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"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

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THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE OF KOREA

In Korea the corner has perhaps not been definitely turned yet by the U.N. forces. The fight around Pusan is bitter and the North Koreans are still pressing upon the Americans in various sectors with a view to throwing them into the sea or boxing them up on the south coast. But General MacArthur's army has put a brake on the Communist advance in several places and is even actually piercing the North Korean lines at certain important points. At least the avowed Communist plan to liquidate the South Korean democracy by August 15 has failed and we may reasonably predict that the G.I.'s will slowly roll back the aggressors. The time, therefore, is not unripe for asking: When the G.I.'s reach the 38th Parallel, will this cartographer's-term have any validity? What will be the future of Korea?

Truman and the 38th Parallel

At the commencement of hostilities America's undertaking to carry out the Security Council's resolutions against North Korea was understood as police action to restore the *status quo ante*. In other words, there was to be no crossing of the 38th Parallel, no occupation of North Korean territory. Unless unforeseen circumstances take a hand in the matter, compelling a change of decision, we may suppose that Truman will stick to the terms of this interpretation. But let us realise clearly that there are certain conditions which must be fulfilled to give these terms their true meaning. Just to drive back the North Korean army beyond the old line of demarcation could never be the aim of the Herculean labour accepted by the Americans in those first few days when South Korea seemed as good as lost. A mere going home of the army that has defied the Security Council and relentlessly pushed on in its ambition to overrun the whole of Korea would be a ridiculous *finale* to the music America took upon herself to face. If North Korea remains in any position to bide time for a second attack, the war will have been fought in vain. If its army retreats in fairly good shape and can be reorganised in the future, there will be a perilous inconclusiveness in the whole campaign of saving South Korea from the heel of Communist tyranny. The Northern army must be completely broken and whatever of it escapes slaughter or capture must unconditionally surrender. Not a vestige of the military machine must survive in North Korea. That is the first indispensable condition. And it is not without an eye to this condition that Northern industrial targets have been ceaselessly plastered from the air.

The second *sine qua non* is that those in power in the North should admit the U.N. Commission within their borders. The 38th Parallel was never intended to be a permanent line of division. It was a temporary arrangement during the surrender of Japan: Japanese troops north of this latitude were to lay down their arms to the Russians, those south of it to the Americans. A short occupation of the northern territory by the Russians and of the southern by the Americans was to follow. But the real aim was all along to unify the country by a democratic plebiscite. When the Russians sought to convert the provisional dividing line into an Iron Curtain and the prospect of an overall plebiscite began to fade, the U.N. was called in. South Korea allowed the U.N.'s Commission to supervise its elections and to see that they were not "rigged", but North Korea refused to hold any truck with this international body and imposed the Communist Party's rule at the point of the bayonet. Even the withdrawal of the Occupation troops was done without letting the U.N. representatives confirm it. We had international testimony that the Americans had quitted Korea: there was no acceptable evidence that the Russians had left. As soon as Kim Il-sung's forces have been rendered innocuous and his government has capitulated, the accredited U.N. Commission must take charge of all North

Korea and ensure that a free plebiscite is held over the entire Korean peninsula with a view to unifying the country under a popularly chosen government. Unless this is agreed to and the original post-war objective of Korean unification by democratic means is reacknowledged, Truman would not be obliged to halt at the 38th Parallel. The *status quo ante* can signify nothing more than that an American military occupation of North Korea would not take place and that the dividing line will remain in force as a temporary measure as it originally was meant to be. There is no implication here that a Communist armed dictatorship will continue or that the North and the South will not be democratically unified under the eyes of the U.N. Commission. If such an absurd and frustrating implication is attempted to be read, MacArthur will be fully justified in marching right over the 38th Parallel up to the Manchurian border and within easy aircraft-range of Vladivostok.

Stalin and the U.N. Commission

Will Stalin allow the U.N. Commission to operate over the North no less than the South? Well, if he does not, the only alternative before him is to permit MacArthur's presence close to the Soviet frontier. Truman's immediate acceptance of the Communist challenge in Korea has shown the stuff the American democracy is made of. Never did the Kremlin dream that the terrible hazards of helping South Korea would be heroically faced by the G.I.'s. Stalin has been forced to sit up and take notice of Truman's readiness to meet him anywhere in the world. Unless he wants an atomic world war in which Russia, for all her manpower and tanks, will certainly be out-bombed and in the end go the way of Hitler's Germany because of her inferiority both in atomic stock-piles and in economic resources, he will think a dozen times before venturing to interfere in Korea after the Northern forces have met their doom.

And he will most probably desist from a global armed commitment because of one other sign of strength displayed by Truman: the decision to defend Formosa. Panicky thinkers have again and again pointed at this last stronghold of Nationalist China and deplored Truman's despatch of the Seventh Fleet to guard it from invasion by Mao's Reds. They have exclaimed: "Truman is going beyond the need of the moment and dangerously provoking Red China. If Red China undertakes to invade Formosa and comes into conflict with the American Navy, Russia will be bound by treaty obligations to enter the fray and then the whole world's fat will be in the fire! Not Korea but Formosa is the danger-spot from which World War III will issue." The truth, however, is that Truman's prompt answer to the strategic necessity of neutralising Formosa while the Korean battle is in progress is a gesture whose boldness as well as foresight has taken Stalin's and Mao's breath away. It plainly means that, on top of having a sharp military vision, he is not in the least afraid of the risk of a global conflagration if by taking that risk the Communist master-plan of world-conquest can be upset at the very start. It clearly argues that, whatever the initial flourish of a victorious stride by Russia's land colossus towards the Atlantic Channel ports or of a triumphant swarming of Mao's millions across South-East Asia, there is no doubt in Truman's mind on the final upshot. His decision about Formosa, therefore, is one of the strongest deterrents against Russia's world-ambition, a most effective quencher of the destructive flames preparing to leap out of the Kremlin, a really potent factor in localising the Korean clash and impressing on Stalin's mind the prudence of non-interference with any work by the U.N. Commission for the future of all Korea.

THE COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

A SURVEY AND STOCK-TAKING

By MALCOLM MACDONALD

The following is the text of a talk broadcast a short while ago by the Commissioner-General for the United Kingdom in South-East Asia over Radio Malaya.

It is more than two years since the Russian and other leaders of international Communism loosed a vigorous offensive upon Asia. They did it then because Russian ambitions in the Western world had just received a serious setback. The sturdy democratic nations of Western Europe and North America organized themselves in peaceful but firm resistance to the monstrous spread of Russian imperialism and Communism across Europe. That spread has been stopped in its tracks ever since.

Naturally the tyrants in Moscow did not like this. They at once switched part of their restless energies from the Occident to the Orient. They sought to continue in the East the advance which was brought to a standstill in the West. So a Communist offensive in Asia began.

Co-Ordinated Plan

Communist armies in China pushed southwards from the northern regions which until then were the limits of their conquest. Communist conspirators in India sought to overthrow Pandit Nehru's Government by violent industrial and political action. The Communists in Indo-China hotted up their rebellion. The Communist Party in Burma began an armed revolt. Communist terrorists in Malaya launched a campaign of banditry and murder. Communist leaders in Java tried to capture by force the Republican Government of Indonesia.

That was two years ago. The outbreaks occurred more or less simultaneously. It was no coincidence or accident, but the result of a coordinated plan, originating in Moscow and communicated to the local leaders of Communism in the various countries concerned.

You will note two things about this Communist offensive. First, it is not a movement to support the great cause of Asian political freedom. On the contrary, Communism opposes the desire of the Asian peoples to be independent, sovereign nations governing their own affairs. For example, the Communists in India strive ceaselessly to overthrow Pandit Nehru's free Government of India. The Communists in Burma fight bitterly to destroy Thakin Nu's free Government of Burma. The Communists in Indonesia conspire to defeat President Soekarno and the free Government of Indonesia. In the same way, the Communists in Malaya range themselves against the hopeful endeavour to create here a free, united Malayan nation which shall in due course be self-governing.

Allegiance to Moscow

The fact is that the Communists throughout Southern Asia do not owe their primary allegiance to their own countries. They owe it to foreign Communist powers. Their victory would spell the subservience of their countries to an alien Government, in the same way as the Communists in Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries in Eastern Europe have made their countries slaves of Russia.

We are witnessing in the world today a resurgence of Russian imperialism, eager to conquer the earth. This historical phenomenon has appeared periodically during recent centuries. The only difference

now is that it masquerades under new leadership with a new name. Instead of being Tsars, the leaders are Commissars. Instead of preaching Pan-Slavism, they proclaim Communism. Their agents throughout the world are the local Communist "fifth-columns" in every land. The terrorists in Malaya are typical anti-national, anti-democratic running dogs of this Russian imperialism.

The second thing to note about them and their friends is this: it would be quite unnecessary for them to try to overthrow existing Governments in Southern Asia by force, if the people of Southern Asia felt any voluntary desire for Communism. Did such a desire exist, the Communist way of life could come in these countries by peaceful, constitutional means, with the consent of the peoples. It is only because the populations of all these countries feel an aversion to Communism that the local Communists, assisted by their foreign allies, have to try to impose their wishes by violence.

Recourse to Arms

Russian technique in these situations follows the same pattern all over the world. The Communist minority in a country stirs up trouble. Communist propaganda from Moscow and elsewhere represents the affair as a national uprising of the local people. The Russians and their friends hope that the effort will make such progress that it is worth while for foreign Communists to intervene, to give such aid in arms and men as ensures victory. That is what they expected to happen in Burma, Indo-China, Malaya and other South-East Asian countries.

At this point let me make a general comment on the present situation. The events of the last two years have been deeply disappointing to all of us who hoped to see uninterrupted peaceful economic and political progress throughout the region. It is tragic that once happy populations should suffer the distress and danger brought to them at Communist instigation. And it is a matter of grave concern that in several countries, including Malaya, the outlaws have not been suppressed. We must not attempt to minimise the seriousness of that fact. But at the same time it is revealing sometimes to study the situation through the enemy's eyes, to get a glimpse of his hopes and fears. And certainly, if the turn of events in South-East Asia has been disappointing to us, it is probably even more disappointing to the Communists.

They have gained, of course, one victory in Asia of gigantic importance. Almost the whole mainland of China, with its multitudinous population, is now under their control. They have advanced to the borders of Southern Asia. But beyond those borders they have experienced more defeats than victories. They have scored no success in Pakistan. Their efforts to stir up formidable trouble in India have been thwarted. They have gained no ground in Ceylon. And in the countries of South-East Asia they have so far had much less success than they hoped for.

Important Gateways

Let me tell you what has happened recently in South-East Asian coun-

tries surrounding Malaya. First let me report on lands to the north—on Burma and Indo-China. They are extremely important, for they lie along the frontier with Communist China. If Communists from the North wished to interfere in a major way in South-East Asian affairs, Burma is one gateway and Indo-China the other through which they might enter. If these gateways are firmly secured against penetration from outside, the whole of South-East Asia is better protected. But if these gateways fell under Communist assaults, the way would be open for Red progress towards Siam and the south.

That is why local Communists in Burma and Indo-China have made such strenuous efforts to upset the Governments in their countries. That is why Communist propagandists in Moscow and elsewhere have given tremendous publicity to their attempts, perpetually exaggerating the local Communists' strength, brazenly misrepresenting them as leaders of potent National movements, and hopefully prophesying their early complete triumph.

What, in fact, has been happening in those two countries in recent months? I have visited them both lately, and studied the situations on the spot. I can tell you that in each during the last few months the local Communists have gradually lost ground, supporters and prestige.

Strife in Burma

Consider Burma first. Since early 1948 the Communists have maintained an armed revolt against the Burmese Government. They would have had little success if other critics of the Government had not staged separate uprisings of their own. In particular, the Karens took up arms, believing that this would help them to secure their aim of an autonomous Karen State within the Burmese Union. The Karens are not Communists. They are zealously anti-Communists, and could probably be counted upon to oppose any serious Communist threat.

Nevertheless, their rebellion indirectly aided the Communists, for the Government could not exert its full military strength against the Communists and at the same time fight the Karens. So the Communists were able to continue their struggle longer than would otherwise have been the case. A sort of stalemate developed, with the Government in authority over most of Burma, but the Communists virtually controlling some important areas and the Karens controlling others. That was the situation at the beginning of this year.

Since then the Government has won some striking successes. First, they inflicted a defeat on the Karens, driving them from strongholds which they held on the famous road to Mandalay. The Government have regained control of the valuable road and rail communications linking Rangoon with northern Burma, and the Karens in the region have retreated into the hills.

Afterwards the Government turned its main force against the Communists, who occupied Prome on the other vital artery of Burmese national life, the great Irrawaddy River. It drove the Communists out of Prome and off the river. So the Govern-

ment exerts its authority again in important territory previously held by the enemy, and the Communists have dispersed into the countryside. Considerable surrenders of Karens and Communists continue to take place. There is even a possibility of a settlement by negotiation of the dispute between the Government and the Karens.

The strife in Burma is probably by no means ended. Doubtless the Communist leaders will attempt a come-back. The situation is fluid, with fortunes liable to shift this way or that. But for the time being at least the Communists are weakened, and the national, democratic forces opposing them are strengthened. The Burmese gateway into South-East Asia is rather more firmly held than it was before.

Retreat in Indo-China

What has been happening during the same period in Indo-China? There too, for many months past, the Communists have been retreating.

There are three States in Indo-China—Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos—all hitherto governed by a French Administration. In each there is a nationalist movement, seeking to achieve self-government. The movement is particularly strong in Viet-Nam, the most populous and wealthy of the States. But the Nationalists in Viet-Nam are divided between two opposing political camps. One is led by Ho Chi Minh, the well-known Moscow-trained Communist. If he had his way, Indo-China would be freed from French rule only to fall under the heel of Russia, to become a satellite subservient in every way to Moscow's will. Indo-China would not be free at all.

The other part of the nationalist movement is led by Bao Dai. He wishes his countrymen to be free from either Colonial rule by the French or Communist rule by the Russians. However, knowing that a small nation by itself in this dangerous world would be helpless, he wishes Indo-China to maintain with France the same sort of friendly, mutually beneficial partnership which the nations in the British Commonwealth maintain with Britain. In fact, if he has his way Indo-China will be completely free, with good guarantees of its freedom.

Communist propaganda represents Ho Chi Minh as the commanding National leader, supported by 90 per cent. of the Indo-Chinese people. It describes Bao Dai as a craven puppet with no support at all. Luckily in Malaya we know how little we need believe Communist propaganda. We know how it distorts the truth about Malaya. Its picture of Indo-China is just as viciously misleading.

Ho's Prestige Damaged

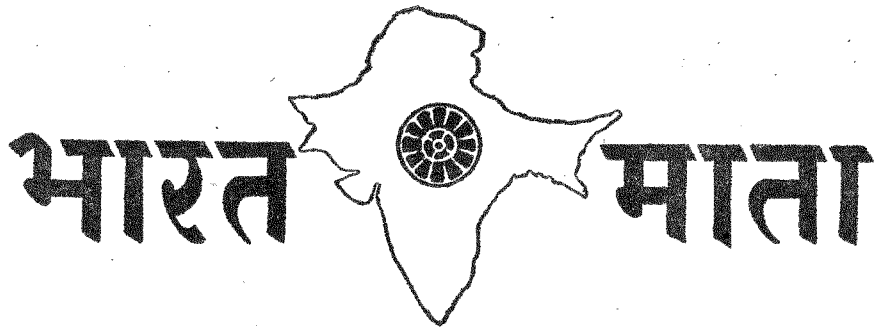
It is true that Ho Chi Minh once received the support of a large majority of the Indo-Chinese, who thought him a national patriot unfettered by foreign commitments. But that view of him is changing. Let me summarise the four principal developments of the year. I myself have seen something of them during two visits to Indo-China.

First, French troops and Bao Dai's

Continued on page 4

मातृवाणी

कर्म में जो कठिनाइयाँ आती हैं वे परिस्थितियों से या बाहरी तुच्छ घटनाओं से नहीं आती, बल्कि वे आंतरिक भाव (विशेषकर प्राणगत भाव) की किल्ली चीज से आती हैं जो भाव कि अनुचित होता है—जैसे अहंकार, महत्वाकांक्षा, कर्म के



'मदर इंडिया'—हिन्दी पूर्ति : : : सितम्बर २, १९५०.

