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Managing Editor:
K. R. PODDAR

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K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

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The CHALLENGE of REPRESSION and GENOCIDE

All over India the minds of men are both anguished and perplexed. The tragedy of the Hindu population in East Bengal is not only terrible but seems to reach down to basic problems of inter-dominion ethics. That is why even the anguish is doubled: there appears to be no clear-cut way out of the tragedy. Tomorrow the communal situation in Pakistan may improve, but it is certain that no guarantee can be found for a fundamental improvement. Murder, mutilation, arson, loot and rape may recur any time. How shall we prevent them? What steps would be legitimate?

The most puzzled man in the country is Pandit Nehru. He feels that what is happening in East Pakistan is closely linked up with what has happened for the last two and a half years in Kashmir and yet there is the difference that he could march his armies into Kashmir while now he is holding them back. He is all for peaceful means of settlement and yet he realises that there is no peace, for Pakistan has butchered thousands and vast multitudes are fleeing from her territory because there is no security or justice there and they are pouring into India for protection and appealing to her to stop the iniquitous war that is being waged on them. Surely here is a pull in two directions, with the result that a man of fine sensibilities and high principles like our Prime Minister is bound to be in acute torture and oppressed by a sense of being baulked and frustrated.

ARE HINDUS IN PAKISTAN NATIONALS OR ALIENS?

The whole perplexity, however, rests on a central misconception. He has said: "Inevitably, we cannot control happenings in East Bengal except in consultation with the Pakistan Central Government and the Government of East Bengal." This is but to rephrase the stand taken by East Bengal's Premier, Mr. Nurul Amin. "My Government," he says, "are of the opinion that minorities in each country, being nationals of that country, must look to the Government of their own country for protection of their lives and property and that it would be disastrous to future relationship between Pakistan and India to encourage any other feeling tantamount to a form of ex-territorial loyalty in either State." Mr. Amin is a lawyer and Pandit Nehru has also had a legal training. Both of them stress what seems a point of international law, the one because it suits him, the other because of genuine scruple.

But it is worth while analysing the legal nicety upheld by the heads of the two States. First let us ask: What is its real status in Pakistan's mind? If Pakistan is based avowedly on the two-nation theory which rules that Muslims and Hindus cannot ever form a single nation, it is illogical to argue that the Hindu minorities in Pakistan can be nationals. By very definition they become aliens. And it is as aliens that Pakistan's Press regards them. The *Dawn* of Karachi, which is a semi-official organ of the Pakistan Government, recently argued that the Hindus resident in Pakistan should be treated as aliens and expelled since Assam has passed a law to expel the large number of Muslim immigrants from East Bengal. There is no parity in fact between immigrants who have been citizens of another State and whose motives are suspect and people who have never left a province and have been living there from their birth. Assam is one of those parts of India which figured in Mr. Jinnah's original plan of Pakistan, just as Kashmir did. Since partition there has been a huge influx of Muslims—almost four times that of non-Muslims—which the Assam Government rightly considers "suspiciously methodical," the purpose being to flood Assam with Pakistani elements that can raise the standard of revolt and claim to be members of a national uprising more or less on the same pattern as the "Azad" Kashmir gang. There is absolutely no valid reason for Muslims in such masses to move from East Bengal into India; and an immigrants Bill, calculated to push out these 500,000 undesirables, is a correct measure of security and in consonance with Article 9 of our Constitution. Aliens undoubtedly they are. How can they be compared to the Hindus who have known no other country than East Bengal, mostly agriculturists whose families have been attached to the soil for generations without count? To institute the comparison is simply to declare that a Hindu just by being

a Hindu is an alien in Pakistan. And even the comparison happens to be instituted precisely because it is the ineradicable conviction of the upholders of Pakistan that Hindus and Muslims are two nations and cannot be anything else than aliens to each other.

