady in the social body—the parcellation, the fragmentation into a thousand petty interests—all aggressive and combative—of the economic strength of a community, and also the stupendous inequality and maldistribution of wealth and opportunity. But it brings in its own poison.

It is a great illusion, as has been pointed out by many, that a collective and impersonal body cannot be profiteers and war-mongers. A nation as a whole can very well be moved by greed and violence and *Sieglust* (passion for conquest)—Nazism had another name, it was also called National Socialism. Everything depends not upon the form, but the spirit that animates the form. It is the spirit, man's inner nature that is to be handled, dealt with and changed; outer systems and forms have only a secondary importance.

### NATIONALISM

Again, Nationalism is also not the *summum bonum* of collective living. The nation has emerged out of the family and the tribe as a greater unit of the human aggregate. But this does not mean that it is the last word on the subject, that larger units are not to be found or formed. In the present-day juncture it is Nationalism that has become a stumbling-block to a fairer solution of human problems. Especially countries that are still subject or have newly won their independence believe that the attainment of their free, unfettered, separate national existence will automatically bring in its train all ideal results that have been postponed till now. They do not see, however, that in the actual circumstances an international solution has the greater chance of bringing about a happier solution for the nation too, and not the other way round. The more significant urge today is towards this greater aggregation—Pan-America, Pan-Russia, Pan-Arabia, a Western European Bloc and an Eastern European Bloc, are movements that have been thrown up because of a greater necessity in human life and its evolution. Man's stupidity, his failure to grasp the situation, his incapacity to march with Nature, his tendency always to fall back, to return to the outdated past may delay or cause a turn or twist in this healthy movement, but it cannot be permanently thwarted or denied for long. Churchill's memorable call to France, on the eve of her debacle in the last war, to join and form with Britain a single national union, however sentimental or even ludicrous it may appear to some, is, as we see it, the cry of humanity itself to transcend the modern barriers of nationhood and rise to a higher status of solidarity and collective consciousness.

### INTERNATIONALISM

And yet internationalism is not the one thing needful either. If it means the obliteration of all national values, of all cultural diversity, it will not certainly conduce to the greater enrichment and perfection of humanity. Taken by itself and in its absolute sense, it cannot be a practical success. The fact is being proved every moment these days. Internationalism in the economic sphere, however, seems to have a greater probability and utility than in the merely political sphere. Economics is forcing peoples and nations to live together and move together: it has become the soldering

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# WORDSWORTH—MAN AND POET

By "LIBRA"

The death-centenary of Wordsworth was celebrated three weeks back. Appreciative articles were published in various Indian journals, but most of them seemed to me conventional and neither the man Wordsworth nor the poet Wordsworth stood out. I shall not attempt a systematic study to make good their defects. I shall just throw together some facts and observations to stimulate the mind to a living perception of this strange and great figure.

It is now well-known that the highly respectable and conservative sage who never let any suggestion of sensuality or of lawlessness enter his poetic works had been a sower of wild oats in his youth. He was a young man when the French Revolution broke out and in the early phase of it he was actually in France, one of the little group of fiery orators who called themselves Girondists and with whom probably he would have gone to the guillotine, had he remained longer. During his stay he had a tempestuous liaison with a girl named Annette Vallon who bore him a child. Herbert Read has noted that Wordsworth's genius awakened suddenly after his experiences in France, developed gloriously in the next nine years during which he had not given up the idea of marrying Annette as soon as the political situation made it possible for him to return to her country, and declined from the time of his sedate marriage with Mary Hutchinson.

## Annette and Dorothy

There seems little doubt that his efforts to remove all trace of Annette from his life had a harmful effect on the spontaneity and power of his inspiration. But to connect the spontaneity and power wholly with Annette is to exaggerate her significance in his life and to forget that the "culture of feeling" in which his genius lay and which made him write—

...all grandeur comes,  
All truth and beauty from pervading love,  
That gone, we are as dust—

was not only concerned with natural human interchanges of emotion between man and woman but in a sort of cosmic sensibility, an awareness of all life and nature in terms of the deep heart. About "every natural form, rock, fruit and flower, even the loose stones that cover the highway" he uses in his *Prelude* the phrase that is one of his most astonishing in bare power: "I saw them feel." And he adds:

...the great mass  
Lay bedded in a quivering soul.

His "culture of feeling" was a multi-mooded pantheism in which the deep heart of man communed with and got illumination from the sentient Spirit of the universe which was the ultimate ground of man's own self.

If any particular woman contributed vitally to the growth of Wordsworth's poetry it could not be Annette Vallon. She may have stirred his poetic imagination and remained a significant stimulus for many years, but it was his own sister Dorothy who principally kept his genius alive: she was a true sister to his soul, feeding it and strengthening it by her own extreme sensitiveness to the details as well as to the vast general presence of nature: even the exquisite *Daffodils* is now taken to be her composition. She was little of the philosopher, but no finer companion can a pantheistic poet hope for. And between her and Wordsworth there was a special passage of feeling which brought an intense personal colour to their companionship. There was something of a pure physical passion about their intimacy—nothing perverted by any direct sexuality but a love, both acute and profound, that went beyond mere brotherliness and sisterliness. No sister, in the common acceptance of the term, would dream of writing to her brother as Dorothy did when telling Wordsworth how she tried to bear his temporary absence: "I tasted and bit the apple where you had bitten it." Again, no ordinary brother could write as he did of her:

And she who dwells with me, whom I have loved  
With such communion that no place on earth  
Can ever be a solitude to me.

Most probably the celebrated "Lucy" poems which are Wordsworth's high-water mark of personal love-expression were really a dramatic transformation of his relation with Dorothy. An actual Lucy has not been identified yet, while all his descriptions of her as "a child of nature" and all his tenderness and devotion in writing of her agree with what we know of her temperament and of her relation with him. At least about the poem, "A slumber did my spirit seal" which belongs to the "Lucy" series, Coleridge remarks that this most sublime epitaph, in all likelihood, reflected some gloomy moment in which Wordsworth had fancied the time his sister might die.

Not Annette, therefore, but Dorothy was Wordsworth's main inspirer and sustainer. And if his genius suffered gradual eclipse after his marriage to Mary Hutchinson it was not so much because he drew the curtain completely over Annette and became respectable as because the new relation-

ship cut across his unusual communion with Dorothy and she was too dutiful a woman to come in any way between man and wife. We know that she suffered terribly by the marriage. Wordsworth had too much self-conceit to experience the same heartbreak, he had also a philosophic intellect to fall back upon, an intellect which was not dependent on Dorothy; but his poetic springs could not help drying up, especially as he was out of touch altogether with also the only other human being of his circle who could sustain both his heart and his imagination in the paths of poetry—Coleridge. Coleridge above anyone else nourished Wordsworth's philosophic intellect and made it poetically creative, just as Wordsworth in his turn gave Coleridge's unstable and erratic genius strength and staying power. Coleridge's tragedy was even greater than Wordsworth's, for when he got estranged from his friend he lost Dorothy as well, whereas his friend had her for many more years to keep his mind kindled. But when Dorothy was made to play second fiddle in Wordsworth's emotional life and Coleridge had become just a splendid memory, the poet of the *Prelude* and the simple yet profound lyrics and the beautifully contemplative sonnets and the supreme *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* started on the way to becoming a dry stick.

## Traits of Character

He grew not only staid and respectable but also ridiculous in many things. For instance, he refused to attend de Quincy's marriage to the country girl who had borne him several children. In his later years he could not endure to read Goethe: he found in Goethe's works "a profligacy, an inhuman sensuality" which he described as "utterly revolting." He wrote a whole series of sonnets praising capital punishment. Several traits of his character which were merely odd in his younger days became now idiotic no less than offensive.

Even in his younger days he had always a certain self-righteousness and a particularly high opinion of all he expressed in his writings. No poet of the nineteenth century, except perhaps Tennyson who perpetrated lines like "The monkey would not eat since little Willie died", could have come out quite seriously with the line "A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman" as if it were great poetry. One recalls also his sudden remark at a dinner party: "Davy, do you know why I published *The White Doe of Rylstone* in quarto?" "No," replied Davy. Then Wordsworth said: "To show the world my opinion of it." One remembers too his statement to Lamb: "I believe I could write like Shakespeare, if I had a mind to try it." We do not know what he said when Lamb's answer came, as swiftly as the stutter would allow: "Yes, n-nothing is w-wanting but the m-mind."

There is a bit of odd conceit, though mixed with a bit of startling commonsense, in that incident in the English Channel where he and Dorothy and Mary had gone boating. A squall overtook them and it seemed as if the boat would capsiz. Wordsworth coolly took off his coat and vest and prepared to swim ashore, leaving his wife and his sister to drown because they could not swim. Luckily the weather changed, but that resolve to save his own skin was strangely in contrast to the sentiment he had voiced in a sonnet to his wife:

Dearer to me than life and light are dear!

Many other quaint glimpses we have of him, not always showing him in an egoistic or humourless light. Once in talking of letter-writing and the care that men like Southey lavished on it he said that such was his horror of having his letters preserved, that in order to guard against it he always took pains to make them as bad and dull as possible! There is considerable simplicity as much as the poet's proverbial enthusiasm about his own products, in the account Haydon gives of Wordsworth reading one of his most famous poems, *The Leach Gatherer*, to his hairdresser! Even the egoism that was his was mostly unconscious: there was no deliberate attempt to magnify himself, nor any resentment of circumstances which put him in a laughable situation. When he had to go to receive his Laureate-ship he had no appropriate garments in his own wardrobe and went dressed in Samuel Rogers' ill-fitting suit. According to custom he had to get down on both knees. But so tight was the suit that he could not get up at all and had to be helped to a standing posture. There is nothing on record to indicate he here minded looking funny, though surely he must have known the comic figure he must have cut, kneeling on the floor for an unconscionable length of time until the bystanders realised his predicament. That he was not quite without either humour or charm is testified by Charles Greville who described him at almost sixty as "very cheerful, merry, courteous and talkative." His mood of merriment is evidenced by an anecdote related by Haydon. Wordsworth and Haydon were walking across Hyde Park one day and Wordsworth was quoting his beautiful address to the stock dove. On finishing the poem he started telling Haydon how once in a wood Mrs. Wordsworth and a lady were walking, when the stock dove was cooing. A farmer's wife coming by said to herself, "Oh, I do like stock doves!" Mrs. Wordsworth, in all her enthusiasm for her husband's poetry, took the old woman to her heart; "but," continued

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the old woman, "some like them in a pie; for my part there's nothink like 'em stewed in onions."