विषय में मानसिक धारणाओं की कठोरता इत्यादि-इत्यादि। यह बराबर ही कहीं उतम है कि असा-मंगल्य—जेमेलपन को दूर करने के लिये उसके कारण को दूबरे या दूबरो के भीतर खोजने की अपेक्षा स्वयं अपने भीतर खोजा जाय।

—श्री माताजी।

सम्पादकीय

कोरिया के भविष्य पर कुछ इशारे।

जान पड़ता है कि कोरिया में अमरीकी फौजों ने अभी निश्चित रूप से पास नहीं पलटा है। पूसन के आस पास करारो लड़ाई चल रही है, और उत्तरी कोरियन कई इलाकों में अमरीकी अमरीकनों को दबाये जा रहे हैं। मानों कि या तो वे अमरीकनों को समुद्र में फेंक देना चाहते हैं या फिर उन्हें दक्षिणी समुद्र तट पर डकेल देना चाहते हैं। पर जनरल मेक-आर्थर की सेना ने कई स्थलों पर उत्तर कोरियनों को रोक अवरुध दिया है और कहीं कहीं उसकी फौजें उत्तर कोरिया में घुसी भी रही हैं। कम से कम १५ अगस्त को दक्षिण कोरियन प्रजातन्त्र को सत्ता कर देने की साम्यवादी योजना विफल अवश्य हो गई है और हमें आशा है कि धीरे-धीरे दक्षिण कोरियन सेनायें आक्रमण कारियों को उलट कर देश से निकाल बाहर करेगी।

युद्धरम्भ के समय 'सुरक्षा समिति' के प्रस्ताव के अनुसार दक्षिण कोरिया केवल पुलिस-कार्यवादी का कर्तव्य-पालन करने आगे बढ़ा था, उत्तर कोरिया पर अधिकार करने का प्रश्न उसके सामने नहीं था। कोई असाधारण परिस्थिति घटित हो जाय तो बात दूसरी है, अन्यथा टू.मैन अपनी कार्यवाही में इस मर्यादा को हर सुत नहीं लाँचेंगे। यदि उत्तर कोरिया दूसरे हमले के इशतजार में खामोश रह कर समय गुजार देता है तो कहना होगा कि यह लड़ाई व्यर्थ ही लड़ी गई। यदि उसकी फौजें अधिकार रूप में विश्राम ग्रहण कर लेती हैं, तो कम्युनिस्ट जालिम के पंजों तले से दक्षिण कोरिया की रक्षा का सारा 'कैम्पेन' एक खतरनाक निःसारता के रूप में सामने आयेगा। उत्तरी कोरिया की फौजों को समुचा ही नष्ट कर देना होगा और उसका जो भाग कल्ल या गिर-फतारी से बच निकले उसे बिलशत आत्म-समर्पण करना चाहिए। उत्तर कोरिया में सैनिक-शक्ति का एक टुकड़ा भी नहीं बच रहना चाहिए। यही सबसे पहली और अनिवार्य शर्त है।

दूसरी शर्त यह है कि उत्तर कोरिया के सत्ता-धिकारियों को अपनी शरध्वों में यू.नो-कमीशन को प्रवेश करा लेना होगा। ३८-समानान्तर को विभाजन की स्थायी रेखा कभी कसर नहीं दिया गया। जापान के आत्म-समर्पण के समय की गई वह एक स्थायी व्यवस्था भर थी। तत्कालीन शासन संचालन के लिये उत्तर कोरिया और दक्षिण कोरिया रूस और अमरीका के बीच आधे-आधे बाँट लिये गये थे। पर अन्ततः पेशा यही था कि प्रजातांत्रिक चुनाव द्वारा एक अखंड कोरिया का निर्माण किया जाये। जब रूसियों ने इस शरध पर अपने तानाशाही शासन का लोहानी परदा तान दिया तब 'यू.नो' को कोरिया में दखल देना पड़ा। दक्षिण कोरिया ने अपने चुनावों में 'यू.नो' के अनुशासन का पालन किया पर उत्तर कोरिया ने 'यू.नो' को अपने बहाँ दखल देने से इनकार कर दिया और संगीन की नोकों के बल उता कोरिया में कम्युनिस्ट राज कायम कर दिया। इस बात की अन्तर-राष्ट्रीय गवाही मौजूद है कि अमरीकी फौजें दक्षिण कोरिया

लुप्त कर चली गई थीं, जब कि रूसी सेनाओं के उत्तर कोरिया छोड़ने का कोई प्रमाण नहीं मिलता। किम-इल सुंग की फौजों के विश्राम लेने के साथ ही यदि यू.नो कमीशन समुचे उत्तर कोरिया पर पूर्ण अधिकार करके वहाँ की प्रजा के जनतांत्रिक चुनाव द्वारा कोरिया में स्वतन्त्र सरकार स्थापित नहीं करता, तब तक टू.मैन को ३८-समानान्तर पर रुक जाने को बाध्य नहीं होना चाहिए। नहीं तो इस स्थिति-स्थापकता का अर्थ तो इससे अधिक और कुछ न होगा कि पहले की तरह ही उत्तर और दक्षिण कोरिया के बीच एक अस्थायी विभाजनरेखा बनी रहेगी। तब तो यह बात जरा भी साक नहीं होती कि उत्तर में साम्यवादी तानाशाही बनी रहेगी या फिर 'यू.नो' कमीशन की दृष्टि-बले अखण्ड स्वतन्त्र कोरिया का निर्माण होगा।

यदि स्टैलिन उत्तर कोरिया में 'यू.नो' का दखल नहीं स्वीकारेगा तो मेक-आर्थर की सेनाओं के लिए सोवियत की सरहद पर आ डटने के सिवाय

लिये जो सप्तम बेड़ा भेजा है उसकी निन्दा की है। उनका कहना है कि इस तरह टू.मैन लाल चीन को संघर्ष के लिए भड़का रहे हैं और चीन यदि युद्ध पर आयादा हुआ तो सन्धि शर्तों के अनुसार रूस उसकी मदद को वाक्य हो जायगा और अन्ततः तीसरे युद्ध का लंका कांड अारम्भ हो जायगा; इस अर्थ में तीसरे युद्ध के खतरे का सच्चा स्थल असल में कोरिया न होकर फॉरमोसा ही है। पर सच बात तो यह है कि यदि ऐसा कदम उठाने से साम्यवादी विश्व विजय के सुत्रपात को मूल में ही कुठाराघात दिया जा सकता है तो टू.मैन विश्व-युद्ध की जोखिम उठाकर भी उसे करने से चूकेगा नहीं। रूस और चीन के वर्तमान सैन्य-आन्दोलन चाहे जितने ही प्रबल और आतंककारी क्यों न हो, टू.मैन जानता है कि अंतिम विजय उसी की है। फॉरमोसा के सम्बन्ध में टू.मैन का निर्णय रूस की विश्व-विजयीकांक्षा के भाग में सबसे बड़ी बाधा है, क्रैमलीन की राजसी जिह्वा से लपलपा कर विस्फो

सकता है? महमूद तुम तो केवल एक भारवाहक बैल के समान ही रहे। तुम्हारी राज सभा में अनेक विद्वानों और गुणोजनों की मजलिस तो जरूर बम गई थी किन्तु तुम न तो उनके ज्ञान का या गुणों का रसास्वादन ही कर पाये और न उनकी मध्यांदा ही जानी।

महमूद : मेरी कभी वैसी इच्छा भी नहीं हुई। मुझे तो अपने लिए केवल बहार और अलंकार ही चाहिए थे। जिस प्रकार गजनी को सजाने के लिए मैं विदेशियों के भंडारों में से धीरे-धीरे खजाने छीन लाया था अपने अन्तःपुर को रम-णोरत्नों से समृद्ध किया था उसी प्रकार अपने दर-बार की शोभा बढ़ाने के लिए ही मैंने तुम्हारी भाँति बातों और कलम के शूरवीरों का आयोजन किया था। बस और कुछ नहीं। अच्छा फिरदौसी उस बात को जाने दो। पर कम से कम तुम तो यह नहीं कह सकते कि तुम्हारे अर्थलोखता मुझसे किसी कदर भी कम नहीं थी। बल्कि मैं तो सम-झता हूँ कि तुम भी अपनी बातों का मुख्य धन से ही कूतते हो। विचारे तुम लोग भी दो चार धातु के टुकड़ों के लिए कितने कातर हो उठते हो।

फिरदौसी : कवि की वाणी का मोल सोने चाँदी के टुकड़ों से नहीं लगाया जाता है और कवि का दुःख भी इसके लिए नहीं है। कवि को दुःख है केवल सनुष्य की सुखता के लिए, तुम्हारी तरह शूरवीरों के मस्तक में मस्तिष्क का इतना अभाव होने के कारण, तुम्हारे प्राणों में बूढ़ भर भी रस न होने के कारण। स्वर्गिक सम्पदा से भी बड़ कर काव्य के लिए तुम्हारे हृदय में कितना आदर था, इसी का बिन्ध भी तुम्हारी वह मुट्टी भर भीख। मैं धन के लिए कभी कातर नहीं हुआ, मेरे मर्म पर तो आघात किया था काव्य की लांछना ने। आबू-सिना ने पहिले ही तुम्हारी कद्रदानी समझली थी इसीलिए वह तुम्हारे हाथ नहीं आया। महमूद, गजनी सहित तुम्हारा सारा साम्राज्य देकर भी शायद मेरी एक गजलका यथेष्ट सम्मान न हो पाता।

महमूद : शाबाश, तुम लोग वागीर तो हो ही परन्तु ऐसी वीरता जिन्यों के ही लायक है। कवि और नारी दोनों शायद एक ही स्तर के प्राणी हैं। संसार के भीषण संघर्ष और तुफान या कर्म जीवन की ल लपट और पृथिवी की धूल मिट्टी तुम लोगों को न तो सहन ही होती है और न शोभा ही देता है। इसीलिए राजा या बादशाहों का कर्तव्य है कि तुम लोगों को अपनी छत्र छाया में रख कर तुम्हारा पालन पोषण किया करें और समय सक्षय पर तुम लोगों के मुँहसे दो चार भीठी बातें सुन कर शरीर एवं मन का विश्राम लें और अपना दिल खुश करें।

फिरदौसी : छूटेरे, तू क्या जाने बागी की महिमा। बागी द्वारा कवि जिस छन्द, स्वर सहरी या शिखर की सृष्टि करता है वह तो स्वयं भगवान की कलाकृति सा ही सुन्दर एवं अमरकारिक है कवि की बागी में सारा विश्व आयत हो जाता है। बागी द्वारा ही संसार की उत्पत्ति है; कवि की बागी भगवान की दृष्टि को ही मुक्त करती है। कवि की बागी ही भगवान की आँखों की ज्योति है।

महमूद : तुम लोगों की सृष्टि होती है हवामें, आकाश में, जल में। फिरदौसी, जिसे तुम दस्यु कहते हो, उसने तुमसे भी बड़े काव्य की सृष्टि की है। पर मेरा काव्य तुम्हारी तरह काव्य पर (शेष पृष्ठ ४ पर)

यहां : वहां

मन रे जीवन की बाग मरोड़।

देख लुका तू चमन यहां का

चल देखें अब चमन वहां का

जग में स्वर्ण सुखों से बड़ कर योग्य कमाने क्या कुछ और ?

★

लहरों के संग उठना गिरना

पल में जीना पल में मरना

तज इन दोलों को चल देखें योग्य कमाने क्या कुछ और ?

★

श्वान—भोग शतवर्ष अपेक्षा—

नहीं लाख गुण क्या है अच्छा

चमका जीवन ज्योति एक क्षण, खोना शूली पर अतिधोर ?

—श्री नारायण प्रसाद जी "विन्दु"

और कोई चारा नहीं रह जायगा। कोरिया में साम्यवादी चुनौती को टू.मैन ने जिस तपाक से स्वीकार कर लिया उसी से पता चल जाता है कि अमरीकी प्रजातन्त्र किस धातु का बना है? उत्तर कोरियन फौजें जब पराजित हो चुकेगीं तो स्टैलिन फिर कभी मूलकर भी कोरिया में दखलगीरी करने की बात नहीं सोचेगा। क्यों कि वह जानता है कि उसके बाद कोरिया में हाथ डालना आणविक युद्ध को निमन्त्रण देना है और आणविक युद्ध में अपनी सारी जन-शक्ति और शस्त्र-शक्ति के बावजूद भी रूस अमरीका की एक ही फूत्कार में सत्यानास का प्राप्त हो जायगा, इस बात को स्टैलिन खूब अच्छी तरह समझता है। रूस विश्व-युद्ध की जोखिम उठाने में इसलिये भी हिचकेंगा कि उसने टू.मैन की उस शक्ति का परिचय पा लिया है जिसके द्वारा उसने फॉरमोसा की रक्षा करने का निश्चय कर रखा है। भयभीत चिन्तकों ने बार-बार राष्ट्रीय चीन के इस अन्तिम दुर्ग की ओर संकेत किया है और टू.मैन ने जो इसकी रक्षा के

टिंट होने वाली विनाशक अग्नि को बुझाने के लिये यह एक अत्यन्त प्रभावशाली फूत्कार है।

(मदर-इण्डिया के सम्पादकीय से अनुदित)

सुल्ताना महमूद—फिरदौसी

[श्री नलिनी कान्त गुप्त]

महमूद : फिरदौसी, धन्य है तुम्हारी कविता शक्ति! कितनी आध से मैंने तुमको अपना राज कवि बनाया था। तुमने जिन अलौकिक अभिनव गुणों से मुझे विभूषित कर दिया था, स्तुति की जिस छटा से मुझे गौरवान्वित किया था, वह मैं कभी भी नहीं भूल सकूंगा। धन्यवाद! तुम्हें खरीदने की भाँति मुनाफे का सौदा मैंने जिन्दगी में कभी नहीं किया। मेरा धन भी शायद कभी ऐसा सार्थक नहीं हुआ।

फिरदौसी : तुम सा अर्थलोलुप नरपिशाच-जिसकी सारी जिन्दगी लूट मार में ही गुजरी हो, धन की सार्थकता के अतिरिक्त और समझ ही क्या

श्री अरविन्द और विश्वयुद्ध

शेषांश

ले०—श्री वशिष्ठ

“भारत छोड़ो” आन्दोलन के असफल हो जाने पर बौखलाई हुई आसुरी शक्तियों ने वस्तु-स्थिति का अध्ययन किया और जिस तिस की तत्कालीन प्रकृति के अनुसार प्रेरणा देनी आरम्भ कर दी। ‘भारत छोड़ो’ आन्दोलन से मुँहलाये हुये अंग्रेजों को प्रेरित किया, कांफ्रेसी विशेषकर हिन्दुओं की दबाने के लिए तथा मुसलमानों विशेषतः लीगियों को उठाने के लिये। देव शक्ति का कोई सुझाव अंगरेजों को अनुकूल प्रतीत न हुआ फिर भी देव शक्ति ने पर्याप्त नियन्त्रण स्थापित कर लिया, मुँहलाये हुये अंगरेज तो आसुरी शक्तियों की कुप्रेरणा से समस्त देश अर्कों को भारत सु चा कानून के अन्तर्गत कोर्ट मार्शल द्वारा मृत्यु के घाट उतारने को इयत हो सकते थे और ऐसा कर डालने पर कौन उन्हें दोष दे सकता था? जब हीरोशीमा काण्ड पर ही कोई डुङ्ग न कर सका। लीगियों को आसुरी शक्तियों ने खूब प्रोत्साहन दिया और दिया खुला, द्वन्द्व रहित क्षेत्र फैलाने के लिए। जिस प्रांत में मुसलमान १८ प्रतिशत से भी कम थे वहां सरकारों नौकरियों पर मुसलमानों का बहुमत कर दिया गया। चारों ओर से पाकिस्तान की मांग उठाई जाने लगी। देवशक्ति ने निराशा हिन्दुओं को उत्साह व आशा की अन्तः प्रेरणा ही पर स्वराज्य प्राप्ति के लिए अत्यन्त उद्युक्तता व आसक्ति के कारण आसुरी शक्ति हम फिर बहकाकर बार बार मुसलिम लोग के हितार्थ मिस्टर जिन्ना के दरवाजे पर समझौते के लिए भेजने लगी जिससे मिस्टर जिन्ना अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय ख्याति में मुसलमानों का विख्यात प्रतिनिधि हिन्दुओं के द्वारा भी माना जाकर प्रसिद्ध हो जाय और किसी प्रकार आसुरी प्रवृत्तियों को पाकिस्तान के नाम पर विभाजन करा कर खून की होली खेलने का प्रवसर हाथ लगे।

भगवती शक्ति की विजय

१९४० की प्रोग्राम क्रम में हिटलर का तुफानी उत्थान आरम्भ हुआ था फ्रांस को हस्तगत करके और १९४५ के अन्त में हिटलर का नश्वर शरीर आत्म-हत्या की गति को प्राप्त हुआ। अंगरेजों को दीवालिया, दुर्दशाग्रस्त, भगोड़ा कड़ने वाले भारतीय स्तब्ध रह गये। “अब अंगरेज भारत से नहीं निकले जा सकेंगे। हिटलर की शक्ति को जिन्होंने नष्ट भ्रष्ट कर दिया उन्हें हम निहत्थे कैसे भगा सकते हैं? हमारा दासत्व, अंगरेजों का हमारे ऊपर शासन अमर हो गया था।” यही चर्चा थी सर्वत्र धीरे धीरे या तेजी से पवित्र (August) अगस्त का महीना आया। देवशक्ति ने मानवता के, सम्भ्रता के, नैतिकता एवं संस्कृति के और सबसे अधिक आध्यात्मिक विकास के लिये अणु बम का उपयोग करा डाला। देवशक्ति ने “हुनिबादारी” की साधुता के कीर्तन की पर्वत न करके यही उचित समझा कि लाखों अमरीकन व लाखों जापानी सैनिकों, करोड़ों डालर की युद्ध सामग्री, टोकियो जैसे कई नगरों का विध्वंस न करके “हीरोशीमा” को समाप्त किया जाय। श्री कृष्ण ने रात को चोर दरवाजे से घुसकर तीन ब्राह्मणों के छद्मवेश में पदले जरासन्ध का शिष्टाचार युक्त निमन्त्रण प्रदण किया और फिर उसे ललकार कर द्वन्द्व युद्ध द्वारा भीम से मरवा डाला। दोनों ओर की अश्लील सेना बचा ली।

पर महान आश्चर्य यह है कि यह सब ताना बाना गणित की ऐसी गणना से हुआ कि जापान ने आत्म-समर्पण भी किया तो १५ अगस्त १९४५ को श्री अरविन्द के जन्म-दिवस पर जो इस देवासुर संग्राम के, इस युद्ध रथ के सारथि थे। उसी १५ अगस्त सन् १९४५ को इंग्लैंड के राजा ने घोषणा की भारत को स्वाधीन करने की। भारत को स्वराज्य, स्वाधीनता तो १९४२ के अन्त में ही मिल चुकी थी केवल कागजी कायदाही शेष थी पर हमने उस भागवत प्रसाद को संशय के बशीसुत हो अस्वीकार कर दिया था। आशुतीत की, निराशा व्यक्ति की दुविधाओं बड़ी करुणाजनक होती हैं। हमें कुछ भी मिलने की आशा नहीं थी और मिल रहा था सम्पूर्ण भारतवर्ष, इसीलिये विश्वास नहीं होता था। हाईकोर्ट से द्वारा हुआ कंगाल राज्याभिषेक के लिए बुलाया जा रहा है, यह एक प्रहस्य, एक परिहास नहीं बल्कि विद्वाने-वाला उपहास प्रतीत होता था। फिर १५ अगस्त १९४६ का वायसराय का पत्र कांग्रेस के प्रधान को आन्तरिक सरकार बनाने के लिये मिला। किन्तु हिटलर की तरह हट हट कर लड़ने वाली आसुरी शक्ति शहस्र-बाहु से सक्रिय थी। इतलिये हमारे द्वारा ख्याति व उपाधि प्राप्त कायदे आजम जिन्ना की खुरामद में कुछ दिन और निकल गये। जून १९४८ में भारत को पूर्ण स्वाधीन कर देने की घोषणा १९४६ में की गई पर देवशक्ति ने इंग्लैंड में अन्तः प्रेरणा से स्वाधीनता की तारीख जून १९४८ से पीछे हटाकर फिर वही १५ अगस्त १९४७ करा दी।