Turning from theory to actual treatment, what do we find? Except for Mr. Mandal of the Depressed Classes, there is not a single Hindu incumbent of a high post in the whole of Pakistan though the number of Hindus is considerable. The Pakistan High Commissioner at Ottawa, Mr. Muhammed Ali, once declared grandiloquently that Mr. Mandal was not the sole non-Muslim enjoying a high post: the Governor of East Pakistan, the Chairman of the Public Services Commission of that province, several judges of the high court in the Punjab and in East Pakistan, the secretary of the Ministry of Finance, the joint secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the heads of the three services (army, navy and air force), key-men in the foreign service—all these were said to be non-Muslims. But the High Commissioner forgot to add that every one of them was a European and not a Hindu! This sort of false propaganda is typical of Pakistan. But it cannot conceal the active discrimination going on in that dominion. As the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has pointed out in relation to the Hindus in East Bengal: "They have no share in the Executive: 25 per cent of the people have no representative in the Cabinet or in the all-powerful bureaucracy. They have no share in legislation, for brute majority (a phrase borrowed by us from pre-partition Muslim League terminology) counts and the voice of the minority is but a cry in the wilderness. They have no share in the judiciary; a community which has produced jurists and judges of international reputation for a century or more cannot provide even a Munsif for the East Pakistan Judicial Service."

If the Hindus are distinctly treated as aliens in ordinary times, what should we expect when riots break out? The hideous massacres that have put even Hitler's persecutions into the shade and sent 130,000 Hindus running for dear life from Pakistan into India are a direct result of the Pakistan Government's policy and in most cases enjoyed the connivance of the authorities. Pandit Nehru has cited the happenings at the Kurmitola air port near Dacca. Intending passengers—women and children no less than men—were attacked and butchered mercilessly within a stone's throw of the military headquarters and in the presence of Pakistani armed guards! And such horrors have taken place all over East Bengal. That is why the Pakistan Government has brusquely rejected the proposal for a joint fact-finding commission and tried to impose an iron curtain on the Press. Pakistan's deeds stink to high heaven and write in letters of blood and tears that the term "nationals" which she applies, whenever it suits her convenience, to the Hindu minorities is an outrageous lie.

OUR RIGHT TO ARMED INTERVENTION

If everything goes to prove that the Hindus are treated as aliens belonging to India and either to be foully murdered or atrociously sent packing to us, can we allow the responsibility for them to rest with Pakistan? It is absurd slavery to the letter of the law to plead that inevitably we have to do nothing save ask the Pakistan Central Government and the Government of East Bengal to control what happens in the latter province. There is not the slightest proof that these Governments have dealt with or ever intend to deal with the Hindu minority as with nationals. A large number of Muslims in India have come forward to proclaim their satisfaction with the Indian Government and condemn Pakistan for her murderous communalism and for the gross falsehoods and exaggerations in her Press for the purpose of further inflaming the lust for *jihad*. Have any Hindus of Pakistan come forward in condemnation of the Indian Government or in support of Pakistan's policy? From all sides one single truth stares us in the face: there are no Hindu nationals in Pakistan's eyes. If that is so, all Hindus within her territory are the concern of India

Continued overleaf

The Challenge of Repression and Genocide —Continued from previous page

whose nationals they were before the partition. We have every right to take drastic protective steps of our own.

What is more, there is the clear pointer in the very terms of the Partition Treaty by which India was vivisected. India accepted partition in order to avoid communal disturbances. Instead of such disturbances diminishing they rose a thousandfold. But we still honoured the Treaty, thinking that these were unavoidable birth-pangs. No such excuse can be found for the holocaust of Khulna and Dacca and Sylhet and Chittagong and Feni. They are not the consequences of heated tempers and pent-up animosities. They are the offspring of a cool calculated plan of genocide. They are an integral part of a deliberate policy. And they go against not only natural expectations but also the written terms of the Partition Treaty. Unmistakably it is stated there that India is broken into two with the express understanding that in spite of the cleavage the minorities left in either section should be protected to the fullest. The Indian Government has carried out its promise in an exemplary fashion. Whatever riots took place against the Muslims at the beginning of our post-partition history were sought to be quelled with a firm hand. The same firm hand has been in evidence in Calcutta where the movement of retaliation was immediately checked. It is noteworthy that almost half as many Hindus were shot by the Indian police as Muslims were killed by the Hindu rioters. And the number of Muslims killed in the riots is exceedingly small—a mere drop as compared to the ocean of blood spilt in East Bengal. Every independent witness has borne out the fact that the Muslims of India get all the protection necessary and live with full civic advantages and on a status of equality with the rest of the population. The latest is Professor Said Neaficy of the University of Tehran, who after a three-month tour of India says: "Pakistan has misrepresented the situation in India. I have visited several towns, cities and villages, and have met Muslims, Christians and Hindus. I cannot anywhere see any evidence to show that minorities are oppressed. In Benares, the holy city of the Hindus, I have participated in the joyful celebrations of the birthday of the Holy Prophet. I have also visited Hyderabad and found that Muslims there are free and equal citizens, sharing the joys and sorrows of their Hindu and Christian brothers."