## Poetic Expression

The stock dove brings us back to Wordsworth the poet. And after all as the poet is Wordsworth great and destined to be remembered. What is the value of his poetic experience and expression? Not all that he wrote appealed to his fellow-poets. Blake was so upset that he got a bowel complaint which nearly killed him, when he read Wordsworth's lines on passing Jehovah unalarmed and on realising that nothing

*can breed such fear and awe  
As fall upon us often when we look  
Into our minds, into the mind of man.*

"Does Mr. Wordsworth think he can surpass Jehovah?" Blake asked in horror. On the other hand, when the Immortality Ode was read out to him, he fell into almost hysterical rapture. In this connection we may mention Wordsworth's own attitude to Blake. When some of Blake's abnormalities were reported to him, he remarked: "The insanity of this man interests me far more than the sanity of Byron and Moore." The remark shows how much against Wordsworth's brain ran the slick sentimentalism of Moore and the crude power of Byron and how the central motif in his own writings was the feeling of universal mystery and the sense of profundities in the human soul. He did not have Blake's awareness of what Dr. Otto calls the "numinous", the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, the transcendent Godhead, but even more intensely than Blake he had the consciousness of the perfect presence and the ineffable peace that lives secretly not only in the mind of man but also in the earth, the ocean, the sky, the Cosmic Godhead who looks out at us from things of beauty and majesty, who lures us with magical or tranquil distances and

*Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns.*

Tennyson regarded this line from *Tintern Abbey* as the grandest in the entire range of English poetry. Perhaps Tennyson indulged in a little exaggeration, but part of the exaggeration is due to the fact that some other lines of Wordsworth himself merit to be ranked beside it among the greatest treasures of poetic expression in English: for example,

*The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills,*

or

*The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep,  
No more shall grief of mine the seasons wrong;  
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,  
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,*

or

*... a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of thought, alone.*

In a less august manner, too, Wordsworth can work up to a marvellous felicity:

*The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place,  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.*

But, of course, Wordsworth is not all perfection. There are immense stretches of aridity and abstractness in him, especially in his later work. And not everything that even fine critics have praised is pure gold. Thus, it is impossible to agree with Keats when he remarked that *The Excursion* was one of the wonders of the age. Much less can we join Coleridge in that fantastic estimate of *Borderers*, a play of Wordsworth's: "his drama," says Coleridge, "is absolutely wonderful. There are those profound touches of the human heart which I find three or four times in *The Robbers* of Schiller, and often in Shakespeare, but in Wordsworth there are no inequalities."

Yes, there is a lot of padding in many of Wordsworth's poems, but as he wrote a large amount of poetry the quantity of true gold is also huge. And whatever he wrote he did with care and scruple, even though they could not always result in imaginative finish as distinguished from intellectual polish. Dorothy records in her diary how her brother once made himself sick, finding a new epithet for the cuckoo. And we know how there was no facility in at least his manner of composition: he used to pace restlessly in the groves of Alfoxden or the garden-path at Grasmers while composing poetry. Nor was he averse to correction and chiselling and recasting: he did believe in spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling, but he had no superficial idea of what spontaneity consisted in. It did not, for him, consist in just the first draft of a poem; neither did it lie in an uncontrolled or unselective expression. His poem, *Dion*, originally opened with a descriptive stanza beginning—

*Fair is the Swan whose majesty, prevailing  
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake—*

but he resolutely cut it out because it detained the reader too long from the real subject and precluded, rather than prepared for, the subsequent

reference to Plato. His principle, as declared in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, was that the poet should never "interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests." Hence, on the side of matter and substance, spontaneity lay in avoiding all imaginative superfluity, all incongruity of vision, however beautiful in itself. On the side of form and style, it was equivalent to the avoidance of what he called "poetic diction," the artificial language the eighteenth century had employed as well as the tortured language often favoured by the seventeenth century and the late Elizabethans. In the pursuit of this spontaneity of form he was conscientiously studious. "I have bestowed," he says, "great pains on my style, full as much as any of my contemporaries have done on theirs. I yield to none in love for my art. I, therefore, labour at it with reverence, affection and industry. My main endeavour, as to style, has been that my poems should be written in pure intelligible English." By "pure intelligible English" he was at one time inclined to denote, in his own words, "the real language of men in any situation," but later described it as "a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation." In practice he wavered between the two definitions and not infrequently went beyond either when he achieved his greatest effects, but when understanding his criterion we must remember that in speaking of "men" he did not confine himself to his ordinary contemporaries, much less his humble Cumberland neighbours: he included also "men" like Shakespeare and Spenser and Milton, the three poets he perhaps valued most. What he really aimed at when he intuitively rather than intellectually understood and followed his theory was a certain simplicity and austerity wedded to intensity, as in lines about happy commonalty, like

*Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,*

or in lines of personal pathos, like

*And never lifted up a single stone,*

or in lines of poignant racial retrospect, like

*Old, unhappy, far-off things  
And battles long ago,*

or in lines drenched with the tears of things, like

*The still sad music of humanity...*

*The heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world.*

The last quotation can serve as a good starting-point for a few remarks on Wordsworth's technical artistry. The adjectives "heavy" and "weary" with their falling rhythm and y-ending suggestively reinforce each other's sense by sound, while the w-beginning in three words has a marked expansive effect hinting the immensity of the burden, and that immensity with its peculiar ambiguous and baffling character is brought into apt relief by the lengthy yet slackly moving and lingering epithet "unintelligible". Similarly, a most skilful play on the varying sounds of "o" and "a" is part of the inevitability of those two lines of poignant racial retrospect cited already from *The Solitary Reaper*. There is perfect art, full of the sense of water hailing from hidden sources, in the many-shaded crystalline rhythm of:

*Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.*

And nothing could be finer for conjuring up both beauty and mystery than the alliterative phrase in the poem where a young woman is told that if she remains a child of nature grey hairs will never sadden her,

*But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave.*

Wordsworth is particularly felicitous with names of places. As faultlessly used for poetic effect as Glaramara and Lapland is the name of those remote islands in that couplet, sibilant as well as liquid, which is a masterpiece of half atmospheric half psychological strangeness—

*Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.*

An effect not so strangely evocative but as deeply and skillfully intoned is where Wordsworth says to the spirit of liberty whose chosen home he considers to be England and Switzerland, the one country full of the sea's voice and the other full of the voice of the hills:

*... what sorrow would it be  
That mountain floods should thunder as before,  
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful voice be heard by thee!*

Little room remains for doubting that Wordsworth was not incapable of careful conscious art. His many lapses are mostly due to the extreme importance he attached to whatever figured in his perception or experience: the novelty, on the whole, of both thought and feeling that formed the centre of his world-message made him rest complacent again and again with the bare intellectual statement of it—he was not so absorbingly an artist as to admit nothing without the stamp on it of beauty; but there was sufficiently the beauty-lover in him to enable the artist to function effectively not only on the sheer breath of inspiration but also on after-thought and back-view and with the help of sifting and polishing and revising. His frequently wide-awake sensitiveness to word-values is illustrated by the remark we have quoted from Dorothy about his feverish exertion to hit upon a revealing adjective for the cuckoo, and also by his



## WORDSWORTH—MAN AND POET—Continued from page 3

own reference to Sir Walter Scott: "Walter Scott is not a careful composer. He allows himself many liberties which betray a want of respect for his reader. He quoted, as from me,

*The swan, on 'sweet' St. Mary's lake  
Floats double, swan and shadow,*

instead of 'still,' thus obscuring my idea and betraying his own uncritical principles of composition." Clearly, Scott's word was conventional clap-trap: not only what Wordsworth would have called the spirit of the lake remained uncaught but also the experience he had sought to convey was spoiled by an alien element. The accurate and direct communication which, together with intense sympathetic vision, Wordsworth aimed at in his poetry could indeed never be possible unless often enough he had the capacity to be, in Keats's phrase, "a miser of sound and syllable."

However, we must distinguish his artistry from Keats's. Keats was the words-craftsman *par excellence* and it almost appears as if he wanted intensity of vision and feeling more because they could electrify language into breath-bereaving exquisiteness or splendour than for its own revelatory life-enrichment. Wordsworth had the conviction that he had extraordinary things to say and that poetry was the best instrument of embalming as well as transmitting his experience: Keats was drunk with the wine of words and in order to make it always champagne instead of common claret or even good Burgundy he desired the richest and loveliest ideas and emotions to distil it from. The Muse accomplishes her end in various ways: somehow or other she wants great meaning married to great music and diverse temperaments and dispositions she makes her vehicles, and little it matters what starting-point is adopted. But significant differences will be there in the poet's attitude to his creative work in relation to both manner and matter. Wordsworth could rarely treat language as anything save a necessity; Keats could easily treat it as a luxury. Even the abundance of the former was mostly a prodigious piling up of effects economical and clear-cut; even the brevity of the latter tended to be astonishingly packed with "fine excess." In regard to matter, Wordsworth, dominated by his own definite sight and emotion, was anxious that his words should be utterly faithful to them. He had a special meaning antecedent to expression and when he cast about for the correct phrase it was for that which embodied with fine exactitude his meaning. Keats had a more fluid consciousness, a "negative capability"—as he called it—which enabled him to feel that his own self was undefined and could immediately become the self of whatever he saw, be it a tree or a pecking bird or an idle stone. He gave no importance to any fixed meaning arising out of his own previous experience or meditation: he cared only for the most beautiful significance he could get out of the vast potentialities of language at the disposal of the broad general scheme or theme he had in mind. He would welcome any suggestion valuable in itself and assimilable by his subject: it would not trouble him in the least if instead of writing the poem he intended he turned out something entirely dissimilar in mood or direction. In this he resembled Shakespeare who, among English poets, was the most protean genius we know of, though Shakespeare was not

so keenly conscious a connoisseur of words and threw up his wondrous wealth of them out of a masterly multifarious vitality much more vibrant than Keats's. Wordsworth resembled Milton who, among English poets, was the most firmly structured genius on record, though Milton differed in being far ahead of Wordsworth in sustained artistry and far behind him in either poignancy or amplitude of spiritual perception suffusing and transfiguring the powerful analytic and synthetic mentality.