देश का विभाजन निश्चित हुआ जिसकी घोषणा वायसराय ने ३ जून १९४७ को की। उसी पर श्री अरविन्द श्रम की श्री माता जी की वाणी से निम्न शब्द स्फुटित हुए—

“भारतीय स्वाधीनता को संगठित करने में जो वठिनाइयाँ हैं उन्हें हल करने के लिए हमारे सामने एक प्रस्ताव रखा गया है, और उसे तीव्र खिन्नता तथा आशाका पूर्वक स्वीकार किया जा रहा है। परन्तु क्या तुम जानते हो कि यह प्रस्ताव हमारे सामने रखा ही क्यों गया है? हमारे आपस के भगदों की मुखता को हमें जतलाने के लिये। और क्या तुम जानते हो कि हमें यह स्वीकार क्यों करना पड़ रहा है? इसलिए कि हम अपने आप को अपने भगदों की मुखता जतला सकें।

प्रत्यक्ष ही यह समाधान नहीं है। यह एक कसौटी है, अग्नि परीक्षा है और यदि हम पूरी सच्चाई के साथ इसमें से पार उतरेंगे तो हमें प्रत्यक्ष हो जायगा कि किसी देश को टुकड़ों से बाँटकर उसकी एकता तथा महत्ता सम्पादित नहीं की जा सकती। न ही स्वार्थी को एक दूसरे के विरोध में रखकर उसकी स्मृति पैदा की जा सकती है और न ही धार्मिक रुढ़ियों को एक दूसरे के विरोध में रखने से सत्य की भावना को बढ़ाया जा सकता है। सब कुछ होते हुये भी भारत की आत्मा एक है और जब कि अभी हमें प्रतीक्षा करनी है ताकि हम यह कहने में समर्थ हो सकें कि “एक और अधिभाज्य भारतीय जय हो” हमारा नारा होना चाहिए—“भारत की आत्मा अमर हो।”

—श्री मां

श्री माता जी द्वारा १५ अगस्त १९४७ को भारत माता का आवाहन भी हमें एक पुरुष चैतन्य की ओर आकर्षित करता है—“हे हमारी मातः, हे भारत माता की आत्मा, मातः, जिसने चोरतम अवसाद के समय भी अपने बच्चों का साथ कभी नहीं छोड़ा—उस समय भी नहीं जब वे तेरे आदेश से विमुख हुये, उन्होंने अन्त्य प्रभुओं की सेवा स्वीकार की और तेरी अवहेलना की। जब कि अब वे उत्थान को प्राप्त हुए हैं और तेरे बन्धन मोचन के इस उषाकाल में तेरे मुख-मण्डल पर ज्योति विराजमान है। हम इस महान मुहूर्त में तुम्हें नमस्कार करते हैं। हमें मार्ग दिखा ताकि स्वतन्त्रता का जो व्योम क्षेत्र हमारे सामने खुल रहा है वह वास्तविक महानता तथा राष्ट्र संघ में तेरे सच्चे जीवन का व्योम क्षेत्र बने। हमें प्रेरित

कर कि हम सदा महान आदर्शों के पक्ष में रहे और आध्यात्म - मार्ग की नेत्री तथा सब जातियों की मित्र और सहायिका के रूप में तेरी सच्ची-छवि मनुष्यों को दिखावें।”

—श्री माता जी

जब १९४७ में पंजाब में भार काट हुई तब श्री माता जी के उन शब्दों का रहस्य खुला जो ३ जून १९४७ की व्यक्त वाणी के ‘अग्नि परीक्षा’ पद के साथ जुड़े थे।

श्री अरविन्द के १५ अगस्त १९४७ के सन्देश से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि उनका १९४३ में यह कहना कि “यह माता का युद्ध है” कितना प्रत्यक्ष सत्य था और जैसा कि उन्होंने अपने १५ अगस्त १९४७ के सन्देश में कहा था कि उनके जन्म दिवस १५ अगस्त पर भारत की स्वाधीनता का होना इस बात का प्रमाण है कि श्री अरविन्द के भारतीय स्वाधीनता के संकल्प से “माता” शक्ति का कितना सम्बन्ध है इससे यह भी प्रत्यक्ष हो जाता है कि “माता” द्वारा किये गये इस द्वितीय विश्व-युद्ध के हस्तक्षेप में श्री अरविन्द का कितना सहयोग था और वे इस युद्ध की गुह्य (Occult) संचालक स्थिति एवं परिणाम को अपनी दृश्य-दृष्टि से कितना स्पष्ट देख चुके थे।

श्री अरविन्द के उन तीन सपनों (संकल्पों) की पूर्ति के लिये आज किस प्रकार—यद्यपि सशक्ति व लड़खड़ाती हुई—प्रगति हो रही है जो उन्होंने १५ अगस्त १९४७ के सन्देश में प्रकट किये थे। वे हैं स्वाधीन और एकभूत भारत को जन्म देने वाला क्रांतिकारी आन्दोलन। “भारत आज स्वाधीन हो गया है पर उसने एकता प्राप्त नहीं की है.....देश का विभाजन हटना ही चाहिए.....

(१) परन्तु चाहे किसी भी उपाय से हो, चाहे किसी भी प्रकार से हो विभाजन अवश्य हटना चाहिये, एकता अवश्य स्थापित होनी चाहिए और होवेगी।

(२) एशिया के जातियों का पुनरुत्थान तथा स्वातन्त्र्य।

(३) विश्व-संघ की स्थापना।

गांधी जी के निधन पर जो सन्देश श्री अरविन्दने दिया था वह इस प्रकार था, “वह ज्योति जिसने हमें स्वतन्त्रता तक पहुँचाया, चाहे अभी एकता तक नहीं, अब भी जल रही है और तब तक जलती रहेगी जब तक कि विजय प्राप्त न कर लेगी।.....जैसे इसने हमें स्वतन्त्रता प्राप्त कराई है वैसे ही यह हमें एकता भी प्राप्त करायेगी।.....”

समय आवेगा जब विभाजन के दर हो जाने पर जनता में वैसी एकाता हो जायेगी जैसी कि एक माता के पुत्रों में “सहोदर भ्राता की सुमिका” पर होती है। किन्तु विभक्त एकता को पुनः स्थापित करना साधन पर ही निर्भर करता है ऐसे साधन भी हो सकते हैं जो विभाजन को ही दृढ़ करें, अब तक यही हुआ है। पवित्र काण्ड केवल शाम दाम से ही नहीं कभी कभी भेद, दण्ड से भी सिद्ध होते हैं पर मनुष्य अपनी धारणाओं का अनुचर है, साम, दाम का पुजारी भेद दण्ड का कण्ठ से नीचे नहीं उतार सका।

वर्तमान संकट

बंगाल को दुर्वटनाओं पर जो अभी सहा गया है वह भी हमारी गतिविधि के भविष्य की ओर संकेत करता है। उन शब्दों से जो ४-४-५० को एक साधक को लिखे गये थे वस्तु स्थिति को समझने में पर्याप्त सहयता मिलती है, “.....सुम्हें तो अन्धकारमय अवस्थायें निरुत्साहित नहीं करतीं न ही वे सुम्हें इस बात का निश्चय करतीं हैं कि “संसार को सहायता” करने का मेरा संकल्प निरर्थक है क्योंकि सुम्हें मालूम था कि ऐसी अवस्थायें आनी हैं वे विश्व प्रकृति में उपस्थित ही थीं और उनका प्रकट होना निश्चित था ताकि वे समाप्त या वृद्धित की जा सकें.....भारत स्वतन्त्र हो चुका है, और भगवान के कार्य के लिये यह आवश्यक था.....इस समय जो कठिनाइयाँ भारत को घेरे हुए हैं तथा जो कुछ समय के लिये शायद दृढ़ भी जाय विशेष कर पाकिस्तान के भ्रमेले के सम्बन्ध में, वे भी ऐसी चीज जो हैं प्रकट होनी थीं और फिर साफ की जानी थीं। यहां भी पूरी सफाई होनी निश्चित है, चाहे दुर्भाग्यवश, इस कार्य में मनुष्य को अवश्यमेव बहुत काफी संकट झेलना पड़ेगा। उसके बाद, भगवान के लिये कार्य करना अपेक्षाकृत आसान हो जायगा और यह भी खूब सम्भव है कि संसार को आध्यात्मिक प्रकाश की ओर ले जाने का स्वप्न-दवापि यह स्वप्न मात्र नहीं है—वास्तविक सत्य बन जाय। इसलिये आज इन अन्धकारमय अवस्थाओं में भी मैं यह मानने को उद्यत नहीं हूँ कि संसार की सहायता करने का मेरा संकल्प असफल होगा।” ४-४-५०

१९४२ में जो मूल सम्पूर्ण हिन्दु जनता से (हिन्दु महा सभा से भी क्यों कि उसने भी क्रिष्ण-योजना को ठुकरा दिया था हिटलर की व जापान की अवश्यम्भावी विजय की दृढ़ धारणा के कारण) हुई थी उसके परिणाम स्वरूप हम अपने देश को ही बँटवा बँटे और उस विभाजन की मार को हम आज भी रो रो कर सहन कर रहे हैं और वरें भी क्या? आर्थिक दृष्टि से आय में कमी, व्यय में वृद्धि पाकिस्तान निर्माण की घेन है। धारणाधियों ने जो आर्थिक व अन्त्य-प्रकार की दुर्दशा भोगा है वह कल्पनातीत है।

पर अब एक संकट कम्युनिज्म का और आ रहा है और पहले से भी कहीं भयानक रूप में, मानों स्टालिन ने विजय में हिटलर से छीने हुये ‘स्वस्तिक’ पर हंसुवा और हथौड़ा और बाँध दिये हैं। हिटलर व टोजो की विजय कापना करके जो मूल की थी और उसका जो दण्ड भुगतना पड़ा है वह सामने है यदि हमने स्टालिन को सहोदर साथी मान कर १९४२ जैसी कामना की तो पशुवों की लुरमें प्रचुर भूसा, खली भले ही मिल जाय (जो केवल बधन में ही सत्य है व्यवहार में वह भी नहीं) किन्तु मनुष्य का व्यक्तित्व कुछ भी नहीं रहेगा। जैसे हमारे अस्तबल और बैलखाने में बन्धे घोड़े व बैलों का अपना अपना उतना ही व्यक्तित्व होता है जितना चारा उन्हें दे दिया जाता है शायद इतना ही मनुष्य का होगा।

स्पष्ट दृष्टिगोचर हो रहा है कि मास्को का ऊंट धीरे धीरे ‘अरब’ के तम्बू में शरीर घुसाता जा रहा है। और अरब नैतिक व वैधानिक गुत्थी में उलझ रहा है। यह स्पष्ट हो रहा है कि कोरिया का युद्ध उत्तर एशिया और तत्पश्चात् दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया पर कम्युनिस्टों का आधिपत्य कायम करने का पहला प्रयास है ताकि इस महाद्वीप पर जा जाने के लिये भारत में तिब्बत के द्वार से प्रवेश किया जा सके। यदि कम्युनिस्ट यहां सफल हो गये तो समस्त पृथिवी पर क्रमशः अधिकार करने की प्रगति तब तक होती ही रहेगी जब तक अमरीका से टकरा न हो। सम्भव है मास्को का डिक्टेटर अमरीका के साथ संघर्ष को कूटनीति से टालता रहे। किन्तु यदि अमरीका के साथ मिलकर समस्त अकम्युनिस्ट राष्ट्रों ने इस कोरिया-युद्ध

(शेष पृष्ठ ४ पर)

युद्ध के बाद

श्री अरविन्द

अनु० श्री अनन्दीलाल जी तिवारी

महायुद्ध समाप्त हुए कुछ समय हो चुका है, उसकी भयंकरता अतीत की ओट में छिपने लगी है। हमारे चारों ओर अब वर्तमान की विकल लहरें उठ-गिर रही हैं, एक नितांत अनिश्चित अवस्था है, नीरन्ध्रकाला कुहासा है, भाषी अस्पष्ट और दुर्बोध है। अत्युक्ति का सहारा लेकर भी अग्रगण्य हम आज की इस बेमिसाल अवस्था की स्थिति का कुछ स्पष्ट निश्चय नहीं कर सकते, वह मनमाना बढ़ती जा रही है; तो भी यह सम्भव है कि हम युद्ध के कुछ खोया-पया परिणामोंका आकलन कर सकें। संघर्ष के काल में अपने परस्पर-विरुद्ध स्वार्थ टंकने के लिये मिथ्या विज्ञापन-वाक्यों की तरह जिन सब आदर्शों का उद्घोष गाल भर कर किया जाता था, वे आज मुक और तिरस्कृत हो गये हैं। शत्रुता के दुर्भेद्य बन्धन में विजडित दुर्मेक शक्तियां आपस में भिड़ रही हैं पर अब या तो इतनी थक गयी हैं या इतनी कमजोर हो गयी हैं कि न तो अपने दुश्मन को पड़ाव ही सकती हैं और न इस संघर्ष की कैद से छूट ही सकती हैं, हवा में एक विमृद्ध अवसरवादिता की भावना है जो अब अपना रास्ता नहीं पा रही है और न इस कुचक्र में से मुक्त ही पा रही है; ऐसी है आज की परिस्थिति। आज की दुनिया की उपमा उस दृष्टी-फूटी नौका से कर सकते हैं जिसके बचने की कोई आशा नहीं और जो आधी-विडोलीत समुद्र की आर जलराशि पर दिशाहीन बढ़ती जा रही है। सुप्रीम कौंसिल के राजनेता उसके लाचार नौ-नायक हैं। वे विज्ञा चिन्ता कर आदेश तो दे रहे हैं लेकिन इसकी कोई उम्मीद नहीं कि उनका पालन होगा, तिसपर, ये आदेश पल पल पर बदले जा रहे हैं। न तो कहीं प्रकाश ही दिखता है जो रास्ता सुझाये और न उनके पास ही इस संकट के निवारण का कोई व्यावहारिक कार्यक्रम है। बुद्धि और नीतिमत्ता का दिवाला निकल गया है; मारकाट का उन्माद गवा ता उसके स्थान पर एक भारी अवसाह और शून्यता का भाव आ गया है।

विश्व-व्यापी निराशा की हवा, मोह का निराकरण और आदर्श और आशाओं की सहती विफलता, यह है युद्ध का पश्चात् परिणाम। युद्ध जब चल रहा था तब हमें बड़े-बड़े चमकीले सपने दिखाये गये थे; आज वे कहां हैं? परित्यक्त, वलुषित और अवज्ञात आज वे निर्वासित कर दिये गये हैं कूड़े-कचरे के उस रक्त-रंजित ढेर में जो कि युद्ध अपने पीछे छोड़ गया है, उनकी सुन्दरता और पवित्रता छिन गई है, प्राण चला गया है। उनमें से एक भी अब हमारे लिए साबित नहीं रह गया है। जो युद्ध सदा के लिए युद्ध का अंत करने के लिए लड़ा गया था नबे नये संघर्षों और आपसी गृह-विरोधों का जनक सिद्ध हुआ है। नयी, अधिक बढ़ी और ज्यादा खूनी लड़ाई अब पृथ्वी पर युद्ध के बाद आयी हुई कलान्ति ही उसे रोक रही है। कहा गया था कि शान्ति और न्याय के आधार पर एक नयी दुनिया की रचना की जायगी लेकिन यह दुनिया कोरी कल्पनाओं के स्वर्ग में विलीन हो गयी है। लीग आफ नेशन्स जो उसे रूप और आकार देने के लिए बनायी गयी थी अपना अस्तित्व प्रायः गंवा चुकी है, या केवल विडम्बना और कटावत की तरह रह गयी है। वह सुप्रीम कौंसिल का एक अतिरिक्त अंश है जिसका ऊपरी शोभा और सच्चा के सिवा अपना कोई मूल्य नहीं। एक बच्चा पर जर्जर आशा-वचन है जिसका उपयोग उन्हें लुभाने के लिये किया जा रहा है जो आज भी उसकी निर्वीर्य योजना में विश्वास करते हैं। उसका अस्तित्व केवल कागज पर है; यदि आगे कभी उसमें क्रिया की हलचल दिखे तो भी वह कुछ शक्तिशाली राज्यों के संघ या केवल दो दो साम्राज्यवादी मित्र-सरकारों द्वारा सारी दुनिया के शासन करने के असत प्रयत्न का एक शीना आवरण या सहारा ही हो सकेगी, बसके अधिक कुछ नहीं। किसी समय आत्म-निर्णय के सिद्धान्त की घोषणा कितने जोर से हुई थी, आज वह भी विजयो राज्यों द्वारा अमान्य किया जा रहा है या ताक पर रख दिया गया है। उसकी जगह फिर पुराने कूटनीतिक नियमोंके आधार पर विभाजित यूरोप की तसवीर आ गयी है। आफ्रिका को दो या तीन बड़े राष्ट्रों ने अपनी निजी सम्पत्ति की तरह हथिया लिया है और बांट लिया है पश्चिमी एशिया पर उन देशों के अनिच्छुक निवासियों पर मशीनगन और तलवार की प्रभुता के जोर से आदेशानुसारी शासन (A system of mandates) की नयी सुलामी लाद दी गई है; इन आदेशों को आज खल कर व्यापारिक शोषण का साधन माना जा रहा है। ये पराधीन और पररक्षित देश स्वाधीनता की मांग कर रहे हैं किन्तु सैनिक शक्ति के द्वारा उन्हें उठने नहीं दिया जा रहा है; यह विचित्र दृश्य इस नयी विश्व-रचना का एक प्रमुख लक्षण है। सेना और सशस्त्र बल के प्रतिष्ठात विसर्जन का कोई चिन्ह नहीं दिखता। हर जगह अभी उसकी भावना भी मौजूद है और वारतविक तैयारियां भी हो रही हैं; हां उसके भार और क्रिया का केन्द्र वहां पश्चिम की ओर यहाँ पूर्व की ओर हट गया है। यह सब विलकुल अनपेक्षित हो ऐसा नहीं है; युद्ध जब चल रहा था तभी उन कुछ लोगों ने जो आदर्शों में निष्ठा तो रखते थे पर साथ ही अपनी दृष्टि स्वच्छ रखना चाहते थे यह सब देख लिया था; अब तो यह सामान्य ज्ञानकारी का विषय हो गया है।