Yes, India has kept her word. Pakistan has completely broken hers. The conditions that are integral to the Partition Treaty have been most flagrantly violated and there is not the least sign of any possible change of heart in the Pakistan Government. Only to throw dust in our eyes are high-sounding phrases periodically trotted out. Thus Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan has asserted that protection of Pakistan's minorities is his Government's own responsibility and that he is determined to "discharge this duty unflinchingly and with the utmost vigour." But nothing radical is done. And observers with a sense of history have reminded us that Mr. Jinnah also had said that the minorities living in Pakistan would be treated "not only justly but generously." Curiously enough, he said this not long after the non-Muslims had been hounded out of West Punjab and the Frontier with knife and gun and fire-brand and shortly before the Hindus of Sind were barbarously compelled to quit! Promises and temporary lulls are, therefore, no proof of a psychological conversion. The most important provisions of the Partition Treaty are a dead letter for Pakistan. The defiance of them entitles us to any measures we may deem fit for securing the welfare of the 12 million Hindus who are in panic in East Bengal. This defiance legally and constitutionally gives us the right even to march our armies into East Pakistan and make an end of Bengal's partition!

THE ALTERNATIVES BEFORE US AND PAKISTAN'S STRATEGY

Of course, if a better line of action is open to us than armed intervention we should adopt it. Two suggestions have been offered. One is to absorb all the Hindus of East Bengal. But 12 million are not a small number. Can our economy stand the strain? As Acharya Kripalani has pointed out, to accept refugees periodically and in instalments instead of all in one continual movement is to be at the mercy of the sweet will of Pakistan to upset our economy whenever she thinks it will suit her hostile intentions. But even a total migration will spell economic disaster for India. There is no earthly reason why we should be subjected to so ruinous an inconvenience. Besides, the length of time over which the total migration would be stretched out would give Pakistani fanatics opportunities enough to harass the Hindu minorities and either slaughter them or push them out, famished and possessionless. The second suggestion is that, if the Hindus of Pakistan are to come here, the Muslims of India must go and make room for them: there must be at least an equal exchange of populations. But to uproot an enormous number of persons from their homelands and carry them to unknown destinations is, as Pandit Nehru said, a task so colossal in magnitude and fraught with such misery to the people concerned that it is difficult to conceive it or to give effect to it within a measurable space of time. Here, too, Pakistani fanatics will have sufficient chance to play havoc with the Hindu minorities. There may be reprisals from the masses in India, and, as in 1947, when the populations of the two Punjabs were forcibly exchanged, the whole process may end in massacre and eviction. Untold tragedy is in store in the scheme apart even from the lesson we have learnt from the unrehabilitated condition of so many out of the 6 million refugees from West Punjab and Sind. And in addition, there is the question whether the Indian Muslims would consent to leave for Pakistan. As a secular State we cannot compel them.

Even if we did, what about the Muslims remaining over after 12 million of them have been exchanged for the 12 million Hindus of East Bengal? Nearly double the number would still remain and Pakistan would keep on clamouring about their safety or else demand extra territory to transfer them to and settle them on. India will stand to suffer in all instances—just because the Pakistan Government has let loose the forces of bigotry in East Bengal today.