### Poetic Experience

In that poignancy, in that amplitude of spiritual perception is Wordsworth's uniqueness in the poetic literature of England. He was the first Seer in that literature, answering in however limited a measure to the definition of seerhood current in the mystic Orient: one who has known by direct intuition and by intimate personal realisation and by concrete entry of consciousness a Divine Reality at once emanating, containing and pervading the universe, an Existence that is an infinite Consciousness and eternal Bliss and the secret Self of all things and beings. Wordsworth's seer-sense of this Reality is not a possession always intense and all-permeating, but it forms the permanent background of his best work and at several places comes to the fore and then his poetry is the sheer speech of the Godhead residing in cosmic nature. Wordsworth is not strictly a nature poet, catching felicitously the colour and atmosphere and thrill of her myriad phenomena: he is the singer of the mighty and superhuman presence whose outer face and body is she or, rather, whose manifold degrees of manifestation make up her stuff and activity. Together with Shelley who was an atheist according to conventional Christian standards just as Wordsworth was according to the same standards an apostate—together with Shelley he is the greatest Yogi of pantheism that has appeared in the poetic history of England. But we must not understand either his pantheism or Shelley's in a narrow sense which erases all distinctions between high and low, good and evil, right and wrong. If important distinctions had not been acknowledged in Reality's outer field, Shelley would never have had the ardour of the world-reformer or Wordsworth the zeal of the character-builder. But their ardour and zeal rose from something beyond the mere moral consciousness, some light of which this consciousness is itself a variable reflection, and that is why they instinctively looked for the source of all good not in the rational will but in some indescribable vastness of peace or in some ineffable wideness of ecstasy that are the hidden universal oneness of all diversities, even all contradictions. And of the two pantheists the more powerful was Wordsworth, though Shelley was the more vivid: Wordsworth it was who awoke in Shelley the pantheist dormant within the rebel against orthodox Christianity, and Wordsworth it was who had the more massive awareness of what he called "Wisdom and Spirit of the universe," an awareness which dissolved more effectively than Shelley's feeling of the "white radiance of eternity" the pains and fears infesting mortal life, and which replaced them with an enduring calm until Wordsworth could recognise

*A grandeur in the beating of the heart.*

## PANACEA OF "ISMS" *Continued from page 1*

agent in modern times of all the elements—the groups and types of the human family that were so long separate from each other, unknown to each other or clashing with each other. But that is good so far as it goes. Powerful as economic forces are, they are not the only deciding or directing agents in human affairs. That is the great flaw in the "Internationale", the Marxian type of internationalism which has been made familiar to us. Man is not a political animal, in spite of Aristotle, nor is he an economic animal, in spite of Marx and Engels. Mere economics, even when working for a greater unity of mankind, tends to work more for uniformity: it reduces man to the position of a machine and a physical or material machine at that. By an irony of fate the human value for which the international proletariat raised its banner of revolt is precisely what suffers in the end. The Beveridge Plan, once so much talked of, made such an appeal, no doubt, because of the economic advantages it ensures, but also, by far and large, because it viewed man as a human being in and against the machine to which he belongs, because it is psychologically a scheme to salvage the manhood of man, so far as is possible, out of a rigidly mechanistic industrial organization.

### HUMANISM

So the cry is for greater human values. Man needs food and shelter, it goes without saying, but he yearns for other things also, air and light; he needs freedom, he needs culture—higher thoughts, finer emotions, nobler urges—the field and expression of personal worth. The acquisition of knowledge, the creation of beauty, the pursuit of philosophy, art, literature, and science in their pure forms and for their own sake are things man holds dear to his heart. Without them life loses its charm and significance. Mind and sensibility must be free to roam, not turned and tied to the exclusive needs and interests of physical life, free, that is to say, to discover and create norms and ideals and truths that are values in themselves and also

lend values to the matter-of-fact terrestrial life. It is not sufficient that all men should have work and wages, it is not sufficient that all should have learnt the three R's, it is not sufficient that they should understand their rights—social, political, economic—and claim and vindicate them. Nor is it sufficient for men to become merely useful or indispensable—although happy and contented—members of a collective body. The individual must be free, free in his creative joy to bring out and formulate, in thought, in speech, in action, in all the modes of expression, the truth, the beauty, the good he experiences within. An all-round culture, a well-developed mind, a well-organised life, a well-formed body, a harmonious working of all the members of the system at a high level of consciousness—that is man's need, for there lies his self-fulfilment. That is the ideal of Humanism—which the ancient Graeco-Roman culture worshipped, which was again revived by the Renaissance and which once again became a fresh and living force after the great Revolution and is still the high light to which Science and modern knowledge turns.

### THE MORE BEYOND

And yet this is not the grand finale, the *nec plus ultra*. For, man does not stop with man; in the tremendous phrase carved by Nietzsche, "Man is a thing that shall be surpassed." Until and unless man surpasses himself, finds a focus and fulcrum outside and beyond his normal human—too human—self, he cannot entirely and radically change his nature and rebuild his society on an altogether different pattern. Man has to reach his divine status, become the Divine, within and outside, body and soul; then only can the ills to which he is exposed totally vanish and then alone can he enjoy individually and collectively a perfect life on earth. Naturally man is not expected to accomplish this mighty work alone and unaided, he can rest assured and comforted, for Nature herself is moving inexorably towards that consummation.

# SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION

PART II OF "THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA"

By "Synergist"

## SECTION III: THE NEW WORLD-VIEW

(a) THE SPIRITUAL METAPHYSIC

### THE DIVINE REALITY

*"The Master and Mover of our works is the One, the Universal and Supreme, the Eternal and the Infinite. He is the transcendent unknown or unknowable Absolute, the unexpressed and unmanifested Ineffable above us; but he is also the Self of all beings, the Master of all worlds, transcending all worlds, the Light and the Guide, the All-Beautiful and All-Blissful, the Beloved and the Lover. He is the Cosmic Spirit and all this creative Energy around us; he is the Immanent within us. All that is is he, and he is the More than all that is, and we ourselves, though we know it not, are being of his being, force of his force, conscious with a consciousness derived from his; even our mortal existence is made out of his substance and there is an immortal within us that is a spark of the Light and Bliss that are for ever."*

Sri Aurobindo.

In our effort to understand the three-termed ontological relation between God, man and the universe and the significance of the cosmic process, we have up to now proceeded from Matter to Spirit, from the terrestrial to the supra-terrestrial, following the ascending curve of the evolutionary movement. Now we shall proceed downwards from the heights of the Spirit to its inconscient depths.

In Sri Aurobindo's spiritual metaphysic, the Ultimate Reality is a Divine Being, whose essential nature is Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Consciousness:Force-Bliss), and whose gnostic light and highest creative dynamis is Supermind. This Reality manifests Itself to the human consciousness in spiritual experience either as a Divine Person, Lord and Creator of the Universe, or as an Impersonal Absolute. This Divine Person is not the Personal God of the Scriptures, an anthropomorphic Deity—a glorified image of man. No doubt the Divine does appear in a particular form to His devotee\*—as Krishna to a Vaishnavite or as Christ to a Christian mystic, but His manifesting capacity is not restricted to the form in which He chooses to appear. Sri Aurobindo writes: "The personal realisation of the Divine may be sometimes with Form, sometimes without Form. Without Form, it is the Presence of the living Divine Person, felt in everything. With Form, it comes with the image of the One to whom worship is offered. The Divine can always manifest himself in a form to the bhakta or seeker. One sees him in the form in which one worships or seeks him or in a form suitable to the Divine Personality who is the object of the adoration."—"The Divine Personality reveals Himself in various forms and names to the individual soul. These forms and names are in a sense created in the human consciousness; in another they are eternal symbols revealed by the Divine who thus concretises Himself in mind-form to the multiple consciousness and aids it in its return to its own Unity."

The Upanishads also clearly state that the Divine Reality is apprehended by the human consciousness in its two aspects of Personality and Impersonality, but that It exceeds both these aspects. They refer to It as the Lord, Ish, Ishvara, Para Purusha, Sah (He), when they want to emphasise the Personal aspect, and refer to It as Tat, That, when they wish to stress the Impersonal aspect. There is a tendency among some intellectuals who have taken to the spiritual path to emphasise only the Impersonal Absolute and make It out to be the Ultimate. Sri Aurobindo's words in *The Yoga and its Objects* clearly show the mistake of holding such a view—"... behind the *Sad Atman* is the silence of the *Asat* which the Buddhist Nihilists realised as the *Sunyam* and beyond that silence is the *Paratpara Purusha* (*puruso varenya adityavarnas tamasah parastat*). It is He who has made

\*This point is discussed in "The World Crisis and India," Essay IX: Values and Sanctions.

this world out of His being and is immanent in and sustains it....."