लेकिन यह परिस्थिति का एक ही पक्ष है; हमारी आंखों के सर्वाधिक समीप, स्पष्ट और अनुपेक्षणीय, पर उतना अर्थवान और महत्वशाली नहीं। यह एक बीच की अवस्था है, इस भारी उपपलव का अन्तस निश्चित परिणाम नहीं। यह आशा करना ही व्यर्थ था कि युद्ध के इस बवंडर से तत्काल ही दुनिया का आमूल चमत्कारिक परिवर्तन या पुनर्जीवन सिद्ध हो जायगा। यह कल्पना ही अनुचित थी

कि मनुष्य के चिरकालिक आचार और चरित्र की मिथी में दृढ़-प्रतिष्ठ अतीत का प्रभाव विप्लव के किसी एक भयानक क्षण में सदा के लिये ओझल हो जायगा या अपना आसन भविष्य की किसी एक दम नयी और निष्कलुष शक्ति को सौंप देगा। हमें जो काम करना है वह इतना बड़ा है कि वह इतना आसान नहीं हो सकता। मनुष्य और उसके जीवन का यह नव-जन्म, अपनी उच्चतर प्रकृति में उसका उत्तरण किसी इतनी बाहरी और क्षिप्र और छोटी विधि के वश की बीज नहीं है। यह सोचना ही पल्ट था कि युद्ध-आरम्भ में वह कितना ही दुःखदायी और भयानक क्यों न हो पर अन्त में एक शुभ संकट सिद्ध होगा या वह एक ऐसे नये परिवर्तन की सुनिश्चित स्थापना करेगा जो मनुष्य के हृदय मन और बाहरी क्रिया-कर्म को नितान्त पावन और नव-प्राण युक्त कर दे। वह तो संघर्ष की एक बड़ी प्रक्रिया का पहला प्रहार था, एक अवसर कि नयी खेती की कुछ पूजे-तैयारी हो जाय। उसने उन शक्तियों और विचारों के जो अभी तक निश्चिन्तापूर्वक अपने आसन में आसुद्ध थी, वर्तमान पर जिनका निश्चित सामिल था और भविष्य की जो आशा रखती थी—व्यावहारिक तो नहीं पर नैतिक अधिकार का दावा कर दिया है। उसने जमीन को कुछ गोडवा दिया है, पर कूड़े-कचरे के सारे पुराने जंजाल का उन्मूलन उसकी सामर्थ्य के बाहर था। जमीन का कोतना—बखेरना हो गया, यहां वहां कुछ निराई भी हो गयी लेकिन वोने और फसल काटने की बात अभी बहुत दूर है; वह काम तो नयी शक्तियां करेंगी। यह ग्रामक कल्पना कि राजनीतिक या किसी अन्य तन्त्र का परिवर्तन-कि वह कितना ही बड़ा क्यों न हो—हमारी सम्पत्ता की सारी खराबियों का परिशोध कर देगा तब भी थी और आज भी है। हमें जानना चाहिये कि उत्तर और उच्चतर मानव-जीवन का प्रवर्तन और स्थापन तो अन्तरिक और इसलिए अन्तर्गत परिवर्तन द्वारा ही हो सकता है।

लेकिन इन पुराने सिद्धान्तों और परिस्थितियों का बच रहना भी उतना महत्व नहीं रखता। उनकी बाहरी और बस्तुगत शक्ति कितनी ही बड़ी क्यों न दिखती हो, भीतर भीतर उनमें छुन छुन गया है, वे कमजोर हो गये हैं और अब भविष्य उनके हाथ से खला गया है। उनका बौद्धिक नैतिक प्रभाव खत्म हो गया है और इस अपभ्रम के साथ उनके प्रेरक आत्म-विश्वास और व्यावहारिक कार्यकारी बल में भी गोचर कमी आ रही है।

(अपूर्ण)

(पृष्ठ १ का शेषार्थ)

नहीं बल्कि पृथ्वी की छातीपर ही अंकित है। तुम हाथ में कलम लेकर लिखते हो, पर मैंने उसे तलवार से अंकित किया है। तुमने अक्षरों की सजावट की है तो मैंने मनुष्य को, देश को संभारा है। किसकी सृष्टि अधिक सजीव, लक्ष्य और महत्त्वपूर्ण है? किस में भगवान की देन अधिक जावबदारी-मान है?

फिरदासी : इस प्रकार का प्रमाण होगा कि किस की सृष्टि अधिक श्रेयां रहेगी? महामुद, तुम्हारा कर्तृत्व तो तुम्हारे साथ ही कोप हो गया। तुमने इतना स्वयं, इतना खतब, इतना परिश्रम किया पर आज उसका क्या कोई चिन्ह भी नजर आता है। मेरा काम ही तुम गुमानियों से आज तक भी बेश विदेश में मनुष्य जाति के आनन्द की वस्तु है। तुम्हारी सृष्टि में कृष्ण से संघर्ष की मात्रा ही अधिक है। तुम्हारी सृष्टि है क्षय भंगुर पदार्थों की, नितान्त वाह्य की; केवल शरीर की।

महामुद : फिर भी तुम लोग तो केवल हमारी एक क्षीण प्रतिबन्धि मात्र ही हो। हम जो सचमुच कर दिखाते हैं, तुम लोग केवल उसकी कहानी ही लिखते हो। मैंने जो शाहनामा जगत में अंकित कर दिया था, तुम्हारा शाहनामा तो उसका बस बरथा मात्र ही है।

फिरदासी : तुम लोगोंका कर्तृत्व तो कवि का केवल एक अवहमन, एक आश्रय, एक उपरक्त होता है। कोचक में कलम खिलता है तो रक्त में कोचक की अपनी कौम सी महिना है? कवि एक

बौद्धिक लोक का दर्शन करता है और साधारण लोगों को उसका परिचय देने के लिये जो भी उपकरण सुविधा से मिल जाता है उसी का वह उपयोग कर लेता है। छुर को घिराट, चाणिक को चिरन्तन और कदम्यों को सुन्दर में परिणत करने में ही कवि का कवित्व है। महामुद, जो चर्म-चक्षुओं से दिखालाई पड़ता है वस बही सत्य हो ऐसी कोई बात नहीं है।

महामुद : मैं मानता हूँ कि तुम क्षीण सौन्दर्य के ही पुजारी हो। परन्तु हम लोग हैं शक्ति के उपासक। इसलिए तो मैं कह रहा था कि तुम लोग छिपों के ही समान हो। उसीप्रकार तुम लोग भी सभी देशों और सभी युगों में लोगों का मनोरंजन करते रहते हो। पर जानते हो, इस जगत की सार वस्तु सौन्दर्य नहीं बल्कि शक्ति ही है। शक्ति ही मनुष्य को सृष्टि की सौन्दर्य के कर संद बनाती है, शक्ति ही मनुष्य के मनुष्यत्व को मापदंड है। तुम्हारा प्रभाव केवल भाव जगत और प्राण जगत में ही है परन्तु हमारे कर्तृत्व का प्रभाव तो मनुष्य के रक्त मांस और पृथिवी के फलेवर के नस नस में समाया है।

फिरदासी : बाहुबल ही एक मात्र शक्ति नहीं है—यह है केवल पार्श्विक शक्ति। शक्ति का उच्चतम एवं पूर्णतम प्रकाश तो कवि के सौन्दर्य में ही निहित है। कवि की सौन्दर्य सृष्टि का मूल है विनता की तपः शक्ति में और उसी का एक कण भीचे उतर कर तुम जैसे सूरवीरों को बाहुबली उद्वत बना जाता है।

(शेष पृष्ठ २ का)

में कोई निर्णायक समान न किया और ज्यों-ज्यों करके संघर्ष को टाल कर 'कृत्रिम शान्ति' स्थापित कर ली तो भविष्य में उस भयानक शक्ति से मोरचा लेना पड़ेगा जिसमें 'स्वस्तिक हंसवा और हथौड़ा' एक हो गये हैं।

भगवान के जुने हुए प्रिय भारत वर्ष को केवल अब वल के लिए जीने वाले नर पशुओं की पशु-शाला बनने देना क्या प्रगल्भील भारत वासियों को सहा होगा? पृथ्वी को अनिश्चरवादी राजसासुर कम्युनिस्ट के भयानक बोझ से मुक्त करने के लिये क्या हम भगवान के यन्त्र बनने? ये हैं वे विचार जो हमें अपनी सत्ता की केन्द्रीय चेतना को ओर खींच रही हैं। १५ अगस्त के महा पवित्र पर्व पर भारतियों की यह भीष्म प्रतिज्ञा होनी चाहिये कि भारतीय का जीवन भगवान के द्वारा, भगवान के लिये और भगवान में विकसित होता है। हम अन्दर, ऊपर और चारों ओर चेतना में फँसकर उस मौलिक, के दीप समल को स्थापित करेंगे जिसमें राजा भण्डारी होगा और प्रजा भण्डार भोगी। राजा पालक व दोषक होगा और प्रजा सन्तान व शिशु। ऐश्वर्य का नहीं, वासना की, लालसा की दासता का अभाव होगा। भारत की भवितव्यता उज्ज्वल और भगवत्-निर्दिष्ट है।

(शेष पृष्ठ ३ का)

वह बकरी पर फपटा, पर चुक गया। दुबारा फपटा, दुबारा भी वह निकल गई। अन्त में बकरी तेज बढ़ती हुई धारा को पार करके पूरी तरह से भेड़िये की पहुंच से दूर चली गई।

"बहुत खूब!" भेड़िये ने अपना साजुभाव फिर से धारण करते हुए कहा—"मैं आज त्रत के पवित्र दिन बकरी का मांस खाकर अपवित्र नहीं हूंगा। ना, ना, आज त्रत के दिन मांस! कदापि नहीं।"

उस भेड़िये, उसकी भक्ति और त्रत और उसकी श्रद्धा के बारे में तुम्हारा क्या विचार है?

तुम उसके कपट पर हंसते हो। पर कितने ही लोग ऐसे हैं जिनकी सच्चाई भेड़िये की सच्चाई जैसी है, जो सुन्दर भावनाओं की डींगें मारते हैं, क्यों कि उसमें उनका स्वार्थ होता है। वे छोटे छोटे भक्तिभाव के काम करते हैं, क्यों कि वे अपनी दुर्गाइयों को प्रकाश्य रूप में कर सकने के लिये स्वतन्त्र नहीं होते। पर इस सब चालाकी के होते हुए भी क्या तुम सोचते हो कि ये कपटी उन लोगों के सामने जो सच्चे और न्यायी हैं अधिक देर तक टिक सकते हैं?

(आगामी अंक में समाप्त)

VILLAGE PANCHAYET

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND MODERN DEMOCRACY

By B. C. SEN

Secretary, The Unity Party

Inaugurating the Conference of Local Bodies in Bombay, Mr. G. V. Mavlankar, the Speaker of the Union Parliament, observed: "Municipal government can inspire in the man in the street an enthusiasm and love for self-government. He cannot be fed for all times on slogans or rosy pictures of swaraj." Yet he noticed apathy on the part of politically minded people towards the work of local bodies. Mr. S. K. Patil, Mayor of Bombay, gathering experience from his foreign tour, said in Paris: "I have a strong belief that the system of Parliamentary democracy can only succeed if its roots go deep, that is in local self-government which must exist in villages as well as in towns and cities." But though the new constitution of India provides for the formation of village panchayets, and the provinces have proceeded to organise them, their importance is not generally appreciated to the extent it ought to be.

For one reason, the working of these panchayets has not been very happy in the past; they were only in name self-governing bodies, they really served as departments of the government with some machinery of electing or nominating popular representatives to serve as unpaid agents of the government. In this respect, there has not been any substantial change in the new panchayets; only the list of the works they have to do has been increased and they have been given more powers of local taxation. How far the panchayets are merely subordinate departments of the government was well illustrated recently in Madras. The Inspector of Local Boards in exercise of the powers delegated to him by the State Government issued a notice alleging that the majority party in the Godavari Panchayet Board launched prosecutions indiscriminately against the members of the opposite party and involved the Board in wasteful expenditure. Therefore, the Inspector decided that the Board was incompetent to perform the functions vested in it, and called upon the Panchayet Board to show cause why it should not be superseded.

True Local Self-government and the Present Situation

Ancient Indian Panchayets have been aptly compared to republics; certainly a Board which can be thus superseded by the fiat of a Government Inspector of Local Boards cannot be likened to a sovereign Republic. Indeed the conception of local self-government in the minds of our present day politicians is derived from the West, especially from Britain. As the distinction is very important, we quote here the pertinent remarks made by Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji in the Introduction of his scholarly studies on *Local Government in Ancient India*:

"In bringing out this contrast between the tendencies of Indian and Western politics and political thought it is not meant that Western administrations leave no room for local self-government or have no place for the autonomous local and municipal bodies... In England, for instance, the aggregate of parish councils, district councils, and county councils happens to be, in magnitude or volume of business, greater than all the Government Departments put together. In these advanced countries the local bodies between them spend more money, undertake more enterprise, employ more officials, and legislate more extensively than the central government. But granting all this, it is evident that these organisations of local governments are mostly the creation of the central government; that these local bodies owe their present form and constitution to a process of decentralisation, delegation, or devolution of powers determined by the national legislature, that they are thus in the ultimate analysis but wheels of a common machine, parts of a single plant, and are not by any means 'extra-legal' associations, devoid of any statutory warrant, and, therefore, in the eye of the law, possessed of no authority whatsoever.

"In respect of local self-government as it developed in India, however, we shall find that the Indian institutions are practically *sui generis*, representing a type which may be sharply distinguished from the type represented by the corresponding institutions in modern polity. The fundamental difference is that, while, in the latter case, the state, as a fully developed and completely constituted body, consciously creates autonomous centres within itself by devolution and delimitation of its own functions, in the former the communal institutions, guilds, and local bodies have an independent origin and growth out of fluid and inchoate conditions of tribal life and organization. When the state comes to supervene or be superimposed upon these, it has to treat with them more or less on terms of equality and recognize their pre-existing rights by conventions and agreements which operate as charters regulating their mutual relations. Thus the varied interests of the communal life, such as administrative, judicial, civic, commercial, or industrial, are assured by the voluntary co-operation of independent and integral units of a common body politic."

Thus it will be seen that the Constitution that has been framed for India has completely missed the true spirit of ancient Indian Polity. The Village Panchayets are being created and regulated in every detail by laws made by the central and state governments, and the Constitution itself has been expressly modelled on the Western Parliamentary system which is wholly unsuitable to the peculiar conditions in India. The aim

was at first to frame a Federal constitution for India giving the fullest autonomy to the provinces, but the Western tendency towards centralisation proved too strong for our constitution-makers, and provincial autonomy in theory, and even more in practice, has been reduced to nullity. Replying to a debate on the Governor's address, the Finance Minister of Madras observed about the nature of the autonomy enjoyed by the province: "Every day it has been receiving instructions from various Ministries of the Union trying to check the Government on every matter. So I do not think the State can claim the position of a sovereign State. In 1935 we had Provincial Autonomy, but the position is different now."

Referring to this statement of the Finance Minister, Dr. A. L. Mudaliar remarked in the Madras Legislative Council, "The other day, the Finance Minister complained against too much interference from the Union. When I had raised that point during the discussion on the draft Constitution in the Council here, the members of the Treasury Bench were then furious with me. And what is the result today? The Finance Minister himself says there is no independence at all for this Ministry, and that they are being treated as if they were a local body. I say, they are treated even worse than local bodies."

That is the situation in India today, the central government is jealously gathering all power into its own hands, the States are worse than local bodies, and the latter have no self-government at all. If our Government had been consistent in following even the western model, they would have delegated extensive powers to the local bodies, and that would have contributed to efficiency as well as economy. And whatever be the advantages of centralisation in western countries, it is unworkable in a vast country like India, and it is quite alien to the genius of the Indian people, as also of the Asiatic people in general. Chiang Kai-Shek failed in China because he tried to establish a centralised government, not allowing sufficient autonomy to the provinces. The civil war in Burma has had the same origin, the assertion of the innate self-governing tendencies of the people; we are seeing the same phenomenon in Indonesia. It has been the genius of Asia not to put much power in the hands of the government; the people managed most of their business themselves without any interference from the Government; the State was not the master but the agent of society to which certain limited powers were delegated.

Sri Aurobindo has remarked: "The fact is that India presents the rare and remarkable phenomenon of the state and the society co-existing apart from, and in some degree independent of, each other as distinct and separate units or entities, as independent centres of national, popular, and collective life and activity. Both of them were independent organisms with distinct and well-defined structures and functions of their own and laws of growth and evolution. The limits of state-interference were accordingly so defined and fixed as not to encroach upon the sphere of the activities of the social organisation. A policy of non-interference was recognised as the ideal policy of the state, the functions of which were ordinarily restricted to the irreducible minimum, viz., the protection of life and property and realisation of the revenue for the proper execution of that duty. There was a well-understood delimitation of the respective boundaries of the political and the social organisation, both of which were co-operating agencies for the promotion of the common weal. This peculiar and predominant tendency in ancient and mediaeval Indian politics is in marked contrast with that of European or Western politics generally. In the West the predominant tendency has been towards a progressive extension of state interference and state control so as to bring within its limits all the main departments of social life and national activity until the ideal is attained of a complete nationalisation or socialisation of all the means and processes of life itself. The state beginning as an agent of society, becomes its master and representative; society is merged in the state to which it surrenders its functions, dropping its independent life. Thus, in the West the king or the repository of the sovereign power is the head of the state as well as of society, including even the church in some cases. In ancient India the king was head of the state, but not of the society. He had a place in the social hierarchy, but it was not the highest place. As the symbol of the state he appeared to the people like a remote abstraction with no direct touch with their daily life which was governed by the social organisation. The points of contact between the state and the ordinary interests of the daily life of the people were indeed very few."