What, then, is to be done? The only alternative appears to be armed conflict, an alternative perfectly justified, as we have shown, on both moral and legal grounds. We may, however, ask whether armed conflict will not involve a further slaughter by Pakistanis of the Hindus within their borders. Commonsense leads us to answer that it must, though we can certainly do much to lessen the evil. But, sooner or later, unless Pakistan disintegrates from within, armed conflict has perhaps to come, and even without it the Hindus of Pakistan have a black future: as Pandit Nehru has clearly put it in his broadcast on March 3: "The basic difficulty of the situation is that the policy of a religious and communal state followed by the Pakistan Government inevitably produces a sense of lack of full citizenship and a continuous insecurity among those who do not belong to the majority community. That policy leads to hatred and violence and produces conflict." The import of these words is that Pakistan is pledged to violent anti-Hindu activity. And this activity implies not only the extermination of Hindus in her own territory but also hostile designs on India. Already there has been invasion of Indian ground in the State of Kashmir whose Maharaja acceded to us by an absolutely unimpeachable instrument backed by Shaikh Abdullah's democratic party of long standing. War to the finish is the sole solution of the Kashmir deadlock. And the recent tactics of large-scale Muslim immigration into Assam prove that another Kashmir is sought to be staged. Evidently the aim is not to localise the conflict but spread it all over with a view to embarrassing India on many fronts. But Pakistan's strategy is a very subtle one: there is no direct and open attack. Every species of war possible on the Hindus and with detriment to Indian possessions, without a straight crossing of swords with India, she wages. To this she adds a cold war by means of evading the evacuee property issue and creating a stand-still in trade and attempting to "jitter" our nerves by moves like the recent concentration of troops on the borders of Cooch Behar and opposite the Purnea District of Bihar. Her plan for the nonce is to attain all her ends without direct war because she banks on our intense desire for peace and our inclination to go to great lengths of compromise on account of that desire. But her long-range plan most probably is open war: she knows that a point will be reached when India will no longer be in a mood to compromise or adopt peaceful methods, and against that day she is preparing at a feverish tempo. Even in the future, however, she would like us to be the aggressor in the world's eyes so that she may lift up her hands in appeal to the world against our infamy and seek aid or bring about anti-Indian sanctions. If we still fail to walk into the trap, she may herself unleash her military might, and hope because of her strategic geography *vis-à-vis* Russia to get away with her misdemeanour. The onset of war seems, therefore, most likely if not as certain as the persecution of the Hindu minorities and the damaging of Indian interests in every field. It would be prudent on our side not to neglect considering whether we should declare war now or wait till Pakistan does it or else delay in the expectation of a more advantageous posture of circumstances.

THE "WHEN" AND "WHERE" OF WAR

At the moment the food situation in our country is not very bright. But the stream of refugees daily flowing in will make it worse. And that means a weakening of our war potential. Hence, not to take immediate steps on the basis that by her brutal behaviour and callous intransigence Pakistan has provided us with a *casus belli* may be dangerous. Another reason for immediate steps is: the quicker the blow, the more chance of preventing harm from befalling the Hindus left in East Bengal. A third reason may be suggested: the more rapidly we act, the less chance we give West Pakistan to make any effective arrangement for sending East Pakistan military aid. There are a thousand miles of land between, and a greater distance by sea. Both the land-route and the sea-route will be impossible. Even the air-route is highly vulnerable and, besides, it may be questioned whether West Pakistan has a sufficient air-fleet to keep sending material as well as men. East Bengal is bound to be an irreparable casualty if we do not delay armed attack. Not that our delay would enable East Bengal to be ever our match: we shall be victorious any time and there is not much that West Pakistan can do by way of reinforcements. But celerity would save us a lot of trouble. Against the three reasons we have submitted, there is only the consideration of international opinion. But here a significant nuance must be borne in mind. Although we are aware that West Pakistan no less than East Pakistan is bent on rendering peace and prosperity most difficult for India and that her invasion of Kashmir and, still more, her continuance in this province is as legitimate a *casus belli* as the persecution of Hindus in East Bengal full two and a half years after partition—although we are aware of a justification for war on both halves of a rabidly communalist dominion, attack in the West is likely not to be deemed necessary at the moment by international opinion. Also, it is not immediately vital for us and we might do well not to take the

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SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION

PART II OF "THE WORLD CRISIS AND INDIA"

By "Synergist"

SECTION III: THE NEW WORLD-VIEW

(a) THE SPIRITUAL METAPHYSIC

Our inquiry has brought us to the conclusion that in order to understand the meaning of life and the purpose of existence, it is absolutely essential for us to know the working of the ontological process; this implies a knowledge of the nature of the Ultimate Reality and its relation to man and the universe. We have seen that man's being has a double aspect and is connected with the Ultimate Reality in two ways; as a natural being he is a formation of Universal Nature, which itself is a manifestation of the Transcendent Divine Reality, a self-projection in space-time extension; and as a soul-being, a direct emanated power of this Reality. That being the case, the history of his evolution and the significance of his life upon earth cannot be known without an understanding of the cosmic manifestation, right from the spiritual summits down to the inconscient depths.