In another line of polar spiritual experiences, the Divine Being can be realised as either a static and impersonal Self who bases and supports all existence in the vastness of His own being, or as a Power and a Personality who puts forth this cosmos of myriad worlds from His static and silent depths by the energism of His Consciousness. So it can be stated that the Divine is not only the Cause and Source of all creation or manifestation, but is Himself that, for all manifestation is only a projection or emanation of Himself amidst conditions of Space and Time. What He is in essence, that He becomes. Now we can proceed a step further and state that in spiritual experience the Divine can also be realised as the *Virat Purusha*, the all-pervading Cosmic Spirit, as well as the Immanent Divine Person, Lord seated in the inmost heart of all creatures—the Divine Being, not in His supracosmic Transcendent or His Universal aspect, but in His Individual aspect.

But though the Divine is all this, He is neither restricted to any of His aspects, nor to the cosmic manifestation which is only a particular movement in the infinite expanse of His Being. He is not only the supracosmic Transcendent beyond Time, Space and Casuality, but is the Ineffable beyond and other than all that we can call Existence, Sat, or its negation Non-Existence, Asat.

Before we proceed further it is necessary to clear certain difficulties which may have arisen in the minds of those who are still to a certain extent under the influence of the rationalistic tendencies of the age. They may perhaps admit the validity of spiritual experience and recognise the truth of Sri Aurobindo's stressing both the Impersonal and Personal aspects of the Divine Reality, but they may be led to believe that his other assertions about It are just metaphysical postulates—rationally and intuitively conceived—which he finds suitable for his philosophy and his system of yoga.

It should be clearly understood that the different aspects and statuses of the Divine described by Sri Aurobindo are to him facts of immediate experience, facts more apodictic than any truth of sense experience or any truth of science and mathematics. With regard to the aspects of the Divine, it is once again necessary to state here that as his realisation is that of the Integral Divine Reality, it is but natural that the experiences which may have seemed final and ultimate to other seers, are to him partial revelations—only particular aspects of a single yet multi-poised Reality, a Reality which is infinitely greater than any of its statuses, the totality of which can only be known by an ascent into the summit light of the Spirit, the Truth-Consciousness of the Divine—the Supermind.

To be continued

## ELIXIR VITAE

*There was a legend among the alchemists that the discovery of the "elixir vitae" would be proved by the form of a vaguely luminous rose floating up in the liquid*

The swift soliloquy of a waterfall—  
The passionate wide communion of seas—  
Twilight's cool rain-blur heralding dark peace—  
A lake's half-audible wind-quiver—all  
Sound-flows of earth, immense or delicate,  
I merge in a bowl of dream and, hushful, wait  
Perfumes of Spirit borne upon world-voice...

Glimmer, O Deep, a mystic petal-poise  
Within my clouded crucible: O breath  
Of God's calm rapture rooted beyond death,  
Love's word that from the unknowable Silence came,  
Upsurge in me: break through my hush thy flame,  
O perfect Rose of the eternal Name!

K. D. SETHNA

# THE MOTHER

By RISHAI

Peace is the basis and pedestal of the cosmic movement. If the immutable peace of the Spirit were not there as the infinite and eternal support, the whole universe would fly to atoms. In spite of the discords and disorders, clashes and collisions, the world holds together with its multitudinous elements and progresses forward through whatever zigzags and detours, because an unshakable peace upholds it from below. This truth was sought to be conveyed by the symbolic image of Shiva supporting upon his prostrate, moveless body the unceasing dance of Kali, the supreme creative Force. Peace is the last of the three principles of Jyoti, Tejas and Shama or Shanti which are the spiritual equivalents of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, the three primal qualities of the lower Nature. In Matter Shanti or the luminous Peace of the Divine becomes the dark and dense Tamas, the congealed inertia of Inconscience.

This peace is the recurring refrain of many of the hymns and incantations of the world's scriptures, because without it there can be no steady purification of human nature and no creative play of any beneficent power in life. It is the principle of preservation and conservation, stability and security, repose and equilibrium. It is the infallible healer of all ills, the rectifier of all errors and the sustainer and restorer of all energies. If peace is once established in one's nature, all defects can be easily repaired, all impurities washed clean and a solid, sure progress made towards self-transcendence. It is the mirror in which the soul sees itself and the only condition and atmosphere in which it can commune with its eternal Master.

But it is not easy to have a settled peace in one's entire being. If quiet and detachment are practised for a long time through an unremitting renunciation of all desires, and a conscious opening is made inwards and upwards, peace comes and begins to fill our being. In the beginning, we feel a growing peace only in the centre of our consciousness, and whenever there is unrest or disquiet in any of the members of our nature, we can at once recede from it and take refuge in that tranquil centre. But afterwards peace expands from the centre and gradually steps and encompasses the whole nature. It establishes itself not only in the mind, the heart and the life parts, but even in the very cells of the body. That is to say, it becomes integral and sovereign. But this integrality is the most difficult to achieve. It can be said that an integral peace has been only an ideal never yet perfectly realised by man. It includes a complete elimination of all rajasic restlessness from the very cells of the body and a saturation of the entire being with the serenity of an imperturbable calm. There have been many Yogis who lived in an absolute peace in the depths of their being, but the outer parts of their nature were still subject to the onslaughts of the lower passions and impulsions. It is true that they did not mind these onslaughts which felt like pin-pricks to them, but still a pin-prick is a pin-prick and not an absolute immunity and mastery. This besetting duality has been an ungainly, incongruous feature of most spiritual lives and enforced a frequent resort to trance. A complete invulnerability, a perfect and permanent immunity of the whole consciousness to the forces of disturbance or unrest, is a conquest hardly yet achieved by man.

In the *Prayers and Meditations* the Mother speaks of this integral peace. Her conception of it is not only deeper and fuller, but immeasurably more comprehensive than that of most spiritual teachers. It overwhelms us by its uncompromising absoluteness. She would have us establish a peace which is all-pervasive and perfectly impervious to all causes of trouble or worry. In her Prayer of the 5th December, 1912, she gives us a revealing picture of this kind of peace, which is remarkable not only for its arresting originality, but also for the momentous bearings it has upon the question of divine realisation.

"In Peace and Silence the Eternal manifests: allow nothing to disturb you and the Eternal will manifest; have perfect equality in face of all and the Eternal will be there. . . . Yes, we should not put too much intensity, too much effort into our seeking for Thee; the effort and intensity become a veil in front of Thee; we must not desire to see Thee, for that is still a mental agitation which obscures Thy Eternal Presence. It is in the most complete Peace, Serenity and Equality that all is Thou even as Thou art all, and the least vibration in this perfectly pure and calm atmosphere is an obstacle to Thy manifestation. No haste, no inquietude, no tension; Thou, nothing but Thou without any analysis or any objectivising, and Thou art there without any possible doubt, for all becomes Holy Peace and Sacred Silence."

"Have perfect equality in face of all and the Eternal will be there."

This is the same supreme equality as elaborated and insistently inculcated by the Gita—an equality which is the very essence of eternity. This alone can be the widest foundation of a powerful, dynamic spirituality and not the traditional straining and struggle of the spiritual seekers or the heat and effervescence of their undisciplined emotions, so ruthlessly castigated by Vivekananda and branded as hysteria and neurosis. So long as aspiration and devotion for the Infinite are mental or vital-emotional, there is usually, perhaps unavoidably, a great, unequal tension in the being, an overdoing and excess, and, in consequence, a want of balance and poise; but when the aspiration becomes purely psychic, a movement of the central soul, the fever and strain subside, and there is, instead, a calm, placid, ever-growing intensity, a flaming but unwavering love, broad-based on equality. Pure Bhakti—and by it is meant psychic Bhakti—blossoms only when the mind and heart have been lulled into a reposeful, trustful peace.

"We must not desire to see Thee, for that is still a mental agitation which obscures Thy eternal Presence." An astounding injunction, this—

not to desire to see the Divine! But is not desire a movement of ignorance, however laudable and salutary it may be in the conditions of that ignorance? It has, no doubt, its evolutionary purpose; but it is not an authentic movement of the soul which does not desire to see, but sees, and revels in its natural sight. To a man who has wilfully kept his eyes closed, you will not say, "Groped for the light, it is there," but, "open your eyes and see the light." Our ignorance is, indeed, wilful. We have not only chosen it, but we cling to it, and that is why knowledge does not dawn and the darkness does not pass. If we want the freedom and bliss of the spirit, we have only to reject this ignorance and its trail of blind cravings and attachments and turn globally to God.

We have not to desire to see Him, but actually to open our eyes and see Him. A flaming faith passes into vision and culminates in knowledge. One remembers in this connection a very apt teaching of Shankaracharya: "Steep your sight in knowledge and contemplate the world as full of Brahman." The desire to see the Divine is, as the Mother says, "a mental agitation which obscures Thy eternal Presence". In this agitation a veil falls between us and the Divine, and instead of seeing Him, we see only a surging mist or a confused blur of our mind's imaginings. But, if from the beginning, instead of following the lead of the mind, we follow the lead of our soul, and have a firm faith in its guidance, the fiery intensity of the psychic aspiration will gradually infuse itself into our whole nature and force open the "third eye" which will see the Divine as naturally as the physical eyes see the material objects.

"The least vibration in this perfectly pure and calm atmosphere is an obstacle to Thy manifestation. No haste, no inquietude, no tension; Thou, nothing but Thou. . . ." Here the Mother speaks of the very perfection of peace, something transcending even psychic peace. It is a peace in which there is not even the slightest disturbing vibration anywhere, in any part of the being. It is the peace of the immutable Self, universal in consciousness and eternally equal to all impacts of the world. It is one of the prerequisites of the manifestation of the Divine in and through the liberated soul of man. It is only in this boundless, nameless peace that the liberated individual develops what the Gita calls Para Bhakti, and by this transcendent love and adoration knows and unites with the Supreme and becomes a vehicle of His Light and Love and Force upon the earth.

"When one has become the Brahman, when one, serene in the Self, neither grieves nor desires, when one is equal to all beings, then one gets the supreme love and devotion to me" (The Gita: Chapter 18).