The Disasters of Overcentralisation

From this description of the difference between Indian and Western Polity, it will be apparent that the new Constitution has followed the western ideal, completely ignoring the Indian. Indeed the makers of the Constitution took pride in saying that they had incorporated in it all that was best in western institutions, but no one ever made any reference to ancient Indian Polity. It is not our contention that the ancient Indian Polity should be revived in all its details, or that we should not adopt

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VILLAGE PANCHAYET—Continued from page 3

anything from the West. But it is natural that the Indian mind would more readily accept what is rooted in its tradition than anything imported from the West. Then it has to be seen which of the two conceptions is most suited to modern conditions in India. We have no doubt that a constitution based on the ancient Indian principles, evolving forms suitable to modern conditions, can alone succeed in India. Already the disasters of overcentralisation have begun to appear. From all reports, the food situation, to take one example, is grave; in several provinces food grains have already become scarce and the prices are soaring so high as to be beyond the reach of ordinary people. The horrors of the Bengal famine may be repeated, and this time there is not the excuse of war conditions. It is due to the inefficiency and mismanagement of the central government that the food situation has deteriorated so much. Firstly, the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, had somehow caught the idea that India must be made self-sufficient before 1952. There are no reliable statistics; the rains are so uncertain that no one can predict what will be the production in the country with any accuracy; the villages where the food is grown are in a dilapidated condition and the cultivators and agricultural labourers have such a low standard of life that they cannot be expected to make any extra exertion in producing food in the near future. Yet the Prime Minister took a vow that even if the Indians had to starve, no food would be imported after 1951. There is no indication that this decision was arrived at after consulting the states and provinces. Irrespective of the needs of the country, import of food grains has been gradually reduced: the states have not been given a free hand to shape their own food policy. The result today is the suffering of millions of people. We quote here a letter published in *The Mail*, Madras, giving a graphic description of conditions prevailing in many parts of free India:

"To The Editor, *The Mail*

Sir,

Into the causes leading to the present food crisis it is not necessary to enter, suffice it to say that the suffering is unparalleled in the annals of our country. In the famine of 1877 there were at least free kitchens run by the State and the charitably minded, which enabled lakhs of people to keep body and soul together. Now, it is living death we are witnessing. In our district people are living on aloe roots, palmyrah tender leaves, greens and grain collected from ant holes. Even palmyrah fruits and tamarind seeds have become a rarity, while ground-nuts are a luxury to thousands of the poor. . . . People at the helm of affairs stand completely exposed, both in regard to their unimaginativeness and inefficiency. They had ample notice of the famines months ago.

M. G. Guruswami Iyer.
M.A., L.T., B.L.

Member, Ramnad Dt. Food Committee, Sivaganga."

We are told that the Union Food Ministry is belatedly trying to import 100,000 tons of rice. Our point is that there need be no Food Ministry at the Centre at all, also no Ministry for Agriculture, Education, Health and other nation-building activities. The provinces should have sovereign powers to deal with these subjects. That would not only save huge unnecessary expenditure at the Centre, but the provinces, freed from undue interference from the Centre, will manage these works much better. The Centre should retain only the power of co-ordination, serving as a connecting link between the deficit and the surplus provinces, and also make arrangements for wholesale import of food grains according to the demands made by the Provinces. The small Island Government of Ceylon has been on the alert to the food situation and indented for five lakhs and odd tons of rice from Burma. The Indonesian and Japan Governments have also made similar arrangements for rice with Burma and Siam to feed their people. Britain has already negotiated with Burma for rice for her requirements. But our Government, following its policy of self-sufficiency, has placed only small orders for some thousands of tons, which will not at all be adequate to meet the present demands and avert the impending famine. Now, when millions up and down the country are starving, attempts are being made hurriedly to import grain from Italy, Siam and Burma. But by the time this hastily secured grain arrives, famished villagers will have died, their feeble bodies being unable longer to fight for life.

The Burmans are in need of clothing, while we need rice. Rice is available in abundance in Burma, Indian textiles can easily be bartered for rice. If instead of following the arbitrary policy of self-sufficiency in food, India pays more attention to industrial development, she can import all the food she requires to make up her deficiency and at the same time improve the living standard of her people. Then the idea that this vast country must be governed in every detail from the Centre must be given up. This truth unfortunately has not yet been realised by our leaders. They see that things are not going well, but according to them the real remedy is more power for the Centre and not less. Thus Mr. K. M. Munshi recently observed during the debate on food in the Parliament: "Under the powers the Centre now enjoys, the Central Ministry of Agriculture cannot pull up any State with regard to its procurement policy. It cannot say a word as to how the Grow More Food Campaign in the States is progressing. The Centre has the maximum of responsibility and equally the maximum of impotency." Thus, on the admission of the Food Minister himself, the Central Ministry of Agriculture is impotent. But why keep this Ministry at all? The Centre is taking the lion's share of the revenues and taxes, and giving aids to the provinces; thus the States cannot exercise their sovereignty. In accepting financial aid from the Centre for the development of objects falling within the sphere in which they are sovereign, the States have to surrender a part of their sovereignty granted to them by the Constitution. He who pays the piper calls the tune. This tendency to gather all power in the Centre is supported by the false idea that it is only in this way that the unity of India can be preserved. A unitary system of government may be suitable to small countries; but in a vast country, national unity can be preserved only by giving the fullest autonomy to the constituting states and provinces which will then voluntarily co-operate with the Centre for the general well-being of the whole country.

Secret of Successful Policy

It was by following this policy that empires were successfully built up in ancient India and when they failed, the failure was due not to this policy of decentralisation, but rather to the policy of too much centralisation that is being followed by our present government; the ancient empires were compelled to adopt such a policy as, on account of crude means of communication, they could not otherwise organise the resources of the country to meet the threat of foreign aggression. Thus to meet an external danger they had to adopt a policy alien to the genius of the people, and this led to internal disintegration. Now that means of communication have greatly improved, India should proceed to build up her unity following her own genius of local autonomy, which enabled her to perform the almost impossible feat of building up under ancient conditions vast empires with a territory which on two occasions was more extensive than British India, stretching from Afghanistan to Mysore. "It is difficult even to conceive how it was physically possible, in the absence of the modern means and facilities of communication, to control a continent from one centre in an isolated corner of India such as that at Pataliputra when the news of a disturbance beyond the north-western frontier in Central Asia or Arachosia would take probably six months' time to reach the headquarters of government. And yet the growth of such an imperial authority is attested by sober history. It is not sufficiently recognized that India in the olden times was not a land of jungles and wastes, but a land of abundant agriculture, brisk trade, numerous arts and crafts, convenient roads and trade-routes with wells and rest-houses, shade-giving groves and fruit-bearing trees at regular intervals, and prosperous cities. The Greek writers on Alexander's campaigns speak of 2,000 regular towns in the Panjab alone. But these material factors, though they go a great way, do not by themselves exhaust or constitute that assemblage of conditions which make the governance of empires of such colossal dimensions feasible. The fact is that for an adequate explanation of this puzzling phenomenon we have to look beyond the material and objective, the physical and the natural, to the subjective and the spiritual aspects of the situation. Man's inventiveness is meant to triumph over the difficulties of his natural environment. And so the natural difficulties in the way of the Mauryan empire

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THE COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA—Continued from page 2

Viet-Nameese soldiers, fighting side by side, have gained considerable military victories over Ho Chi Minh's forces. They have liberated the greater part of the plains of Cochinchina and the whole of the Red River delta in Tongking, the most important agricultural areas of the country inhabited by large populations. The Communist guerillas are being driven more and more into mountainous country.

Second, the inhabitants of countless liberated towns and villages are jubilant at their freedom from Ho Chi Minh's rule, for they suffered under him terrible privations and

tyranny. The evil reputation of his Communist Government is spreading through the land.

Third, Ho's prestige has been damaged also by the diplomatic recognition accorded him by the Governments of Russia and China. The Indo-Chinese people realise increasingly that he is not so much an Indo-Chinese national patriot as an unpatriotic international Communist.

Fourth, Bao Dai's reputation as a national leader, on the other hand, has risen steadily. The French have already transferred to him immense powers in the Government of his country, and he now commands the

loyalty of probably a majority of the Viet-Nameese people. So Ho Chi Minh's strength has recently diminished, whilst Bao Dai's has grown.

Evenly Matched Struggle

I do not suggest that this process has yet reached a decisive stage. Ho still derives support from the population in regions where he holds sway. Moreover, he is now receiving comfort and aid from his foreign Communist friends, and if this arrives on a sufficient scale he can strike back powerfully to recover lost ground. The struggle between

him and Bao Dai is evenly matched; but for some time the advantage has been passing gradually from him to his rival.

During the last year, therefore, the Indo-Chinese gateway to South-East Asia, like the Burmese gateway, has been more firmly held.

These are features in the South-East Asian scene which can give us some measure of cautious encouragement. Other elements and potentialities, however, remain as dangerous as ever. There is no room for easy optimism, still less complacency.

SRI AUROBINDO AND MAN'S SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

By C. C. DUTT

Continued from previous issue

There is a false subjectivism as well as a true subjectivism. The distinction between the two must be clearly grasped. The subjective stage is that turning point in man's growth when he turns his gaze from the outside and looks deep into himself to discover his truth and the right law for action. It is a step towards self-knowledge and towards living in and from the self. Everything depends on how that step is taken.

That the step has been taken by the modern world is undoubted. In all matters we are beginning to make a subjective approach. The new aim in educating the child has already been referred to. In the treatment of criminals, too, the latest idea is not to look upon an offender as a law-breaker to be imprisoned or tortured or hanged, but as an unfortunate person, a diseased human being whose infirmity is to be studied, whose case is to be diagnosed and treated from within. Society likewise is beginning to be looked upon as a living organism with a soul of its own. "So far", says Sri Aurobindo, "it is good—the greater knowledge, the truer depth, the wiser humanity of this new view of things are obvious. But so also are the limitations of our knowledge and experience." As long as a boat is lying anchored in the haven, she runs but little risk; her dangers commence when the anchor is raised and she sails out in the open. Man released from the secure haven of conventions must hand over the management of his boat to a safe helmsman. At the present stage, he must first realise that his true personality is not his ego, but the divine Person ever present in him. The second truth that he must grasp is that he is not only himself but is one with all of his kind. The Divine expresses himself through the individual (*Vyasti*) as well as through the group (*Samasti*). The individual is not an isolated being, he cannot flourish by himself. Nor can the group crush the individual without maiming itself.

When a subjectively awakened group gets an egoistic self-vision, it commits a number of serious subjective errors. The most serious is to reduce the individual to a nullity, to a mere cell of the collective body. In every department of life the initiative passes into the hands of the collectivity and that collectivity is given a big name—the State. The result may be a gain in efficiency—but at the cost of the freedom of the individual. This is how the totalitarian State developed—principally in Germany, Italy and Russia. It may be that there is all over the world a tendency to increase the efficiency of the State and by way of payment for it give up a part of the freedom of the individual—Sri Aurobindo has discussed this development of the State at a great length in some of the later chapters of *The Human Cycle*.

A corollary of this view of the State is that it "has a divine right to the obedience, the unquestioning service and the whole activity of the individual, the service of State and community is the only absolute rule of morality." With regard to other States, its effective law is that of war and strife.

This leads to a ludicrous extreme. Since the survival of the best is the highest good of man, the interests of Germany, the Nordic race, were necessarily looked upon as the most important objective. We have called this view ludicrous, because it is totally inconsistent with the spirit of progress such as we believe to be characteristic of this age. If the Greeks looked down upon all non-Greeks as barbarians, if the Jews believed all Gentiles to be inferior beings, if Moslems hated all non-Moslems as Kafirs (unbelievers), if the Hindus characterised all non-Hindus as Mlechchhas (unclean), we can find some excuse for them as it all happened so long ago. But there is no more excuse for the Britisher's erstwhile slogan of "White man's burden" than there is for the preposterous claim to superiority of the Nordic race. With regard to the German standpoint, Sri Aurobindo says, "It is a new and a modern gospel born of the application of a metaphysical logic to the conclusions of materialistic science, of a philosophic subjectivism to the objective pragmatic positivism of recent thought."

Individualism aims at securing to the individual being the liberty to develop himself and fulfil his life in every way. There is only one thing that limits this freedom, and that is the obligation to allow other individuals the same freedom. In the case of nations, too, the individualistic age came to the same conclusion—each nation is to enjoy full freedom as long as that freedom does not affect the freedom of others. Just as the law of a State enforces the above principle of freedom with obligation, of liberty with law, as between man and man, so international law, it was hoped, would effectively restrain the egoism of nations. But so far this fond hope has not been realised. A League of Nations was founded after the first World War, but it could do very little to ensure fair play between one nation and another. Japan occupied Manchukuo, Italy gobbled up Abyssinia, Spain was the scene of a prolonged Civil War, fomented and fostered by powerful parties. These and other incidents made it clear to the world at large that another Great War was bound to come. And come it did. Now, after the second war a new International Organization has come into being. This august body, the U.N.O., is functioning better than its predecessor. But how far it can go in enforcing a decree against a major power remains yet to be seen. A truly efficient international organization is likely to take a long time to develop. An international court administering international law is no doubt a fascinating ideal to the mental man, but "it is possible for subjectivism to go beyond and to discover the true Self as something greater than the mind."

The growth of science has brought in many new ideas in politics and sociology, often of a contradictory nature. But rampant individualism and extreme collectivism seek to justify themselves by the laws of physical science. The biological view that the root nature of all living is a struggle to take the best advantage of the environment not only for self-preservation but also for self-aggrandisement has given support to the political view that the individual must make every effort to prolong his life, to be strong and efficient and to dominate others. On the other hand, the dictum of science that the true law of life is that the component unit should live for the whole and subordinate and sacrifice itself to the growth of the whole has been taken to justify the collectivists' idea of a State or society. The very clever German thinkers combined the two ideas and justified both the crushing down of the individual in the German State and its aggressive self-assertion against other States. But it is absurd to decide questions of the highest importance to our corporate life by scientific analogies. To quote Darwin's law of "Survival of the Fittest" in support of the political slogan "Might is Right" is absurd on the face of it. The subjective and the objective outlooks on life rise from the same source and are destined to meet each other on the spiritual plane. Our human aim is to transcend our ego-bound life and rise up to that higher level of consciousness. The Master says, "The ideal of human existence personal and social would be its progressive transformation into a conscious outflowing of the joy, power, love, light, beauty of the transcendent and universal Spirit."

In order to know the ideal law of Man's social development we have to take into consideration not only his evolutionary past but also his mental and spiritual destiny. We have to place him correctly in Nature's cycles. We know that he began as inconscient Matter and then proceeded to evolve, step by step, his vitality and his mentality.

In the Material stage there was very little variation; types varied, but the individuals of the type were uniform. Even when Life first appeared, the same law prevailed; but as Life grew, and Mind emerged and became self-conscious, the individual arrived at a greater power of variation. With the development of the intellect this power reached a very high level. Man is distinguished from the lesser animal by the liberation of his mental consciousness which enables him, more and more, to understand himself and the law of his being and, ultimately, to surpass his mentality and open his consciousness into higher and higher planes of existence, arriving, in time, at the Self, the Spirit which manifests itself in all Nature. It is the individual who has to make this ascent; it is for this end that man has become an individual soul. But he cannot do it by his unaided mentality. He needs the help of the secret Divine in him and he needs the help of the Divine immanent in Nature and in his fellow-men. This is where his corporate life comes in. The Master says, "All life around him is a help towards the divine purpose in him; every human being is his fellow-worker and assists him whether by association and union or by strife and opposition." Our aim is divine perfection; towards that end, individual man and, through his growth the race, has to travel. The object of society, therefore, should be to provide the suitable conditions of life and growth for this purpose. Man has to go ahead from stage to stage; there is nothing sacrosanct about any particular stage; "the cycles are many and each cycle has its own figure of the Divine in man". All humanity is one in its nature, in spite of apparent differences in intellectual development; the whole race has one destiny towards which it is moving inevitably.

Within the general framework each individual has to follow the common aim according to his own *swabhava*, and to grow from within. In Sri Aurobindo's words, "Each individual is that Self and sums up all human potentiality in his own. This potentiality he has to find, develop, work out from within." He has to develop it himself from within, no State, no Church, no Order or Caste can dictate to him. The life and growth of the individual are for the sake of the world, but he can help the world only when he is really and truly his own self. When he asks for liberty it is not so much his egoistic demand as the claim of his Self. Now, just as the individual Self can demand freedom of thought and action, so can the Self of his family or clan or community or nation. Only, as in the case of the individual, it must not be an egoistic demand. There is another thing, too. The individual cannot in any way be limited by the group he belongs to, for he is a manifestation of the universal Self and his goal in life is the realisation of that fact. What, then, is the position of the group or community? It is, says the Master, a mid-term between the individual and the universal, and helps them to fulfil each other. Mankind or humanity is too big an aggregate for the individual to grasp, so he tends to grasp it through the smaller intermediate groups. Neither the individual man nor the nation is intended by nature to stand by itself. No doubt, the individual perfects his individuality by free development from within, but he has to aid and be aided by a similar free development in others. The nation is an aggregate life that expresses the Self. It has the right to be itself, fulfil itself, but it can assert that right only in harmony with the same right of other nations. Nay, more, every nation has to respect and to aid and to be aided by the free development of all nations. The ideal law may be long in coming; but it is the business of the man of a subjective age to hold it before him and find out gradually how he can establish it in life.

To be continued in the next issue.

IN THE MOT MORALITY, RELIGION

By RISHI

A great confusion seems to prevail today, not only in the popular mind but also in the minds of thoughtful men, in regard to the distinctive nature and function of morality, religion and spirituality. They are either lumped together and flung into the limbo of past relics or only morality is singled out for conventional lip homage and use partly as a cloak and an expedient, and religion and spirituality dismissed with a superior disdain as incompatible with the culture and civilisation of a scientific and rationalistic age. Even those, who seriously ponder over the problems of life and death and endeavour to envisage the destiny of man and the means of its fulfilment, extract a code of ethics, a set of lofty moral rules and principles from the great religions and make them do duty for spirituality. The Sermon on the Mount, the Dhammapada or the Niti-sutras are considered the very essence of the religions from which they have sprung and it is believed that a devout following of their injunctions in the growing light of one's intelligence is the sanest and safest method of spiritual progress. An ethical eclecticism has thus come to be regarded by some as the high-water mark of spiritual culture, because it is rational, practical and attractively catholic, and there is an instinctive dread and distrust of all that is mystic or esoteric. The overweening ignorance of the human mind refuses to believe that there can be any higher planes of consciousness or subtler formulations of energy beyond what it perceives and conceives. The boundaries of man's little consciousness are held to be the boundaries of Reality, of which man, in his present state, is the sole witness, assessor and possessor. This self-conceit of the human mind pens it in the narrow province of Matter and precludes any excursion into the immeasurable reaches beyond. It deadens man's finer perceptions, atrophies his subtler faculties and reduces his proud mastery over Nature to a crippling psychological serfdom.