When we examine the evolution process and trace it backwards to its beginnings, we come to a stage when we find that the primary principle is Matter; that is, Matter seems to be, to the human consciousness as it is constituted at present, the foundation on which the whole of creation rests; some even go so far as to consider it the original source of all terrestrial existence. But to the eye of the seer, whose consciousness has risen above the mental into the gnostic ranges and attained identification with the Supreme Divine Intelligence, the real foundation of all existence is the Spirit, and Matter only one of its modes, one of its manifested principles, and the material universe a particular kind of organised existence created by a certain type of formative power. As the ancient seers had intuited, man's real origin is "not below, but above". Sri Aurobindo gives this idea beautiful expression when he writes, "...Not towards the Godhead concealed in the 'inconscient ocean where darkness is wrapped within darkness', but towards the Godhead seated in the sea of eternal light, in the highest ether of our being, is the original impetus which has carried upward the evolving soul to the type of our humanity."

In Sri Aurobindo's metaphysic this universe is a self-revelation of the Divine; it is an emanatory manifestation, not a creation produced out of the void. All is Brahman, *sarvam khalu idam brahma*. The world of Becoming is not something other than pure Being. He says, "The Absolute neither creates nor is created,—in the current sense of making or being made; we can speak of creation only in the sense of Being becoming in form and movement what it already is in substance and status."—"What is in the Timeless unmanifested, implied, essential, appears in Time in movement, or at least in design and relation, in result and circumstance. These two then are the same Eternity or the same Eternal in double status; they are a twofold status of being and consciousness, one an eternity of immobile status, the other an eternity of motion in status." According to him the whole of creation is a becoming of the Divine Self—a manifestation of whatever is already there in essence, amidst conditions of time and space. He says that out of the seed there evolves that which is already involved in the seed, pre-existent in being, predestined in its will to become. If there is an evolution, then there must have been a previous involution, for there seems to be no reason why Life should evolve out of Matter, or Mind out of Life, unless we posit that Life is already involved in Matter and Mind in Life. He sees the cosmic process as a descending-ascending involutory-evolutionary movement between two poles, Spirit and its manifested principle Matter. "The whole of creation may be said to be a movement between two involutions,—Spirit, in which all is involved and out of which all evolves downward to the other pole of Matter; Matter, in which also all is involved and out of which all evolves upwards to the other pole of Spirit."

This involution-evolution theme of descent and ascent is the leit-motif of the Aurobindonian *Weltanschauung* and correlates its spiritual metaphysic, psychology and ethic. It covers the two ends of Being and all the levels and ranges of existence. Therefore, in examining Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, ours will be a dual approach; we shall proceed upwards following the evolutionary curve from the mental-vital-physical human level to the highest gnostic level of the Divine Reality. This will be the existential approach. The other will be the ontological approach, where we shall examine the statuses and aspects of the Supreme Being and follow the descent of the Spirit from its heights to its inconscient abysses, out of which arises this material universe. Both these approaches will be closely linked, for involution and evolution are two movements of a single process. We shall start with the existential approach and examine Sri Aurobindo's remarks on the evolution of Matter, Life and Mind in earth existence. In an essay on Evolution which he wrote in the *Arya* in 1915—extracts from which are given below—he states that as the materialistic view of the world is fast collapsing, the materialistic statement of the evolution theory must also disappear. The vitalistic and idealistic tendencies of thought which were supposed to have been slain by the march of physical science would rise again and challenge many of its leading tenets. Then he points out the direction in which existing ideas on human evolution will change. He

asks, "In what respect then is it likely that the evolution theory will be found deficient by the wider and more complex thought of the future and compelled to undergo essential changes?"

"In the first place, the materialistic theory of evolution starts from the Sankhya position that all world is a development out of indeterminate Matter by Nature-Force, but it excludes the Silent Cause of the Sankhyas, the Purusha or observant and reflective Soul. Hence it conceives the world as a sort of automatic machine which has somehow happened. No intelligent cause, no aim, no *raison d'être*, but simply an automatic deployment, combination, self-adaptation of means to end without any knowledge or intention in the adaptation. This is the first paradox of the theory and its justification must be crushing and conclusive if it is to be finally accepted by the human mind.