We know that Sri Aurobindo lays the same kind of insistent stress upon this peace and calm as the very foundation of his Yoga. In the *Bases of Yoga* he says, "The first thing to do in the sadhana is to get a settled peace and silence in the mind" "Whatever else is aspired for and gained, this (calm) must be kept. Even Knowledge, Power, Ananda, if they come and do not find this foundation are unable to remain and have to withdraw until the divine purity and peace of the Sat-Purusha are permanently there." . . . .

"It is in the peace behind that you must learn to live and feel it to be yourself." . . . .

"To feel the peace above and about your head is a first step; you have to get connected with it and it must descend into you and fill your mind, life and body and surround you, so that you live in it—for this peace is the one sign of the Divine's presence with you."

It is interesting to note the same idea here as in the Mother's Prayer quoted above and expressed in almost identical terms.

This was also the ideal of the ancient spiritual culture in India. But later Yogic and religious disciplines seem to have loosened their hold upon peace. Especially, in some forms of the Bhakti cult, there is a tacit—in many cases even an explicit—sanction given to frenzy, impatience and over-eagerness. Intensity is, of course, indispensable; it is the marshalling of the concentrated energies of the being towards a single definite object; but an unquiet intensity shakes the poise and disturbs the balance of the central consciousness and opens the door to many a force of darkness and disorder. It produces a lopsidedness, a flaccidness, sometimes even a morbidity, and clouds and confuses the intellect, rendering it difficult, if not impossible, for the higher light to descend and settle in our nature. The vast, untrembling background and foundation of the ancient Vedic and Vedantic discipline having been lost, Indian spiritual endeavours floundered for centuries in morasses or tossed in swirls and eddies, only achieving a sheer, giddy ascent into the Light of the Spirit or a brilliant burst of power or ecstasy in a few giants of exceptional calibre. It is high time they reverted to the ancient background and recovered its deep peace and calm upon which alone the massive edifice of the future can be securely reared.

It is obvious that it is not a mental peace that the Mother speaks of in her Prayers. A strong moral will may succeed in coercing the nature and imposing a sort of peace upon it, but it is usually found to be a precarious peace and very superficial, behind which one can often hear the



# R ON PEACE

## HCHAND

uneasy rumble of the rebellious forces. The Socratic confession of suppressed passions is a universal experience which sometimes damps the ardours of youthful idealism and leads to cynicism or pessimism. A peace or calm held at the point of the sword against the unflagging opposition of its enemies, cannot be called a conquest, far less a secure possession. What the Mother means by peace is not the sepulchral stillness of a devastated nature either. She means by peace something profound, permanent, radical, absolute; something that is sovereign in action as well as in inaction, in life as well as in death—the infinite and fathomless peace of the Eternal.

"May the peace of Thy divine love be on all things." It is this peace of the Divine which she passionately invokes in her Prayer of March 10, 1914 (Pp. 71-72):

"In the silence of the night Thy Peace reigned over all things, in the silence of my heart Thy Peace reigns always; and when these two silences were united, Thy Peace was so powerful that no trouble of any kind could resist it. I then thought of all those who were watching over the ship to safeguard and protect our route, and in gratitude, I willed that Thy Peace should be born and live in their hearts; then I thought of all those who, confident and carefree, slept the sleep of inconscience, and, with solicitude for their miseries, pity for their latent suffering which would awake in them in their own waking, I willed that a little of Thy Peace might dwell in their hearts and bring to birth in them the life of the Spirit, the light which dispels ignorance. I then thought of all the dwellers of this vast sea, visible and invisible, and I willed that over them might be extended Thy Peace. I thought next of those whom we had left far away and whose affection is with us, and with a great tenderness, I willed for them Thy conscious and lasting Peace, the plenitude of Thy Peace proportioned to their capacity to receive it. Then I thought of all those to whom we are going, who are restless with childish preoccupations and fight for mean competitions of interest in ignorance and egoism; and ardently, in a great aspiration of all those whom we know, of all those whom we do not know, of all the life that is working itself out, of all that has changed its form, and all that is not yet in form, and for all that, and also for all of which I cannot think, for all that is present to my memory, and for all that I forget, in a great ingathering and mute adoration, I implored Thy Peace."

And again in the Prayer of Dec. 7, 1916: "In appearance my life is the most ordinary and commonplace possible; and inwardly what is it? Nothing but a calm tranquillity without any variation or anything unexpected; the calm of something which is realised and is not sought for any longer, which no longer expects anything from life and things, which acts without anticipating any profit, knowing perfectly that its action does not in any way belong to it, either in its impulsion or in its result; which wills, conscious that it is the supreme will alone that wills in it; a calm wholly made of an incontestable certitude, of an objectless knowledge, of a causeless joy and of a self-existent state of consciousness which no longer belongs to time. It is an immobility which moves in the domain of external life, without, however, belonging to it or seeking to escape from it. I hope for nothing, expect nothing, desire nothing, aspire for nothing and, above all, I am nothing; and yet happiness, a happiness calm and unmixed, a happiness that does not know itself and has no need to look at its existence, has come to inhabit the tabernacle of this body. This happiness is Thou, O Lord, and this calm too is Thou, O Lord, for these are not at all human faculties and the senses of men can neither appreciate nor enjoy them...."

This peace is one constantly felt in strength and action, and not only in the silent depths of the soul. It is victorious over all causes of anxiety or agitation and a stable support of even the most stupendous activities of life.

We have seen that its first perfection is the psychic peace—peace in its pervading and unassailable purity, possessing and occupying the whole nature. Its final perfection is the peace of the Spirit, infinite, eternal, all-embracing and all-transcending. It is through this peace alone that the Divine can sovereignly act in the liberated human instrument.

Man, torn and convulsed by the universal unrest, pants today for peace: his soul is in deep agony. War and strife have become the order of the day, war and strife in every walk of life; and everywhere there is a conflict of values, a crumbling of traditions, a vague longing for something new, a desperate tug of the old and a growing discontent and disquiet. How will peace emerge out of this heaving chaos? And unless peace comes, how will this chaos dissolve?

In this dilemma, the soul of man, unknown to his outer consciousness, appeals to God, its sole refuge. It is this appeal that rings in many of the Mother's Prayers and Meditations with the haunting pathos of psychic sadness. Her Prayer of the 29th Nov. 1913, runs:

"Why all this noise, all this movement, this vain and hollow agitation; why this whirlwind sweeping men away like a swarm of flies caught

in a storm? How sad is the spectacle of all this energy wasted, all these efforts lost. When will they cease from dancing like puppets at the end of threads held they know not by whom or by what? When will they take the time to sit and draw inwards, to collect themselves and open that inner door which hides from them Thy priceless treasures, Thy infinite boons?...

"How painful and miserable seems to me their life of ignorance and obscurity, their life of foolish agitation and profitless dissipation, when a single spark of Thy sublime light, a single drop of Thy divine love can transform this suffering into an ocean of joy!

"O, Lord, my prayer rises towards Thee: May they know at last Thy peace and that calm and irresistible power which springs from an immutable serenity—appanage of those whose eyes have been opened and who can contemplate Thee in the enkindled core of their being.

"But the hour of Thy manifestation has come.

"And canticles of joy will soon break out from every side.

"I bow down religiously before the solemnity of that hour."

The foregoing consideration will have made it abundantly clear that by peace the Mother does not mean non-violence. Peace comes with purity, with the elimination of desires and the progressive abdication of the ego, and is not the result of the imposition of an ethical principle upon one's nature. It is an inner state that evolves out of the awakened soul or descends from the Self, and is not generated or induced by the ethical rule of non-violence. It is not, therefore, an outcome of moral but of spiritual growth. On the basis of peace both violence and non-violence can have their respective play in accordance with the Will of the Divine. Ancient dynamic spirituality had the wisdom to recognise the indispensability of divine violence as a preliminary to every new creation. Effete formations and outworn structures of the past, whether they are physical, vital or mental, have often to be ruthlessly broken up and cast away, so that new forms and principles may emerge and initiate a new era of human progress. Destruction clears the way for new creation and it is a folly to fight shy of it and try to keep one's hands clean. Ancient spirituality imaged Shiva, the beneficent God of kindness and compassion as also Rudra, the terrible Godhead of destructive violence and scourging wrath. It is this truth that Sri Krishna taught Arjuna while exhorting him to fight—"Fight, but with the fever of thy soul gone",—"Fight, but without anger or hatred."

The pacifists who think that a mere physical abstention from violence will save the modern world from ruin and bring about the cherished millennium are either ignorant of human nature or infatuated with an impossible utopian dream. Violence will continue to disturb or disrupt human society and shatter the naive hopes of the pacifists so long as any of the lower lusts of man sways his nature. If it is repressed on the physical level, it will migrate to the vital and chafe and seethe till it bursts on the physical again; or, repressed even on the vital level, it will rise to the mental and assume the concentrated intensity of a mental violence. The remedy lies not in the imposition of a moral principle or the adoption of a mental rule but in a sustained and thorough purification of human nature including even the subconscious, for it is often seen that when violence is completely expelled from the normal waking consciousness, it sinks into the subconscious and re-emerges from there in sudden, fretful spurts, playing havoc with the order and security of individual and collective life.

Besides, violence cannot be regarded with indifference, but has to be met and combated, not certainly out of any love of revenge or retribution, but for the protection and preservation of the higher values of existence. Evil has to be smitten hard and falsehood pulled down from its high throne, in order that Love and Truth may be reinstated in the hearts of men. And this work of destruction need not in the least ruffle the inner peace; rather the inner peace is sure to impart a clearer vision and an unflinching strength to those who engage in such a *Dharma yuddha*—a battle for the salvage of the spiritual and cultural heritage of humanity. The Kshatriya element, the aspect of Rudra and Mahakali, has its undeniable truth and function, at least in the present economy of the world, and a wilful ignoring of it can only lead to chaos and confusion and untold miseries. The use of soul-force is an ideal for which man is not yet prepared individually, let alone its employment in the life of the community. And even granting that soul-force succeeds, it is open to question whether it destroys less than physical force would do in the same circumstances and whether it is not attended with consequences too radical and dangerously explosive to control. Whenever it has been tried—it should not be confounded with moral force which is much feebler, because mental, and limited in its scope—it has violently disturbed the ordered march of humanity and upset its psychological balance.