And yet, in spite of the satisfied subjection to Matter, or probably as an inevitable reaction to it the consciousness of man is awaking, very slowly, tentatively and under a cloud of misgivings, to the truth of the supraphysical realities and an infinite vista is opening before it of an integral freedom and self-fulfilment. It has already begun to knock at the doors of the subliminal, peer into the caves of the sub-conscious and in a few exceptional individuals, here and there, gaze up into the super-conscious. It will not, therefore, be without some help to the seekers of Truth and a harmonious perfection in life, if we try to study, in the light of the Mother's teachings, the distinctive features and functions of morality, religion and spirituality and their respective contribution to the growth of human consciousness and culture.

MORALITY

Anthropologists tell us that the consciousness of the primitive man was essentially religious. Whether it was animism, fetishism or totemism, there was a natural, instinctive feeling in him of a Presence or Presences hovering all about him and open to his call for help and healing, if he could only propitiate them. Based on this feeling, there developed a half-mysterious, half-superstitious cult of sacraments and sacrifices out of which later on branched off magic, thaumaturgy etc. At this stage of evolution, there was no distinct conception of morality; individual and social life automatically adjusted themselves to the varying demands of circumstances and environment. There was not much sense of sin or guilt chilling or curbing the natural expression of the aboriginal passions and impulses, and it was only the herd-instinct, the inborn gregarious habits that held the social units together and prevented a violent disruption or disintegration. Gradually, as reason developed, the individual ego also developed with it asserting, on the one hand, its personal ideas and tastes and rights and, on the other, the imperative need of making life conform to the rhythm of the light an expanding consciousness brought to it. This was the beginning of morality—a growing sense of sin or guilt corresponding to an increasing perception of the possibility of a pure rhythmic and harmonious living.

It is not true, as some sociologists maintain, that morality is an outcome of the multiplying social factors that demanded a discipline or regulation of life to counter the menace of its disruptive tendencies. Morality, according to them, is a material growth, a covenant and convenience agreed upon for the sake of a smooth running of the wheels of life. But the origin of ethics lies not in the outer mechanism of the individual and collective existence but in the evolutionary development of reason and the balancing and enlightening principle of *Sattwa* in man. It can be said that morality is a gift of religion, if by religion is meant a contact, however rudimentary, of the human consciousness with the light and harmony of the higher. Like every evolutionary growth in man, the principle of *Sattwa*, in which there is a pronounced emergence and lead of the *Buddhi* or reason, is quickened and fostered by a higher pressure and is not a child of material contingencies. But in its active self-formulation in society, ethics has to make terms with the outer factors of existence, which cloud its original perception and diminish its co-ordinating and controlling

capacity. It becomes then a mere construction of the human mind. And this explains the incompetence of ethics to deal successfully with the obstinate, ancestral elements of human nature,—either it represses and strangles them or, which is more frequent, makes a compromise with them and rests content with a mere veneer and a make-believe. If it wants to be strictly logical and consistent, it ends in an unpractical, self-stultifying extremism which plays havoc with the normal poise of life and impresses the mass mind by its relentless self-mortification.

There is another intrinsic defect of morality: it is that it proceeds on a fixed basis of a division into "the good and the bad". Because it is a creation of the human mind, it goes by analysis and division and fails to arrive at any complete harmony and unity. It "sets up an ideal type into which all must force themselves. This moral ideal differs in its constituents and its ensemble in different times and different places. And yet it proclaims itself as a unique type, a categoric absolute; it admits of none other outside itself; it does not even admit a variation within itself. All are to be moulded according to its single ideal pattern, everybody is to be made uniformly and faultlessly the same. It is because morality is of this rigid unreal nature that it is in its principle and its working the contrary of the spiritual life. The spiritual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its infinite diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for perfection in that diversity. Morality lifts up one artificial standard contrary to the variety of life and the freedom of the spirit. Creating something mental, fixed and limited, it asks all to conform to it. All must labour to acquire the same qualities and the same ideal nature."¹

Turning to the practical side of morality, we find that in most cases a whole life is spent in a strenuous endeavour to put into practice some of the most appealing (this appeal varies according to individual culture and temperament) of the precepts or maxims of ethics. The control of anger or greed or lust proves an exhausting enough affair, and yet the result is hardly ever complete and conclusive. The reason of man which takes the leading part in the practice of morality finds itself often floored before the inconvenient facts of the world, the stubbornness of the habitual trends of life and nature and the embarrassing recurrence of the very passions and propensities it tries to get rid of. This happens because the reason of man has little knowledge of the working of the complex elements of human nature and less power to cope with them. Its characteristic way of dealing with them is to fix upon one or two or a few of them at a time, give them an exclusive and exaggerated importance and strive to coerce them into a preconceived pattern. A single principle is sometimes deified as the central truth of life and hammered into a mutilated nature. This narrow rigidity of ethics stands in the way of the flexible, many-sided movement of human nature and results in a sort of hot-house growth and a lopsided development. It is, moreover, usually, attended with a settled gloom or sombreness of spirit which recalls the monastery or the convent.

A frequent untoward consequence of an unbending practice of morality is a magnification of the ego. This may sound a bit paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, as a clear-eyed introspection is sure to reveal. Even the very humility which is practised by the moralist subtly tends to feed the ego and fill it with a secret sense of gratification. This *sattwic ahankara*, the egoism of virtue, is more difficult to overcome than its cruder *rajasic* and *tamasic* forms, for it is conscious of some light and poise in itself and, drunk with the sense of its unrelaxed *tapasya* or self-discipline, feels no need of seeking or surrendering to a higher light. Its chain of gold is an ornament in its eyes and it wears it with an implicit pride. In some extreme forms of self-justifying rigour, morality goes to the extent of becoming not only unspiritual, but even anti-spiritual.

The way out for the moralist from the hold of his mind-made ethics is to realise that he is a pilgrim of eternity and should not therefore rest in any half-way house, however clean and congenial it may be. Ethics is only a stage in the evolution of human consciousness and to cling to a stage is to forfeit the power and privilege of the final fulfilment. Deliverance for him lies in a sincere seeking for and an unconditional surrender to a higher light and a plastic following of its guidance.

RELIGION

Unlike morality, religion has its roots in the deeper parts of human nature. It is as old as man himself and has been passing through various stages to help him on his way to the Spirit. In its evolved form "it belongs to the higher mind of humanity. It is the effort of man's higher mind to approach, as far as lies in its power, something beyond it, something to which humanity gives the name of God or Spirit or Truth or Faith or Knowledge or the Infinite, some kind of Absolute, which the human mind cannot reach and yet tries to reach."² If it retains the original vision and spiritual inspiration which gave it birth, it can be a capable guide of man to the kingdom of the Spirit. But very often its golden kernel is over-

1 and 2. "Words of the Mother."

HER'S LIGHT AND SPIRITUALITY

ABHCHAND

laid with mental accretions and its freedom and suppleness of movement replaced by a rigid fixity of forms. Instead of leading the human consciousness towards the Spirit or the eternal Truth, it imprisons it in its dogmas and doctrines, cults and ceremonies and comes to constitute a positive hindrance to the spiritual life. In its desire to make its appeal wide, it lends itself to many distortions and ends in a flat compromise with the forces of ignorance. "All religions have each the same story to tell. The occasion for its birth is the coming of a great Teacher of the world. He comes and reveals and is the incarnation of a Divine Truth. But men seize upon it, trade upon it, make an almost political organization out of it. The religion is equipped by them with a government and policy and laws, with its creeds and dogmas, its rules and regulations, its rites and ceremonies, all binding upon its adherents, all absolute and inviolable. Like the State, it too administers rewards to the loyal and assigns punishments for those that revolt or go astray, for the heretic and the renegade."³

This is true of all organised credal religions and accounts for their inability to stand the searchlight of the scientific reason. They have ceased to set the human soul afire and stimulate and canalise its aspiration for the Infinite. They have failed to provide a field for it to grow and expand and advance towards its divine self-fulfilment. They have hemmed it in and entangled it in their elaborate formalism. Instead of becoming a jumping board to the Eternal, they have become a drag and a snare.

But their utility in the evolution of human consciousness, so long as they steer clear of dilution, mixture and perversion, cannot be questioned. "In all religions we find invariably a certain number of people who possess a great emotional capacity and are full of a real and ardent aspiration, but have a very simple mind and do not feel the need of approaching the Divine through knowledge. For such natures religion has a use, and it is even necessary to them; for, through external forms like the ceremonies of the Church, it offers a kind of support and help to their inner spiritual aspiration. . . . Religion has been an impulse to the worst things and the best; if the fiercest wars have been waged and the most hideous persecutions carried on in its name, it has stimulated too supreme heroism and self-sacrifice in its cause. Along with philosophy it marks the limit the human mind has reached in its highest activities."⁴

The main work of religion is to awaken the inner being of man and give it an ample scope for self-development and self-perfection. It is like a bridge for the human consciousness to pass from Nature to the Spirit. It should be primarily concerned with the preparation of "man's mind, life and bodily existence for the spiritual consciousness to take it up; it has to lead him to that point where the inner spiritual light begins fully to emerge."⁵

If religion is to accomplish its real mission, it must start with a double movement of revival and reform. It must revive its spiritual core and purify its forms of all dross and distortion. Forms are indispensable in life, for without them life would be robbed of its very *raison d'être*, which is diversity, but they must be plastic and transparent enough to reveal the Spirit and not bury it under their dense and cumbrous externalities. Forms should be like symbols, at once pointing to and expressing the Formless. But the forms of religion are often darkened and disfigured by the very material with which they have to deal—the abounding impurities of the lower nature of man. A constant renovation and quickening of the central truth and the informing spirit, a constant adaptation and change of forms and a progressive approximation to the Spirit are the condition of keeping a religion undefiled, undecaying and effective in the social economy of mankind.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is the native light and force of the Spirit. It is at once the sole means and the end of man's self-transcendence. It does not proceed, like religion, with a set of dogmas and doctrines and a round of rituals and try to reach the consciousness of man through them; it touches, on the contrary, his consciousness first and through it effects a change, sometimes a revolutionary change, in his nature. But because it is the authentic power of the Spirit, it is beyond the grasp of the human reason and is therefore, readily branded as mystic, occult or esoteric. But, in fact, spirituality would not be what it is, if it were not mystic, not a power and principle transcendent of the human mind and capable of illumining and transforming it by virtue of its very transcendence. Spirituality effects a living contact between the limited human consciousness and the infinite consciousness of the Spirit, and this contact cannot be overwhelming and stunning to the mind. A genuine spiritual experience is not like a mental thought, idea or imagination; it comes from the unexplored depths or heights of the being and leaves an indelible impress upon the consciousness, if it does not at once give it a new and decisive orientation. It is the only power that can lift man out of the morass of his ordinary existence and restore

him to his infinity and immortality. It is the only power that can awaken his soul and make it the master of his nature which is now in the hands of the lower forces of life. Neither morality nor religion can change man and his society; it is the very lightning of the Spirit that has to be infused into them to quicken a new birth. If we admit that the Spirit is the essential and universal truth of existence, the one, immortal Self of all beings, and that body, life and mind are its instruments of self-expression in the material world, then we cannot escape the conclusion that the power of the Spirit is the highest power we can avail of for the cure of the complex malaise which afflicts humanity to-day. The ideas of the mind or the ardours of the heart, however powerful they may be, can never reach the root of the malaise and have no compelling hold over the impetuous energies of life.

But the reason of man fights shy of spirituality, which seems to it so immense, impalpable and uncertain. Besides, the element of mystery which is usually associated with spirituality is a positive bugbear to the human reason, and it is ever on the watch for the failings and impostures of pseudo-spiritual spiritism in order to condemn spirituality. But even the highest achievements of reason have not helped man to attain to any abiding harmony and happiness in life, it has only made him more egocentric, as Aldous Huxley rightly insists, restless and unhappy. Speaking of those in whom the mental life is awakened, the Mother says that they are "restless, tormented, agitated, arbitrary, despotic. Caught altogether in the whirl of the renewals and transformations of which they dream, they are ready to destroy everything without knowledge of any foundation on which to construct, and so with their light made only of blinding flashes, they increase yet more the confusion rather than help it to cease."⁶ This does not mean that there is any inherent, insuperable difficulty and defect in the intellect of man which condemns him for ever to a life of stumbling half-knowledge and disquieting disharmony. The difficulty is not in the intellect itself, but in its egoism and its inveterate tendency to divide and analyse and concentrate on parts to the exclusion of the rest. But, says the Divine Mother to the Mother, "This intellectual faculty which makes man vain and leads him into error, is the very faculty which can also, once enlightened and purified, lead him further, higher than the universal nature, to the direct and conscious communion with the Lord of us all, He who is beyond all manifestation. This dividing intelligence which enables him to separate himself from me, enables him also to scale the heights to be climbed, without his advance being enchained and retarded by the totality of the universe which in its immensity and complexity cannot achieve so prompt an ascent."⁷

Spirituality, as I have said above, is the dynamic of a higher, luminous, and infinite consciousness and is not, like morality and religion, a working of the human mind. It is the breaking of a lid, the tearing of a covering or the opening of a door; it is a leap into the unknown or an invasion of the unknown into our consciousness. Whatever its beginning or the trend and tempo of its working, it is bound to appear mysterious and incalculable to the weak and limited human mind. But the bold leap or the headlong plunge has to be taken, for that is the next evolutionary step, if mankind is to transcend itself, not only in rare individuals, but as a race, and justify its existence upon earth by a divine self-perfection.

Spirituality is a free choice of our being and not, like religion, an imposition of society upon it. Being a free choice, it engages and permeates our whole consciousness and illumines and widens it with a rapidity and radicality absolutely unknown to either morality or religion. It can not only liberate our soul, but also liberate and transform our whole nature, rendering it a fit instrument of the Divine. Spirituality is the end of which morality is the beginning and religion the middle term. All the previous preparation of man discovers its secret sense in this final *saltus* and consummation—the recovery of the light and bliss and purity and power of the Spirit.

But spirituality demands a sacrifice and surrender of the entire being and consciousness of man, not for their self-extinction, but for self-fulfilment. An ungrudging self-giving alone can bring about the ultimate release and transfiguration. It will not do to keep bits of himself tied to the various objects and pursuits of the world; all has to be gathered and given, so that all may be united with the Eternal. "When you come to the Yoga (spiritual self-discipline leading to Union), you must be ready to have all your mental buildings and all your vital scaffoldings shattered to pieces. You must be prepared to be suspended in the air with nothing to support you except your faith. You will have to forget your past self and its clings altogether, to pluck it out of your consciousness and be born anew, free from every kind of bondage. Think not of what you were, but of what you aspire to be; be all in what you want to realise. Turn from your dead past and look straight towards the future. Your religion, country, family lie there; it is the DIVINE."⁸

3 and 4. Ibid. 5. "The Life Divine" by Sri Aurobindo.

6 and 7. "Prayers and Meditations of the Mother." 8. "Words of the Mother."

THE POETRY OF JOYCE CHADWICK

By K. D. SETHNA

*Selected Verse** by Joyce Chadwick—this slender volume of nine poems, which I have received from the author, with six poems inscribed in ink on the blank spaces, confirms the judgment prompted by the three poems published in *Mother India* on April 30, last year. The judgment is that Miss Chadwick is a genuine poet and of a really rare sensibility. Of course, in a general way, all genuine poets possess a sensibility that is rare: indeed without it they cannot write true poetry. But there is a range of sensibility that most poets share despite the individual perception of each—and there is a range which is uncommon and shared by only a few like Miss Chadwick. The latter range may not by itself make a poet finer or greater, but it does provide us with a most unusual “inscape” and “instress” (to adopt Hopkins’s pregnant expressions), a depth of vision and an intensity of emotion that reveal with a vivid directness occult, mystical, spiritual meanings and convey a keen sense of the superhuman, the divine, the eternal.

I cannot say that Miss Chadwick’s work is uniformly excellent. Perhaps this is a grave criticism, considering that the book presents “selected verse” and that the poems number no more than fifteen in all. But two things must be said to counteract the gravity of this censure. To be uniformly excellent in the poetic disclosure of such “inscape” and “instress” as we have in Miss Chadwick’s work is to expect almost the impossible and, in view of its difficulty, I may aver that the amount of her excellence is large. Besides, there is a flamelike livingness in her work, perceptible in the background even when not fully brought out, which shows the possibility of writing often at one’s highest. Both, therefore, as promise and achievement, her selected verse is remarkable.

Not only freshly found word and image—intense, beautiful, deepening into distances—but also a strange rhythm imparting an emotion that seems to come with a holy force as if to remake one’s life and, through the new subjectivity, a new objective world: this is the general impression Miss Chadwick’s best work leaves on me. That is why she must be read not with the eye alone. The sounds must get their full value and be physically heard if their suggestions are to envelop us and succeed in materialising, as it were, the inner mystery. When the poems are read with clear though soft audibility, a heart-breaking loveliness is realised: the heart thrills and breaks, so to speak, into a rapt smile and a dream-exploring sight, the eyes catching hold not only of things but also of what is wonderfully behind them and, by that vision, drawing the depths out. The best work here is at once delicate and dynamic—a structure as of modulated mist which one imagines a breath might dissolve and yet marble-strong with a packed precision and purity that pattern forth significances from unknown dimensions of being.

The opening piece, *To God the Creator*, is perhaps the most magnificent in the genre I have tried to indicate. There is some touch of Hopkins—a gripping, rapture-raw, close-flashing though complex directness—and some touch of Abercrombie’s uplifting thought-vigour and impatient massing of ideas—and a touch of the later Yeats’s taut exquisiteness crossed with the quivering and plunging passion of the Metaphysicals. But when I say this I do not mean anything imitative. The touches are only signs of certain broad affinities. Even if there were imitation, the fusing of three or four such temperaments and manners would itself be a striking originality. But there is much more here. Miss Chadwick has a mood and a music all her own, full of a more insistent mystical experience, a concreter seeing of spiritual presences—and the technique too is individual.