But the peace that the Mother speaks of is the abysmal peace of the Eternal which supports equally the dual work of creation and destruction and is the foundation of all authentic Yogic action. It is a state of perfect equality to all the movements and impacts of life and of harmony and co-ordinated action of all the parts of one's nature. Even a little of this peace ensures happiness and clear perception and a comprehensive and catholic outlook on life and its complex problems. This peace transcends all mental and moral states and is "Not the peace of an inconscient sleep or of a self-satisfied inertia, nor the peace of a self-forgetful ignorance and an obscure and heavy indifference; but the peace of the omnipotent force, the peace of a perfect communion, the peace of an integral awakening, of the disappearance of all limitation and all darkness." (*Prayers & Meditations*; p. 152.)

# NEW TRENDS IN WESTERN THOUGHT

## IS A THIRD WORLD WAR INEVITABLE?

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

U. N. World

Since the year 1,000 A.D., when the end of the world was expected, there has never been a time of such general and profound anxiety as now afflicts the Western World. I should like to think that the anxiety will prove as groundless now as then, but I find this hardly possible. However, since diagnosis must precede prognosis, let us first try to assess the causes of tension. These causes are of several kinds: economic, political, and ideological. The problem is unduly simplified if any one of these is emphasized to the exclusion of the others.

To begin with the economic causes: there are rich nations and poor nations, and rich individuals in poor nations and poor individuals in rich nations. Speaking very broadly, rich nations and individuals tend to side with America, poor nations and individuals with Russia. Consequently it is to Russia's interest to keep the world poor, and to America's interest to make the world prosperous. Of course Communists profess that the poverty they promote is only a temporary means to universal prosperity; but for the present prosperity is their enemy.

If the tension is to be diminished in any permanent way, there must be more approach to economic equality between different nations. Such a contrast as that between the standard of life in China and that in the United States makes genuine friendship between the two countries very difficult. In the case of India, however, this very difficult feat appears to have been accomplished, thanks to the joint statesmanship of Nehru and the British Government.

### Economic and Political Factors

Both in Asia and in Africa, there is a close association between economic and racial factors. In the nineteenth century white men had wealth, power and prestige; now this is no longer the case in Asia, and it is doubtful how long it will continue to be the case in Africa. The claim to equality with white men is a strong incentive to Communism. The West has a difficulty from which Russia is free. There are parts of the world which claim equality, and to which the West can only offer equality in the form of independence, which may lead to chaos. Moscow, on the contrary, can offer what is regarded in advance as equality, though it is in fact submission to Russian imperialism. That has at least the advantage of not causing chaos.

Politically the conflict is essentially similar to three previous ones, namely those provoked by Spain, France and Germany when they sought to conquer the world. The only 'political' novelty is that formerly England led the defence, and now America does so. There were Fifth Columns in previous conflicts, just as there are now; England contained Catholics in 1588, revolutionaries in 1793, and Fascists in 1940. The pattern has been constant since the rise of Spain: one nation has thought itself sufficiently powerful to rule the world but has been in the end defeated by a coalition of nations unwilling to lose their independence. In that coalition there has been a leader, which in the first two conflicts made

immense gains by ultimate victory, but has not sought universal dominion. The same is true now. From Communists and their friends we hear a great deal about American imperialism, but there is not in America the same determination as in Russia to create a vast monolithic state governed from a centre nor is there the same intolerance of all systems other than that established in Washington.

The part played by the clash of ideologies in the present conflict is from one point of view very great, and from another little worse than a form of humbug. Whenever the defence of an ideology becomes identified with the defence of some power-groups, power politics tend to swamp the ideology in the minds of those who direct policy. The ideology survives nominally, but as little more than a trick, for enlisting popular support.

In the sixteenth century, Catholic ideology was merged in Spanish imperialism, Protestant ideology in the profits of piracy. Napoleon, in his early days, was welcomed in Italy and Western Germany, because he was regarded as the standard-bearer of the Revolution: but when it came to the personal rule of his brothers and conscription for French wars, it became apparent that power politics had replaced Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. So it is now in the communist world: power politics for rulers, ideology for dupes and underlings.

### New Historic Elements

I do not want to suggest that there is nothing new in the present state of affairs. On the contrary, several things are new.

Communist ideology is at once more radical and more supple than those of previous imperialisms. The devious dialectic of Karl Marx makes to certain intellectuals an appeal not unlike that which St. Paul made to St. Augustine; this appeal has the double strength of being nominally to the intellect but really to the emotions. To the discontented everywhere it offers upheaval and punishment of enemies. To victims of injustice, of whatever kind it offers redress, all the more infallible because it proceeds according to a mysterious formula which professes to have discovered the very root of all injustice. A young Western intellectual who hates his father, a Jew who has suffered from anti-semitism, a Chinese infuriated by a century of foreign insolence, a Latin-American Indian who execrates the memory of Cortez and Pizarro—all these can easily accept the doctrine that the power of capital is the source of their sorrows.

The second thing that is new is the close-knit character of the organization. The Jesuits, it is true were as well organized, and what they accomplished in the counter-reformation every one knows. But they were few, and Catholics outside their ranks were far less organized; many of these, moreover, were hostile to the Jesuits. There was not the same capacity of liquidating Trotskyites as there is now. It is true that this rigidity of organization has its draw-

backs. Tito rebels against it; some English Communists did not wholly relish the Hitler-Stalin Pact; some Italian Communists failed to see how Karl Marx proved that they ought to relinquish the Italian claim to Trieste. But on the whole advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, at least so far. Whether this will remain true is more questionable.

The third thing that is new is the fact that there are now only two Great Powers. And the fourth thing is the character of the weapons that will be used if the cold war becomes hot.

### Prospects of War and Peace

Will the cold war become hot? I do not know any more about this than is known to every diligent reader of the newspapers. But there are, I think, some things that can be said.

I do not believe that any genuine entente with the Kremlin is possible. Whenever the Kremlin thinks the moment inopportune for a war, it will be willing to make such show of reasonableness as will soothe the nerves of the West. But the "mystique" of Communism makes it appear that no real peace is possible, and that, sooner or later, Communism must triumph. (Hegel's form of the dialectic proved the same for Germany.) There are, of course parts of Marx's doctrine which the Kremlin has tacitly dropped, but the part which concerns the inevitability of war and the certainty of victory remains, and is, I think, genuinely believed by every communist from Stalin downward. And they think that we, on our side, must see that war is inevitable; therefore our overtures must be insincere and our professed desire for world peace must be humbug. While such beliefs persist it would be foolish to hope for genuine peace.

What hope is there, then, of averting an all-out war against Russia? The only hope, it seems to me, is to remain obviously stronger than Russia until new circumstances completely change the situation. There are various new circumstances that 'might' have this effect. There may be a disputed succession after Stalin's death. Titoism may spread; I am convinced that China will not permanently submit to orders from Moscow, provided the West is tolerant of Chinese Communism. Discontent may spread within Russia; it is already very considerable in the Ukraine. Time may make Russian officials lazy and inefficient, as they were under the Czars. It is almost certain that lack of freedom for scientists will, within ten years or so, make the Russian war machine technically inefficient as compared with that of America. For such reasons, if war could be averted for a decade, it is quite likely that it would never take place.

We are thus brought to the stark opposition of strength in war as the decisive factor. I am no authority on war, and it is not for me to estimate military chances. But defeat or victory in a contest with Russia will depend upon many things besides armed force. Western Europe is much more hostile to Communism than it was, chiefly owing to Marshall

Aid. China is lost to us, at least for the present, because we persisted too long in supporting Chiang Kai-shek. The policy of the present South African Government is of enormous propaganda value to Moscow. Palestine presents an insoluble problem: if America and Britain favour the Jews, all the Arab States may become friendly to Moscow; if the Arabs, American Jews will vote against the Administration, and semi-isolationists will take its place in Washington: if strict impartiality is observed, each side will think the other unfairly favoured, and both kinds of evils will result. Neither side seems capable of reflecting that in a war both sides in the Near East would be wiped out.

### Propaganda and Armaments

I think a great deal more could be achieved by propaganda than is being achieved at present. The gradual Russification of satellite nations should be emphasized, and so should the bad economic conditions of the workers under Soviet rule. Tito should be vigorously supported, and so should every beginning of a similar movement in Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary. Truman's Fourth Point should be implemented to the extreme of what is financially possible. Vigorous young intellectuals from doubtful regions e.g. the Near East—should be trained in England or America, as Young Communists are trained in Moscow. And much more should be done than is done at present to make clear positively what the West stands for, and what will be lost to mankind if Moscow triumphs. Money spent in these ways will be a hundred times as effective as an equal sum spent later on actual war.

Nevertheless, actual armaments will in the end decide, if war comes. I do not agree with those who object to the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb. All arguments for a unilateral limitation of weapons of war are only logically defensible if carried to the length of absolute pacifism, for a war cannot be worth fighting unless it is worth winning. I think also, for the reasons given above, that every increase of Western strength makes war less likely. I do not think that, in the present temper of the world, an agreement to limit atomic warfare would do anything but harm, because each side would think that the other was evading it.

The next war, if it comes, will be the greatest disaster that will have befallen the human race up to that moment. I can think of only one greater disaster: the extension of the Kremlin's power over the whole world. Fortunately the measures required to prevent the one are the same as the measures required to prevent the other; they are those that strengthen the forces on the side of human freedom. It is painful that there is such an inadequate realization of the urgency of the problem, and of the comparative unimportance of the enmities surviving from earlier times. I wish some supreme orator could rouse all western nations to realize their danger, and the pettiness of their disputes. Whatever we do, we shall be united, but it is better to be united in a common salvation than in a common death.



# VISNAGAR: A RETROSPECT BY V. K. GOKAK

This poem, which is one lyric split up into sections, has an interesting personal background to its simple yet moving charm. The Government of Baroda wanted to start a College for North Gujarat. Because of a local donation Visnagar was selected, though it is a small Taluka town and, being only 40 miles from the Cutch desert, all sandy soil with very little vegetation. The author was chosen as Principal and asked to see the project through. The area being rural, he had to struggle against odds, but he thought the work had been entrusted him by Providence. The people of Visnagar he found most generous and appreciative. Working for over 3 years, he saw the College built up and was looking forward to a long stay, but was transferred to Kolhapur. When, with the sense of a mission accomplished, he left, his students, colleagues and the public showed an affectionate regret that overwhelmed one who had gone amidst them as a stranger only a few years before. It seemed the work of starting a College had somehow wakened the soul of the people of North Gujarat. And the work had also given him the seclusion he had wanted for deeply studying the writings of Sri Aurobindo. He soon got into touch with the Master and the Mother and began a fruitful practice of meditation. His students brought great sympathetic understanding to him, as was proved by their presenting him on their own initiative with what he had secretly longed for—autographed photos of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

(1)

The blinding glare of the summer sun;  
O the thirst of the summer heat!  
The fiery breath of barren soil  
And tired and baked feet!

Burning particles of sand  
Within the eye, ear, nose and mouth:  
What a job, the soul would sob,  
For a man from the south!

Look! The soul's pure, lambent flame  
The human animal would put out;  
Bird-lime trees and spread the snare  
About it and about.

The soul in desperation asked  
Sometimes: O Master! Why this pain?  
Why put me to the bitter proof  
Again and yet again?

(2)

In the midst of the dazing heat  
And miles of burning sand,  
Hath beckoned a helping hand.

In the heart of the desert blossomed  
Spreading its fragrance close,  
A hundred-petalled rose.

In a strange, staring land  
Rains Mercy, for ages known,  
A tranquil peace I own.

In the sojourn that I question  
Surges a golden chance,  
Marvel of circumstance!

In a helpless habitat  
Is the Mother's hand that guides;  
The Master's grace abides.

In the desert hath sprung a sapling.  
In the summer hath beckoned a shade.  
The house is planned; the brick is laid.

(3)

Yea, North Gujarat is my home.  
It is the Kannada folk and soil.  
No loveless burden this, my friend!  
Nor is it fruitless toil.

For I have plunged into welling hearts  
And bathed in their affection pure,  
Measured their depths dimensionless  
And friendships that endure.

I have walked into happy homes  
And been claimed as their own by each;  
Sat by hearths blazing with warmth  
Of love, else out of reach.

Moving through provinces, I knew  
Their living unity of heart.  
They are one nation at the root;  
Of one whole a part.

Numerous the feet; the gait is one.  
Different the words; one is the flame.  
Tongues many; the throat's mellifluousness  
Has always been the same.

Moved by the melodies of Gujarat,  
This Kannada heart sang like a bird;  
Discerned the dawn of nationhood  
And to great depths was stirred.

O those friends! O the young comrades!  
O the elders without guile!  
O the nectar-brimming friendships  
Mine, though for a while!

The prayers and the congregations,  
The poor man's soul-enkindling love!  
Ah! The pigeon-haunted mansion,  
The cooing of the dove!

The melting song, the delicate sculpture,  
Sunny landscapes, graceful dance,  
The smiles that flowered forth celestial  
On each countenance!

Yea, North Gujarat is my home,  
Blest is the Kannada heart that sings  
The song of Gujarat and her glory,  
For the spirit has wings.

(4)

O here were divinely churned  
The outer life, the inner mind.  
A treasure-trove dim even to dreams  
It was my fortune there to find.

Came walking of their own accord  
To me the Mother's lotus-feet.  
Filled my hands where I was sitting  
The Master's bread, which I did eat.

In simple frolic was thrown open  
Contemplation's shining path.  
Heavenly music filled my ears,—  
A predestined aftermath!

But not just a dreamer's life.  
The Work accompanied the Word;  
The toilsome task, the meedful mission,  
The tryst of which the soul hath heard.

Into these arms was born the Princess  
That North Gujarat fondly bore;  
And this the heart that nursed the infant,  
With which she grew three years and more.

Saraswati, the subterranean,  
Disdaining to espouse the Sea,  
Flashed like lightning through the sandy  
Desert of Cutch in virgin glee:

The Virgin Mother of a thousand sons,—  
She it is that reappears.  
Her august presence we celebrate;  
It permeates the coming years.

A priest I came, pontifical,  
Missioned an icon to install.  
I stayed to hear the image speak  
And lay its magic spell over all.

Continued on page 10

# VISNAGAR: A RETROSPECT —Continued from page 9

I grew dumb when the image spoke.  
It was the voice of a people's soul,—  
The eternal Princess who grows younger  
As the wheel of Time doth onward roll.

Opened without, the region's love.  
Blossomed within, the rose of my heart.  
Rejoice, my soul, in this twin blossoming;  
Brood on it like the brooding dove.

Fulfilment, synthesis divine,  
The harmony, the lustre pure  
Beams within and brims without.  
The whole, the One that shall endure,—

This have I glimpsed. The jewelled dew-drop  
Glistens, on the lotus, single;  
But within its orbèd measure  
The multitudinous oceans mingle!

(5)

A lone fulfilment makes not the Blest,  
A lone intuition the Enlightened One.  
Life is an endless pilgrimage;  
Its course the path of the undying sun.

The *siddhis* are of no avail  
Unless they blend and synthesise.  
Though the dew-drop figures the ocean,  
It is a dew-drop to the wise.

From fulfilment to aspiration  
And to effort beckoned me  
The Mother's hand. In other regions  
Fate pointed out things yet to be.

But to forsake this beloved soil!  
O the sorrow and the smart!  
Why, at this innocent brotherhood,  
Should Fate have aimed its cruel dart!

The enveloping mist of tears,  
The mother-love and the calf-love;  
The stricken friendship that wept over  
The many precious dreams it wove:

The comrade crying his heart out,  
The railway guard whistling in pain;  
The elders wiping their tears gently;  
The menial wishing me back again:—

Yea, like a tender child I wept  
To see this noble-hearted throng  
And when memory lights the scene  
I weep again, as now in song.

I am a page of the Blessed Child  
Whose feet once walked upon this earth.  
But Visnagar is Gokul, sure,  
The very region of his birth,

For blessed is the spot that loves  
With a love limitless, infinite,  
Any little thing that God  
May, in His mercy, bring to light.

(6)

Soul-engraved is that great morning:  
The clouds that dulled the leaden sky;  
The hearts that, thrilled, thronged at the station  
And, sobbing, whispered: "Friend, good bye!"

Moistened by their silent tears,  
The hearts gulped down their pain and said:  
Pilgrim, start! The train is ready,  
The signal given, the engine fed.

As in a flower-enwreathed fane,  
A speechless idol, I sit and stare.  
Whatever is, is for the best.  
Today is here. Tomorrow,—where?

O those garlands of great love!  
The glancing epistles in glowing eyes!  
This is the world of the Mother's making  
Come out to play, from its disguise!

This is fulfilment; the fruit in the flower.  
This is the Mother's milky way.  
And I but a pedestalled icon  
Dressed and decked for a holiday!

These large-hearted folk have showered  
Their spirit-affluence in largesse  
And, plunged in their own bounteous love,  
Me, the mere occasion, they bless.

(7)

I ride on the high tide of love.  
It is the Master's giving.  
But the train whistles; the rail-path points  
To a life of arduous living.

I have welcomed with sweet thanks-offering  
Fulfilment's mellow fruit:  
Shall I not welcome effort now  
That takes me back to the root?

O Infinite! I am infinitesimal.  
Thy grace I drank to my fill  
And now am ready to execute  
Whatever is Thy will.

Yea, this, that and the other  
Speed up God's will in man.  
Fulfilment, effort:—these the poles  
That cover life's brief span.

They alternate in the cosmic game,  
Chequer, like night and day,  
Man's life till they have fashioned forth  
A psyche out of clay!

Amen! I bow low to the love  
That I have left behind  
And calmly I salute the dawn  
Whose day I am yet to find!

(8)

A modest gift  
For a noble one:  
O poet, O my friend!  
Take it. Our regions,  
Like our hearts,  
May one day meet and blend.

Ashoka foliage,  
Mango leaf,—  
One yours, the other mine.  
This is the way  
That Nature decks  
The shrine of the Divine.

This is the way  
That Spring fulfils  
Herself in many ways.  
She blossoms on  
Long after we  
Have had our little days.

Sons of the same  
Ancient Mother,  
We muse on the Indian scene.  
You in your fane  
And I in mine:  
The shrine is the same, I ween.

You in your speech  
And I in mine:—  
We sing to the self-same tune.  
The nation tingles  
In our veins  
Even while we commune.

The Spell eternal  
And the joy vernal  
Animate our song.  
May they wake  
A million hearts  
And may they echo long.

(Translated from the Kannada original by the author)

An international Congress—the first of its kind—has just assembled in Rome to discuss the famous Holy Shroud which after passing through many lands and hands has been lying for years in a Turin chapel. In this Shroud, by a sort of chemical miracle or, as many people would prefer to call it, simply by a miracle, the image of the face and figure of Jesus is said to be preserved as on a sensitive photographic plate. Distinguished scientists will now decide once for all whether the image is an authentic phenomenon. It is to be hoped that arrangements will be made to submit the Shroud to infra-red rays.

The strongest support for its authenticity has come so far from the late Paul Vignon, Doctor of Natural and Physical Science, at one time professor at the Sorbonne. He published a book, *The Holy Shroud of Turin*, in which he made some startling revelations. As long ago as 1902 he had published a fully documented book on the subject in which he had stated his belief in the genuineness of the relic, but also made many reservations. The reservations were removed after many years of unremitting research and investigation.