In view of that experience and seeing, the truest affinity we may trace is perhaps with what we may call the general or essential poetic current passing through some of Sri Aurobindo’s disciples who write in English, though most of their work Miss Chadwick could scarcely have seen before penning hers. They are, as a rule, more elaborate-structured, more clearly moulded in even their complexities and may be said to have more poise in the midst of their dazzlements: she is more nervous in not only her intricate but also her massive movements, she puts shade within shade with great quickness (often telescoping the grammar), as if she were a little afraid lest she should lose the light that breaks upon her in gushes through what appear to be expanding and contracting apertures. Yet there is for all the difference a subtle resemblance, all the less liable to be missed if one “lets the ear read” and the intuition understand, a resemblance which, when felt, seems to make her and them part of some wonderful new white wave from within, one in fundamental drive in spite of being million-aspected in lambent curve and colourful lift and foaming fall.

There is scarcely a poem in Miss Chadwick’s booklet without the leap upward of a Godhead secret within the human or the leap outward of a Godhead waiting in world-nature or the leap downward of a Godhead poised above the mind’s knowledge. But there is sometimes a wrestling with the sense of these marvels and a turning of them into poetic shape with a deliberative and constructive imagination—a vivid forceful thinking out in images: then the effect is not directly revealing and the inner tone which is almost never absent gets weakened. On occasion, there is

a certain smiling ambiguity, as though the poet were happy with her own seizures of spiritual nuances and did not care whether the word-body into which she puts them brought out their beauty in full. There are also occasions when the language has a lowered intensity and then the “idiom of our times” displays its accidental as distinguished from its essential character and one feels the modernist rather than the modern. As total successes I would choose *To God the Creator*, *A Woman Said This in My Dream*, *The Seven Abilities of the Body*, *All Shape has a Sun and a Moon in It* and *Ability*. I have said enough about the first in my general description of Miss Chadwick’s inspiration. I specially fancy in it the lines:

*No prophet’s notion of you, yours I want;
I want you, tiger-fierce, like lilacs gentle,
Your breath may burn me so, or so enchant:
No matter, come! And if your hurricane Will
My littleness do disperse and my presumption,
And so I am split and burned and, shrivelled, fall,
I can but fall into your dark Destruction—
And your Destruction is you.*

To this I respond immediately because of its poetic quality as well as because it transposes to another and perhaps a feminine plane the mood and urge of lines in a poem of my own (*Agni*) which Miss Chadwick had not at all read when she wrote hers. The lines in question are:

*Come with thy myriad eyes that face all truth,
Thy myriad arms equal to each desire!
Shatter or save, but fill this gap of gloom...
Work thy strange will, but load our gaze no more
With unexplorable freedoms of black air,
An infinite rapture veiled by infinite pain...
Lightning of Truth, God’s lava passion—come!*

However, if Miss Chadwick will not mind it, I may remark that her last two verses,

*I can but fall into your dark Destruction—
And your Destruction is you,*

have an admirable point and force but do not bring out enough the profundity that is in the feeling and the vision. Perhaps more justice would be done to this profundity by writing the lines thus:

*I can but strike the depth of a Destruction
Whose very darkness is you.*

In the same poem I like immensely the following also:

*Now you are golden around me. I am dark,
Central and safe within you, winged with you;
Move in your music towards that mundane mark
All moves to, but entranced...*

It is a fine commingling of the mood of “the Cloud of Unknowing” with something Shelleyan as well as Dantesque. Miss Chadwick’s glimpses of God as Nature itself super-natured are most enchantingly concrete:

*Sweeter to smell than sun-warmed cedar bark,
Shaped with more grace than cats or willow trees,
Harder than stone, more soft than petals, cool
Than a pear, musical than bees,
Movement of stars, May thunder, autumn’s full
Glorious gale-paeans in green uplifted seas
That fall again like young gannets; kind like sleep,
Stillter than old carp in a lily pool...*

And I find poignantly profound the phrases:

*What is the stabbing principle in these
Homely delights?—why dreadful as dear
Dogs barking across mist-riding moonlit hills
Out of old farms, ducks quacking, linden-trees
Sweet far beyond pleasure when the turned summer fills
Field, courtyard, bee-soul with their blossoms’ tune—
Bell-note surely to returned Paradise?*

Here we have to a distinct advantage the qualities of the English genius which, even in its mystical orientation, differs in several respects from the Indian. One of the points of difference—and this is what is here—is a more intimately affectionate awareness of the outer life’s details, including the details of Nature. Other points which are hardly an advantage are, in general, a tendency to have the inner vision in excited spurts instead of in a steady glow and a proclivity to hold together the golden glimpses either in a sort of happy heap or by means of a cementing intellectual imagination instead of catching them up against an immediately perceived mystical background which serves to make them cohere.

I am touched deeply also by the first paragraph of *Beyond the Moon-beam*:

*Labour done,
To her own music, slenderly, the Moon goes down;
Leaving the sea to anguish for the shore alone,
The growth-struck seedling alone split and spiral on;
Child-bearing, love-bereft women strive to find
Beyond the Moon’s working a more pitiful Mind.*

It is worth pausing a little over both the art and the significance of these lines. The brief opening phrase, “Labour done”, cannot be technically

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bettered for suggestion of nothing more remaining to be accomplished and of a quiet yet implacable finality. The next line—

To her own music, slenderly, the Moon goes down— is a triumph of subtlety. In conjunction with the phrase preceding it, it manages to convey with an easy concision that now the Moon is free from the cosmic toil to which it was applied and so it attends to its own being's rhythm, gets rapt in its own beauty which is an exquisiteness no travail can exhaust or mar, and moves out of the world's sight to a repose that has no ears for the struggle and the agony of the world. This last shade of meaning is brought out clearly in the next three lines which carry in perfect language the pathos of a world derelict of the light and abandoned to the loneliness of its own self, all its movement and growth and creativity a painful thwarted grope. The concluding words of the passage, hinting the blind direction of the search by "child-bearing, love-bereft women"—

Beyond the Moon's working a more pitiful Mind— are a veritable masterpiece, full of the "tears of things", charged with the terrible coldness of the vast and beautiful powers that rule our sublunary life, powers attracting and stimulating us, working within our hearts and our limbs, giving us short spells of pleasure and then forsaking us to an unfathomable woe—a woe which strains towards some Mystery beyond the indifferent wonders of the visible universe and calls out for compassion, for understanding, for guidance and personal response. Mark the craftsmanship of the line—the play of all the three labials in the language (*b, m, p*), the scheme of a varied fivefold labiality which gives an extreme or saturated sense of an alliterative yet spontaneous insistence expressing the constant cry of the human soul: the labial alliteration is especially apt because a sustained "feel" is created by it of trembling lips of prayer appealing beyond time to eternity. And the two *m*'s of "more" and "Mind" pick up significantly the initial sound in "Moon", as if to connect Nature with Supernature and to pass through both the beauty and the power of the former to some marvellous Godhead that gives the cosmos its being and also transcends the cosmic workings by bringing not only beauty and power but also a brooding love.

One wishes the whole of *Beyond the Moonbeam* had the same inspiration. Not that the rest is infelicitous or superficial; but except for a line here and there we miss the absolute accent. It seems that, though Miss Chadwick has generally a deftness of phrase, she is mostly at her best in short snatches and in small poems. Take *A Woman Said This in My Dream*:

"Father, give me
Half a crown.
I must pay
For time to pray:
Holiness is
Dear to-day.
Father, give me half a queen's,
Half a martyr's
Crown."

This has admirably the crosslight of a dream-experience which yet goes beyond mere dreaming to the spontaneous and surprising felicities of the inner mystic mind. I think it is unique in its naive but still deep charm and its sudden splendour of suggestion with the help of a revelatory pun. In a different way the poem Miss Chadwick has written out in ink on page 9, *The Seven Abilities of the Body*, is also of the same exceptional quality:

All the powers before they go
Bless a body's overthrow:
Scarlet, rose and purple toil—
And the honeysuckle Heart—
To despoil.
These that held it, loosen the knot:
The grey inhabitant of the throat
Moulds it out;
The white watcher in the head
Spreads, by gazing at it, the rout;

*The blue lily over them
Is—already—on a new stem.*

An exquisite occultism is here, a freshness and an unstrained surprise by means so simple yet packed with breath-taking secrets. I am inclined to put *All Shape Has a Sun and a Moon in It* (again a poem handwritten in my copy) on a par with these two gems, because of its pure direct distilled intuitiveness:

A Moon that sees,
A Sun that is,
Form finds in itself
On its knees.
Kneeling Man
Arising can
Move delighted in any place
That silvern face,
That flaming head,
On his little, needed, neat
Clay feet.

This kind of art is a rarity, seldom practised before except by Emily Dickinson perhaps, but not by her in the same fashion—hers was a certain intuitive epigrammaticism or else paradox-play that by a most economical inspiration, in which homely phrases were injected unpredictably with a piquant splendour, pricked open the mystery of the human heart or pinned down the far-calling strangeness lurking in familiar sights: Joyce Chadwick's is an intuitive symbolism, an immediate seizing of inner realities through concrete unelaborated emblems or emblematic gestures. Emily Dickinson seems to catch through the wide-awake intelligence's two outward-gazing eyes intense twinkles from life's depths: Joyce Chadwick is an artist of what is termed by initiates the Third Eye and she operates with quick flashes in a dimension of which the wide-awake intelligence knows nothing but into which one might slip between waking and slumber.

Something of this art but now less occult though still inly-lit is in the lines from *No!*:

Old woman, you want praise for a flower
Who should sigh for a Sickle,
Who should burn for a Bonfire.

But the connection with the common world is more clear. That does not detract from the poetry as such, and Miss Chadwick is fine too in her straightforward descriptive mysticism:

Still, I arose on a white ladder,
Thence in the ultimate whiteness was:
Its energies dropping in pansy-petal
Rich heats for the terminal
Cold body to use—

or,

White light, white will,
White fire that forms all,
Be you wine or be your fever
Working in me, your manifestation...

This booklet is, of course, not everybody's meat, and a tendency in places to be in both thought and language condensed and complicated may keep some people away and, I should add, a degree of elusiveness, a sort of bright slipping through the fingers, in a few poems may discourage the average reader of poetry; but these are not in themselves faults. And though they are not always flamed into positive qualities and merits by Miss Chadwick, I am of the opinion that *Selected Verse*—especially my copy of it with the poet's additions—is a treasure in its own kind and compass, achieving a good deal of radiant value in an extraordinary and difficult field. As for the future, I can only say to the author: "Keep up the vivid intimacy you have with the inner light and fire. But let your gaze be more steady, more broad, and let your sensitive and loving hand pass more firmly and more continuously over the burning body of your God which at present you so wonderfully feel with many short intense contacts of rapture."

VILLAGE PANCHAYET—Continued from page 4

were solved by human statesmanship, by the application or evolution of a system of administration giving effect to an extensive decentralization and utmost latitude to the operations of local government, so that numerous autonomous centres were at work to cope with the administrative requirements of an extensive territory... The fact of the matter is that, just as the aloofness of society from the state has been the main means of its self-preservation when the state is engulfed in political revolutions, and the independent development of local government has provided, like the shell of the tortoise, a haven of peace where the national culture can draw in for its own safety when political storms burst over the land—so also does this system serve to lighten considerably the burden of a new administration, with the result that the addition of mere territory does not materially add to its difficulties. The administration of the Mauryan empire was possible because it did not cherish the ambition of setting up a centralized government consciously legislating for, and controlling the life of, every part of that vast whole, but aimed only at an elastic system of federalism or confederation in which were incorporated, along with the central government at the metropolis, as parts of the same system, the indigenous local administrations. The essence of this imperial system was thus a recognition of local autonomy at the expense of the authority of the central government, which was physically unfit to assert itself except by its enforced affiliation to the pre-existing system of local government."

(Local Government in Ancient India, by Dr. Mookerji).

We have no doubt that this system of unification based on local autonomy should not only be adopted in the Constitution of India but that if a world Government is to be established in order to ensure permanent peace in the world, it can only succeed by following these lines, and India, on account of her past experiments with her vast territory, is most suited to furnish a model. And in such a system the village panchayet, formed on ancient lines, should serve as a stable basis. As we have seen in ancient times, these panchayats were not created by the laws of the Government as it is being done now; they had an independent origin out of fluid conditions of tribal life and organisation. When the state came it had to treat with them more or less on terms of equality and recognize their pre-existing rights by conventions and agreements. The village system, thus developed through free co-operation with the state, lasted up to the advent of British rule which steamrollered them out of existence, substituting local boards on western lines. If the ancient system has to be revived, it must be newly created, but the tradition is still there in the subconsciousness of the Indian people and the new creation should follow the ancient lines as far as possible and feasible under modern conditions. In the first place, they must not be treated as subordinate departments or branches of the

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BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

FLASHES OF TRUTH

GRACE OF THE GREAT AND OTHER ESSAYS by M. P. PANDIT
(The Society for the Spiritual and Cultural Renaissance of Bharat,
Lalita Niwas, 6/23 Edward Elliotts Road, Madras 4. Price: Rs. 1-8)

The book is a small collection of essays contributed by the author to various periodicals. The author has thrown a vivid light on a vast and varied field of human life and problems ranging from 'Woman's Place in Society' to 'Euthanasia' and then to 'Faith' and 'Meditation'. Mr. Pandit is a man of insight and each essay is replete with flashes of truth and this also seems to be the secret of his originality, his sureness of taste and his vigour of style. Everywhere it is the blue flame of a lofty aspiration that propels his pen.

Because he has seized hold of the deeper realities of life by constantly diving far beneath the superficialities, he can give us glimpses of truth with a rare directness and at times his manner is so clinching and epigrammatic that each sentence appears a column of light chasing away some false glimmer. He says, for instance, "It is seeming greatness before which one feels dwarfed, small, and slinks away with a possessing sense of his own inferiority. A great one always radiates greatness", "Have we not come by a wonderful touchstone with which we can easily differentiate between gold and all that has a false glitter?"

The second essay is a brilliant exposition of a message by the Mother. Mr. Pandit is endowed with a rare perspicacity and his interpretation of the inner bearings of the present world-crisis is strikingly true and hope-inspiring. Indeed without this insight into its meaning, "History teaches us nothing; it is a confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions. We do not seize the real sense of all this change and this continued streaming forward of human life in the channels of Time" (*Ideal of Human Unity* by Sri Aurobindo). Mr. Pandit rightly observes: "Humanity is not a creation of an extra-cosmic chance, destined

to go round and round itself in each cycle and perish. The universe is a willed creation of a Supra-cosmic Truth-existence and has a purpose". In the social and political spheres, despite many retrogressive steps and back-slidings, the trend of Nature has definitely been towards breaking the narrow domestic walls erected by a myopic vision and building larger and larger aggregate units, and as he points out, "Today when Nature is preparing to take the next inevitable leap from the Nation group to one International group, the crisis is the severest. The group-egos are fighting hard for self-preservation and instinctively resist the process of being merged by the collective whole".

The essay on meditation is equally illuminating and his description of the right poise in meditation is sure to bring solace to modern man distracted beyond measure.

Fanaticism often puts on the sanctimonious garb of a spiritual faith and whole nations spring to their feet at its call. Hitler and Mussolini, both instruments of diabolic forces, had an unshakable faith in their destinies. The side-walks of history are strewn with wrecks of many such men of egoistic faith. But such dark faiths cut no ice. "It is a smoke-obscured flame that cannot burn upwards to heaven". (Sri Aurobindo). How then to find out with an eye of discrimination what is true and what is false, what is genuine and what is pseudo? The author has treated the whole problem admirably and cleared away many a mist hanging about the eyebrows.

The last essay, "Our Yoga and the Challenge of Pragmatism" is perhaps the masterpiece of the book, scintillating with rather caustic criticism of the Western approach to Reality. The essay brings into relief the quixotic nature of the battles fought in European Philosophy. It opens with a rather severe lash.

"CLOUDCOCKOPOLIS"

THE BIRDS OF ARISTOPHANES: Translated by Gilbert Murray
(Allen & Unwin. Price 7/6 net).

Aristophanes was no romantic comedian. But in *The Birds* he wrote an "escape play". It was a time like the present, when following a war people found themselves faced with scarcities of all kinds and burdens enough, including heavy taxation. Aristophanes, therefore, takes up two elderly men who try to escape out of these difficulties by going off to some other place. No such place is easy to find. In the end they seek the advice of Tereus the legendary king who had been converted into a bird. As he also could not tell of an ideal place free from the vexations of the earth it is decided to build a City of Birds where they will be able to live in happiness. Having built the City they are able to enjoy the offerings sent up from the earth. That leads to a war with the gods who are in the end forced to make a compromise advantageous to the City of Birds.

In a comedy, and especially in a comedy by Aristophanes the story is nothing. It is the humour and the fun, the satire and the allusions, and in the case of this play, the beautiful lyrics, that make up the charm and the attraction. Though the actual references may not be so keenly felt by the modern reader as by the dramatist's contemporaries in spite of the helpful notes of Dr. Gilbert Murray, the types may well be recognized, and the reader can follow with sympathetic relish the hits and innuendos of the author. This is especially so at present when the interferences of officials, the

restrictions and exactions, the black-marketings and scarcities are more fully suffered than at many other periods. Who would not like to escape with Pithetaerus and Eulepides to Cloudcockopolis in the upper air?

And the invitation is so attractive. Sings the Nightingale:

*O Humans, ye natures so dimly
alive, like leaves that blossom
and fade,*

*Ye little-achievers, creations of
clay, impermanent tribes of the
shade,*

*Ephemeral, wingless, much-suffer-
ing mortals, Men!*

*Men that are shapes of a dream,
To Us, the immortal, surrender
your minds, Us ever alive and
agleam;*

.....

*We'll be with you as friends, and
give in good truth*

*To yourselves, your sons, and the
sons of your sons,*

*Absolute health, unlimited wealth
And life and peace and laughter
and youth,*

*And festival dances, with food in
tons!*

*Till the birds' own milk, with
never a hitch,*

*Comes raining in showers, making
all of you rich.*

The Birds is an escape play; but the escape is so satisfying that its delight is not confined to the short while of its reading. It fills the mind with sounds and fancies that keep echoing through the livelong day.

P. L. STEPHEN

inextricable labyrinth.

The book is sure to create a stir coming as it does from the pen of one who is not only an erudite but who has filled his pockets full with the treasures of the Spirit. In view of the price of the book the get-up is very attractive though the quality of the paper could be improved.

RAVINDRANATH KHANNA.