The sudarium is a sheet some four by twelve feet in size, imprinted with two images, one facial, the other dorsal, of a man who had met a violent death by crucifixion and brutal torture. Professor Vignon's conclusions are ably summed up by Guillaïn de Benouville, writing some time ago in *Paris-Soir*. His article was condensed in a issue of *Magazine Digest* last year. Here are

## "I SAW THE PHOTOGRAPH OF JESUS"

some passages:

"How were the images projected into the cloth? Professor Vignon tells us that it was the custom of the time to wrap the dead in sheets which had been sprinkled with powdered aloes, the antiseptic properties of which are well-known to modern chemists. Laboratory experiments prove that the ammoniacal vapours which emanate from a corpse under certain conditions can produce such images on a surface dusted with this powder.

In this particular case, the Shroud came in contact with all the prominent features of the face and figure of the cadaver, leaving a clear impression of them that are readily distinguishable as in a photographic 'negative'.

The dead Man has a serene, compassionate expression on his face that is in strange contrast to the sadistically mutilated body. The high, powerful forehead is the most salient facial characteristic; the eyes are closed, and under the juncture of the lids are stains that doubtlessly betoken tears. Mouth, chin and head are distinctly outlined.

The fact that the images have remained clear and intact proves that the body had not lain in its Shroud very long; otherwise it would have begun to putrefy. Without considering the question of the resurrection at all, it is a historical fact that the body of Jesus was taken from the sepulchre three days after it had been placed there; for at that time

the tomb was discovered to be empty.

As to the nature of the material itself, Professor Vignon has demonstrated that it might very easily date from the era of Christ, or even before. Linen can be preserved indefinitely. There is a fragment of cloth in the Louvre Museum today dating back to 1000 B.C.; its condition is still so good that it gives the same impression of roughness when touched lightly with the fingers as does new linen.

These facts in themselves might seem conclusive evidence that the Man in the Shroud was Jesus Christ; but Professor Vignon goes further. He had hundreds of photographs taken and enlarged (many of them are reproduced in his book), which present a multiplicity of detail. The astonishingly clear markings of the blood and serum prove beyond all doubt that a crucified, bleeding human being had once been wrapped in that sheet.

The markings prove several other things besides: that the victim had been beaten (Professor Vignon was even able to reconstruct a whip similar to the one which must have been used by his tormentors), that his heart had been pierced by a spear-thrust, and that his hands and feet had been perforated by nails.

Now, all these forms of torture are exactly and peculiarly the same as those suffered by Christ. How would one explain their perpetration on someone else; an incident

which would be unique in history?

As soon as the hands and feet were pierced by nails, the blood ran vertically in little streams before drying. When the body was taken down from the Cross, the displacement caused by moving the arms into the folded position shown on the cloth gave these streams a horizontal direction that has puzzled many observers, and is in this way clarified. The arms were folded across the body in the orthodox manner of the period.

And to forestall doubts on the origin of the ammoniacal vapours mentioned above, the professor explains that they were caused by the fermentation of an area which would be a normal reaction during the anguish of pain and fever."

A point not mentioned by M. de Benouville may be here cleared. Sceptics have asserted that although the markings are not paint it looks as if the tints were obtained by working on a stone or raised wooden statue. Artists in the 13th century often did this by passing an aloes tint over the surface of a statue; the tissue was then stretched over it and pressed lightly with the hands so that it absorbed the colorant. Projecting parts gave a brown tint to the tissue while the rest remained white.

This tinting theory has been answered by pointing out that the markings are not superficial and that each thread is completely impregnated. Evidence, therefore, is in favour of M. de Benouville's startling caption to his article: "I Saw the Photograph of Jesus."

"MINERVA"

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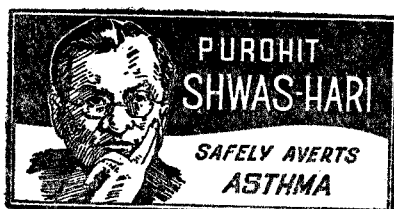
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( 29 )

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- Q: 1. In recent years art and poetry have considerably freed themselves from the stress of intellectuality which so strongly dominated their seeing and expression in the nineteenth century and have turned more and more to the dynamic force of life for inspiration and creation. Is this a turn in the right direction?
- A: "The demand for life, for action, the tendency to a pragmatic and vitalistic view of things, a certain strenuous and even strident note has been loud enough in recent years. Life, action, vital power are great indispensable things but to get back to them by thinking less is a way not open to us in the age of time, even if it were a desirable remedy for our disease of intellectuality and a mechanised existence. In fact we do not think less than the men of the past generation but much more insistently with a more packed and teeming thought, with a more eager desire absorbed hunting of the mind along all the royal high-roads and alluring by-ways of life. And it could not be otherwise. The veritable school of poetry which insists on actual life as the subject-matter of the poet carries into it with or without conscious intention the straining of the thought mind after something quite other than the obvious sense of the things it tries to force into relief, some significance deeper than what either the observing reason or the normal life-sense gives to our first or our second view of existence."
- Q: 2. But is it not a fact that the predominance of the thinking intellect however fruitful it may prove for the development of science and practical utilities, is very unfavourable to the creation of art or poetry and that a turning towards life is essential to restore their creative vigour?
- A: "The intellect moves naturally between two limits, the abstractions or solving analyses of the reason and the domain of positive and practical reality; its great achievements are in these two fields or in a mediation between them, and it can do most and go farthest, can achieve its most native and characteristic and therefore its greatest and completest work either in philosophy or in Science. The age of developed intellectualism in Greece killed poetry; it ended in the comedy of Menander, the intellectual artificialities of Alexandrianism, the last flush of beauty in the aesthetic pseudo-naturalism of the Sicilian pastoral poetry; philosophy occupied the field. In the more rich and complex modern mind this result could not so easily come and has not yet come. At the same time the really great, perfect and securely characteristic work of the age has not been in the field of art and poetry, but in critical thought and science. Criticism and science, by a triumphant force of abstraction and analysis turned on the world of positive fact, have in this period been able to become enormously effective for life. They have been able to reign sovereignly, not so much by their contributions to pure knowledge, but by their practical, revolutionary and constructive force. If modern thought with its immense scientific achievement has not enriched life at its base or given it a higher and purer action,—it has only created a yet unrealised possibility in that direction by its idealistic side,—it has wonderfully equipped it with powerful machinery and an imposing paraphernalia and wrought conspicuous and unprecedented changes in its superstructure. But poetry in this atmosphere has kept itself alive not by any native and spontaneous power born of agreement between its own essential spirit and the spirit of the age, but by a great effort of the imagination and aesthetic intelligence labouring for the most part to make the best of what material it could get in the shape of new thought and new viewpoints for the poetic criticism or the thoughtful presentation of life. It has been an aesthetic byplay rather than a leading or sometimes even premier force in the cultural life of the race such as it was in the ancient ages and even, with a certain limited action, in more recent times."
- Q: 3. Does this mean that there is a basic incompatibility between intellect and poetry?
- A: "The pure intellect cannot create poetry. The inspired or the imaginative reason does indeed play an important, sometimes a leading part, but even that can only be a support or an influence; the thinking mind may help to give a final shape, a great and large form, *sammahema manishayā*, as the Vedic poets said of the mantra, but the word must start first from a more intimate sense in the heart of the inner being, *hridā tashtam*: it is the spirit within and not the mind without that is the fount of poetry. Poetry too is an interpreter of truth, but in the forms of an innate beauty, and not so much of intellectual truth, the truths offered by the critical mind, as of the intimate truth of being. It deals not so much with things thought as with things seen, not with the authenticities of the analytic mind, but with the authenticities of the synthetic vision and the seeing spirit. The abstractions, generalisations, minute precisions of our ordinary intellectual cerebration are no part of its essence or texture; but it has others, more luminous, more subtle, those which come to us after passing through the medium and getting drenched in the light of the intuitive and revealing mind. And therefore when the general activity of thought runs predominantly into the former kind, the works of the latter are apt to proceed under rather anaemic conditions, they are affected by the pervading atmosphere; poetry either ceases or falls into a minor strain or takes refuge in virtuositities of its outer instruments and aids or, if it still does any considerable work, lacks the supreme spontaneity, the natural perfection, the sense of abundant ease or else of sovereign mastery which the touch of the spirit manifests even amidst the fullest or austere labour of its creation."
- Q: 4. Can poetry really overcome this limitation by refraining altogether from thinking and turning solely to life? Is it not possible to harmonise thought and life at a higher level and make them both authentic powers for poetic creation?
- A: "The way out lies not in cessation of thinking and the turn to a strenuous description of life, nor even in a more vitally forceful thinking, but in another kind of thought mind. The filled activity of the thinking mind is as much part of life as that of the body and vital and emotional being, and its growth and predominance are a necessary stage of human progress and man's self-evolution. To go back from it is impossible or, if possible, would be undesirable, a lapse and not a betterment of our spirit. But the full thought-life does not come by the activity of the intellectual reason and its predominance. That is only a step by which we get above the first immersion in the activity and excitement and vigour of the life and the body and give ourselves a first freedom to turn to a greater and higher reach of the fullness of existence. And that higher reach we gain when we get above the limited crude physical mind, above the vital power and its forceful thought and self-vision, above the intellect and its pondering and measuring reason, and tread the illumined realm of an intuitive and spiritual thinking, an intuitive feeling, sense and vision. This is not that vital intuition which is sometimes confused with a much broader, loftier, vaster and more seeing power, but the high original power itself, a supra-intellectual and spiritual intuition. The all-informing spirit, when found in all its fullness, heals the scission between thought and life, the need of a just balance between them disappears, instead there begins a new and luminous and joyful fusion and oneness. The spirit gives us not only a greater light of truth and vision, but the breath of a greater living; for the spirit is not only the self of our consciousness and knowledge, but the great self of life. To find our self and the self of things is not to go through a rarefied ether of thought into Nirvana, but to discover the whole greatest integral power of our complete existence."

K. G.