VILLAGE PANCHAYET —Continued from page 9

government; if the state furnishes a constitution, it can be only in the way of a model, as the government prepares model rules for the management of co-operative societies. As a matter of principle, the villagers themselves must frame their own constitution and manage their affairs in their own rights and not with powers delegated from the government. The Government will have no power to intervene in the internal administration of the villages, except in certain specified matters which affect the general interests of the country as a whole. The villages will not have to depend on the Government for financing their affairs. As Mr. C. R. Srinivasan suggested in Madras, the income from land revenue should be transferred to villagers as the mainstay of their budget. Under the existing system, the village panchayet has to find money for constructive purposes by levying fresh taxes on the people who are already over-taxed, and that is not at all a practical proposition. Mr. Srinivasan, referring to the prohibition policy of the Madras Government, aptly observed; "If the Government can forego a revenue source, twice the size of land revenue (Excise), there is nothing in principle to object to the transfer of this source to villages where most of the nation-building activities have to be attempted."

Living Village Units

If the villagers are thus allowed to manage their own affairs through institutions framed by themselves and if they have an independent source of income in the land revenue, they will get the true taste of freedom that will create a really new life and enthusiasm. And if the villages are thus formed into living units, they will contribute greatly to the solution of most national problems. Thus as long as food is scarce, it should be rationed all over the country, in surplus as well as deficit areas, and the villages should be asked to manage their own rationing and procurement. Mr. K. M. Munshi, Food Minister, replying to the recent debate in Parliament on the food situation, observed that there could not possibly be any accurate statistics in regard to food production or sufficiency. Mr. Munshi

said the estimate of the number of people to be fed at the end of 1951, and the increased production, was bound to be hypothetical. There was a tendency in the surplus States to minimise the estimate of surplus, while in deficit areas the tendency was to maximise the deficit. Nevertheless he agreed with Mr. Sidhwa that there would be self-sufficiency in food, provided there was unified procurement all over the country and even distribution of 16 ozs. per an adult in rural areas and 12 ozs. in urban areas. But, said Mr. Munshi, in a vast country like India, with different States and different administrations and with different levels of agricultural production, the self-sufficiency in theory was unreal in practice. We submit that these difficulties can be solved by making the villages true self-governing units. All States and all towns and villages should be asked voluntarily to accept a uniform ration of 12 ozs. as long as scarcity lasts, and the village panchayets should be asked to prepare correct statistics and also procure surplus grains if there be any and stock them in the village itself until they are required by the government. Thus the food available in the country will be evenly distributed in a manner which has not been so far possible for the Government even though they are investing huge sums and incurring heavy losses in civil supplies.

One objection that can be raised against our proposal to grant full self-government to villages immediately is that the villages are full of factions and corruption and that they are not fit to govern themselves. But following this line of thought we should call back the British to govern us as there is faction and corruption in all levels of society and not only in villages. Self-government itself is the best training ground for making one fit for self-government. Let the villagers learn by mistakes and abuses. Non-official organisations should be started to help the villagers and there can be some provision in law for interference by the Government in cases of palpable injustice, tyranny or revolt. That sort of intervention in urgent cases will not take away from the self-governing character of the Panchayets and that will serve as a salutary check.

THE HERITAGE OF INDIA

BY DR. W. G. RAFFÉ

London is soon to receive a series of books, chiefly on the Indian arts, at a price within the means of the ordinary student. Messrs Tiranti have compiled a formidable project, in not less than ten separate volumes, in which they hope to contain an appreciation of various phases of Indian art, separated artificially according to sculptures or 'bronzes' or 'architecture'. This is the typical West European approach of the specialist scholar—formulated in one mode in museum system; and in this other mode of books that afford—in the main—an expanded version of the tiny labels which must serve to identify each object that is exhibited.

Ancient India never had any museums. There were not any separate 'arts' or 'sciences' while even the technicalities of craftsmanship were all in the vital sub-stratum of all normal life. Hence it is difficult for the ordinary educated Western mind to begin to see these material expressions of a great religious system—or parallel series of systems, if we must admit for a moment the sectarian labels and divergent dogmas—for all these fine pieces of work were conceived integrally as true religious expression; and by no means in the modern mode, as 'works of art' intended to set forth the momentary notions of one man from his single physical point of view. Without being able to bridge this considerably different conception, Europe cannot begin seriously to understand the millions of objects—often broken, separated from their original environment where alone they had full meaning—that now rest in museums, in Europe, in America, and now also in India. The glass case cuts off this ancient inspiration as effectively as in the 'natural history museum' the glass catacomb contains dead animals and birds, in a mere external semblance of life. The museum is deadly to all vital art; just as the typical 'museum idea' is fatal in barring true comprehension both of art in religion and religion in art. It may be a long time before even one museum gets itself arranged not in archaeological mode, not by accidents of chronology, but by the inspiration of each doctrine that vitalized and brought forth each divergent style of material expression in

mythos and dogma.

This is not to say that we cannot afford to neglect even the slightest help, to spread a wider knowledge of the innumerable objects now classified as 'works of art'—and this series of small handbooks will certainly help. The better part of this first issue, on *Classical Indian Sculpture*,* is most certainly in the excellently printed illustrations—including some 86 items in all. The text, by Chintamani Kar, begins with assumptions of Western 'aesthetic' realism as its basis of criterion—he has not the concept of rhythm—for example—as Laurence Binyon displayed in his *Flight of the Dragon*. We cannot fully agree with the statement that he "explains the important political and religious events" or "points out the bearing of ancient myths and icons (!) on the art of the time." Indeed, it would be folly for us to expect this welcome achievement; in the limited space it would not be feasible. Mr. Kar is more concerned with the modelling of form than the modelling of ideas in religion; yet we must have easy reference to all this material, in convenient pictorial form; and it is this factor that brings the book to a ready acceptance. At the price it is a marvel of economic book production. The map is *kutchakam*—mere schoolboy work,—and should have been drawn much better, with more data; it does not even include Nalanda or the two sites mentioned in the very first paragraph. We shall look forward to perusal of the remainder of the works in this project—hoping that sooner or later we shall come to what must be the key book of any such series—an explanation of the vital Ritual that was performed in the ancient temples; and from which ceremonial all the splendour of architecture was developed, into the accompanying mythic modes revealed through sculpture and painting. Always it was this living theme which stimulated the work and governed its formal expression; and unless this central religious core is known and understood, no comprehension of these arts can be developed.

* "Classical Indian Sculpture" by Chintamani Kar with 86 illustrations in photogravure. (Published by Messrs. A. Tiranti, London, price Six Shillings).

LONDON'S NEW CENTRE OF INDIAN CULTURE: THE ASIAN INSTITUTE

London has long been without any permanent centre for advancement of the European knowledge of Indian culture—which fact is all the more remarkable in view of the century-old contacts of Britain with India. Or are we to suppose that it was always considered that military and commercial contacts were enough, with a modicum of missionary enterprise thrown in for good weight?

We have never had the establishment of a single prominent INDIAN MUSEUM but it is to be hoped that the new Government of the Republic of India will give this necessity their early consideration. It is essential—no less for the good of India than for the good of Britain, that a great and permanent centre—filled with living interest as much as museum and books—shall become available. It might cost several lakhs of rupees—but it would be enormously worth while, if only as a good-will investment, and a signal of Indian prestige.

Meanwhile, a far-seeing Indian gentleman, for many years resident in Britain, has himself with some financial risk, undertaken in a smaller way, such an enterprise. Mr. D. P. Chaudhuri has opened The Asian Institute at 16/17 Irving Street, by Leicester Square, in the heart of London; as a centre open every day for the publicising of all the Asian arts and cultures. Having begun in a quiet way, the Asian Institute is slowly making its name; and slowly gaining renown as a place where the products of modern Indian and other Asian art might be seen.

The formulation of the Asian Institute makes it necessary—under the complicated network of law, bye-laws and regulations (some 25,000 of them encumber our daily lives in Britain—using much paper and wasting much time) to gather a sustaining membership in a kind of club. The fee is very low—some three rupees a year, but it is open

also to Europeans interested in Asia.

Mr. Chaudhuri has sketched out a formidable programme. In the hall attached, he intends to show documentary films (only the 16-mm. size can be utilised) and sometimes oriental dance and music. Lectures are to be given; or debates on suitable topics; though it must be observed that the Asian Institute remains strictly non-political—which is a wise proviso. Later it is contemplated that visits will be made to centres of Indian interest; dinners may be held (there is a restaurant conveniently situated next door) and other social gatherings. Classes may be started in certain subjects, not covered by the manifold educational institutions of the metropolis; or by better experts than can usually be found. In all, the general purpose is to spread a wider and far more accurate knowledge about Asia, in this great European capital.

We may hope later to see the small scale production of modern Indian plays; though here again, finance remains as a primary problem, for even with free services of talented amateur players, it still remains necessary to make or purchase costumes, decoration and other production material; and to offset lighting expenses and publicity. Yet the centre exists as a promising 'show-case' for any aspiring Indian poet, who may think of writing suitable plays—and without asking for a playing-cast of 200 actors and a stage of 100 feet in width! Indians who may visit London are invited to call at the Asian Institute, to become personally acquainted with its premises and its methods; they may even find it possible to make contacts with other people who can help in their specific problems, which if they are strangers to Europe, making their first visit, may prove most valuable.

DR. W. G. RAFFÉ

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS —Continued from page 12

and continent enough for any superstructure or content of multitude.

"To condemn this abundance as barbarous is to apply a foreign standard. Where after all are we bound to draw the line? To the pure classical taste Shakespeare's art once appeared great but barbarous for a similar reason,—one remembers the Gallic description of him as a drunken barbarian of genius,—this artistic unity non-existent or spoilt by crowding tropical vegetation of incident and character, his teeming imaginations violent, exaggerated, sometimes bizarre, monstrous, without symmetry, proportion and all the other lucid unities, lightnesses, graces loved by the classic mind. That mind might say of his work that here there is indeed a Titanic genius, a mass of power, but of unity, clarity, classic nobility no trace, but rather an entire absence of lucid grace and lightness and restraint, a profusion of wild ornament and an imaginative riot without law or measure, strained figures, distorted positions and gestures, no dignity, no fine, just, rationally natural and beautiful classic movement and pose. But

even the strictest Latin mind has now got over its objections to the 'splendid barbarism' of Shakespeare and can understand that here is a fuller, less sparing and exiguous vision of life, a greater intuitive unity than the formal unities of the classic aesthesis. But the Indian vision of the world and existence was vaster and fuller than Shakespeare's, because it embraced not merely life, but all being, not merely humanity, but all the worlds and all Nature and cosmos. The [European] mind not having arrived except in individuals at any close, direct, insistent realisation of the unity of the infinite self or the cosmic consciousness peopled with its infinite multiplicity, is not driven to express these things, cannot understand or put up with them when they are expressed in this oriental art, speech and style and object to it as the Latin mind once objected to Shakespeare. Perhaps the day is not distant when it will see and understand and perhaps even itself try to express the same things in another language."

K. G.

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(37)

One of our chief aims will be to provide authentic guidance in regard to the many important questions which arise in the minds of thoughtful persons all over the world. This cannot be better done than by considering these questions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's writings, because Sri Aurobindo is not only a Master of Yoga in possession of the Eternal Spiritual Truths, but also a Guide and Helper of mankind in various spheres of life and thought. To bring home the light of this guidance and to make it directly applicable to the problems that present themselves to an observing intelligence, a series of questions of common interest along with precise answers directly taken from Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q. 1: What is the right way of looking at Indian works of art which the Western mind generally misses and consequently fails to arrive at their true import and significance?

A: "The characteristic attitude of the Indian reflective and creative mind necessitates in our view of its creations an effort to get beyond at once to the inner spirit of the reality it expresses and see from it and not from outside. And in fact to start from the physical details and their synthesis appears to me quite the wrong way to look at an Indian work of art. The orthodox style of western criticism seems to be to dwell scrutinisingly on the technique, on form, on the obvious story of the form, and then pass to some appreciation of beautiful or impressive emotion and idea. It is only in some deeper and more sensitive minds that we get beyond that depth into profounder things. A criticism of that kind applied to Indian art leaves it barren or poor of significance. Here the only right way is to get at once through a total intuitive or revelatory impression or by some meditative dwelling on the whole, *dhyana* in the technical Indian term, to the spiritual meaning and atmosphere, make ourselves one with that as completely as possible, and then only the helpful meaning and value of all the rest comes out with a complete and revealing force. For here it is the spirit that carries the form, while in most western art it is the form that carries whatever there may be of spirit. The striking phrase of Epictetus recurs to the mind in which he describes man as a little soul carrying a corpse, *psucharion ei bastazon nekron*. The more ordinary western outlook is upon animate matter carrying in its life a modicum of soul. But the seeing of the Indian mind and of Indian art is that of a great, a limitless self and spirit, *mahan atma*, which carries to us in the sea to its presence a living shape of itself, small in comparison to its own infinity, but yet sufficient by the power that informs this symbol to support some aspect of that infinite's self-expression. It is therefore essential that we should look here not solely with the physical eye informed by the reason and the aesthetic imagination, but make the physical seeing a passage to the opening of the inner spiritual eye and a moved communion in the soul. A great oriental work of art does not easily reveal its secret to one who comes to it solely in a mood of aesthetic curiosity or with a considering critical objective mind, still less as the cultivated and interested tourist passing among strange and foreign things; but it has to be seen in loneliness, in the solitude of one's self, in moments when one is capable of long and deep meditation and as little weighted as possible with the conventions of material life. That is why the Japanese with their fine sense in these things,—a sense which modern Europe with her assault of crowded art galleries and over-pictured walls seems to have quite lost, though perhaps I am wrong, and those are the right conditions for display of European art,—have put their temples and their Buddhas as often as possible away on mountains and in distant or secluded scenes of Nature and avoid living with great paintings in the crude hours of daily life, but keep them by preference in such a way that their undisputed suggestion can sink into the mind in its finer moments or apart where they can go and look at them in a treasured secrecy when the soul is at leisure from life. That is an indication of the utmost value pointing to the nature of the appeal made by eastern art and the right way and mood for looking at its creations".

Q. 2: Is this way of approach necessary for a proper appreciation of ancient Indian architecture?

A: "Indian architecture especially demands this kind of inner study and this spiritual self-identification with its deepest meaning and will not otherwise reveal itself to us. These sacred buildings are the signs, the architectural self-expression of an ancient spiritual and religious culture. Ignore the spiritual suggestion, the religious significance, the meaning of the symbols and indications, look only with the rational and secular aesthetic mind, and it is vain to expect that we shall get to any true and discerning appreciation of this art. And it has to be remembered too that the religious spirit here is something quite different from the sense of European religions; and even mediaeval Christianity, especially as now looked at by the modern European mind which has gone through the two great crises of the Renaissance and recent secularism, will not in spite of its oriental origin and affinities be of much real help. To bring in into the artistic look on an Indian temple occidental memories or a comparison with Greek Parthenon or Italian church or Duomo or Campanile or even the great Gothic cathedrals of mediaeval

France, though these have in them something much nearer to the Indian mentality, is to intrude a fatally foreign and disturbing element or standard in the mind. But this consciously or else subconsciously is what almost every European mind does to a greater or less degree,—and it is here a pernicious immixture, for it subjects the work of a vision that saw the immeasurable to the tests of an eye that dwells only on measure."

Q. 3: Some European art critics have remarked that Indian architecture lacks in unity which is a fundamental requirement of all art. Is this true?

A: "The failure to see at once the unity of this architecture is perfectly natural to a European eye, because unity in the sense demanded by the Western conception, the Greek unity gained by much suppression and a sparing use of detail and circumstance or even the Gothic unity got by casting everything into the mould of a single spiritual aspiration, is not there. And the greater unity that really is there can never be arrived at at all, if the eye begins and ends by dwelling on form and detail and ornament, because it will then be obsessed by these things and find it difficult to go beyond to the unity which all this in its totality serves not so much to express in itself, but to fill it with that which comes out of it and relieve its oneness by multitude. An original oneness, not a combined synthetic or an effected unity, is that from which this art begins and to which its work when finished returns or rather lives in it as in its self and natural atmosphere. Indian sacred architecture constantly represents the greatest oneness of the self, the cosmic, the infinite in the immensity of its world-design, the multitude of its features of self-expression, *laksana*, (yet the oneness is greater than and independent of their totality and in itself indefinable), and all its starting-point of unity in conception, its mass of design and immensity of material, its crowding abundance of significant ornament and detail and its return towards oneness are only intelligible as necessary circumstances of this poem, this epic or this lyric—for there are smaller structures which are such lyrics—of the Infinite. The western mentality, except in those who are coming or returning, since Europe had once something of this cult in her own way, to this vision, may find it difficult to appreciate the truth and meaning of such an art, which tries to figure existence as a whole and not in its pieces; but I would invite those Indian minds who are troubled by these criticisms or partly or temporarily overpowered by the western way of seeing things, to look at our architecture in the light of this conception and see whether all but minor objections do not vanish as soon as the real meaning makes itself felt and gives body to the first indefinable impression and emotion which we experience before the greater constructions of the Indian builders."

Q. 4: The objection of lack of unity in Indian architecture is derived partly from the fact that it is teeming with an excessive crowding or ornamental details which the western critic finds very confusing and distasteful. How far is this true?

A: "The objection that an excess of thronging detail and ornament hides, impairs or breaks up the unity, is advanced only because the eye has made the mistake of dwelling on the detail first without relation to this original spiritual oneness, which has first to be fixed in an intimate spiritual seeing and union and then all else seen in that vision and experience. When we look on the multiplicity of the world, it is only a crowded plurality that we can find and to arrive at unity we have to reduce, to suppress what we have seen or sparingly select a few indications or to be satisfied with the unity of this or that separate idea, experience or imagination; but when we have realised the self, the infinite unity and look back on the multiplicity of the world, then we find that oneness able to bear all the infinity of variation and circumstance we can crowd into it and its unity remains unabridged by even the most endless self-multiplication of its informing creation. We find the same thing in looking at this architecture. The wealth of ornament, detail, circumstance in Indian temples represents the infinite variety and repetition of the worlds,—not our world only, but all the planes,—suggests the infinite multiplicity in the infinite oneness. It is a matter of our own experience and fullness of vision how much we leave out or bring in, whether we express so much or so little or attempt as in the Dravidian style to give the impression of a teeming inexhaustible plenitude. The largeness of this unity is base

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