Again, Force in indeterminate Matter without Conscious Soul being all the beginning and all the material of things, Mind, Life and Consciousness can only be developments out of Matter and even only operations of Matter. They cannot be at all things in themselves, different from Matter or in the last degree independent of it. This is the second paradox and the point at which the theory has eventually failed to establish itself. More and more the march of knowledge leads towards the view that the three are different forms of Force, each with its own characteristics and proper method of action, each reacting upon the other and enriching its forms by the contact.

An idea has even begun to dawn that there is not a single creation, but a triple,—material, vital and mental; it may be regarded as a composite of three worlds, as it were, interpenetrating each other. We are led back to the old Vedic idea of the triple world in which we live. And we may reasonably forecast that when its operations are examined from this new standpoint, the old Vedic knowledge will be justified that it is one Law and Truth acting in all, but very differently formulated according to the medium in which the work proceeds and its dominant principle. The same gods exist on all the planes and maintain the same essential laws, but with a different aspect and mode of working and to ever wider results.

If this be the truth, then the action of evolution must be other than has been supposed. For example, the evolution of Life in Matter must have been produced and governed not by a material principle, but by a Life-Principle working in and upon the conditions of Matter and applying to it its own laws, impulses, necessities. This idea of a mighty Life, other than the material principle, working in it and upon it has begun to dominate the advanced thought of Europe. The other idea of a still mightier Mind working in Life and upon it has not yet made sufficient way because the investigation of the laws of Mind is still in its groping infancy.

Again, the materialist theory supposes a rigid chain of material necessity; each previous condition is a co-ordination of so many manifest forces and conditions; each resulting condition is its manifest result. All mystery, all element of the incalculable disappears. If we can completely analyse the previous conditions and discover their general law, we can be sure of the subsequent result, as in the case of an eclipse or an earthquake. For all is manifestation which is the logical result of a previous manifestation.

Once more the conclusion is too simple and trenchant; the world is more complex. Besides the manifest causes there are those that are unmanifest or latent and not subject to our analysis. This element increases as we climb the ladder of existence; its scope is greater in Life than in Matter, freer in Mind than in Life. European thought already tends to posit behind all manifest activity an Unmanifest called according to intellectual predilection either the Inconscient or the Subconscient which contains more and in a way unseizable to us knows more and can see more than the surface existence. Out of this Unmanifest the manifest constantly emerges.

Again we return towards an ancient truth already known to the Vedic sages,—the idea of an inconscient or subconscient ocean of being, the ocean of the heart of things out of which the worlds form themselves. But the Veda posits also a governing and originating superconscient which accounts for the appearance of a hidden consciousness and knowledge pervading the operations of Evolution and which constitutes the self-acting Law and Truth behind them.

The theory of materialistic evolution led naturally to the idea of a slow and gradual progression in a straight line. It admits reversions, atavisms, loops and zigzags of reaction deflecting the straight line, but these must necessarily be subordinate, hardly visible if we calculate by ages rather than by shorter periods of time. Here too, fuller knowledge disturbs the received notions. In the history of man everything seems now to point to alternations of a serious character, ages of progression, ages of recoil, the whole constituting an evolution that is cyclic rather than in one straight line. A theory of cycles of human civilisation has been advanced, we may yet arrive at the theory of cycles of human evolution, the *kalpa* and *man-*

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THE ROUGH ROAD BY LOUIS GUILLOUX

Louis Guilloux, already distinguished in France for his short stories and his novel "Le Sang Noir", won international recognition in 1942 with the award of the important Prix Theophraste-Renanot for his long novel "Le Jeu de Patience", on which he had worked for many years. In the short article below on a problem of popular culture there is his characteristic human understanding, combined with the living touch of personal experience.

The progress and operation of our present-day civilization tends, as we all know, toward a constant, and increasing, reduction in the number of people who are illiterate. It is a civilization which offers a great many schools, large and small, to the lower grades of which is one is obliged to go, and a great many libraries to which one can go if one wants to. Yet in actual fact it is a civilization which lacks a *policy of culture* as applied to the public at large: to that uncounted and innumerable public of "little people"—clerks, labourers, apprentices, small tradesmen—who, when they have gone through school, have for all that no true touch with culture, or any means of finding or creating it, except as it may come to them by chance.

Suppose, even, that we do not go so far as to speak of a policy of culture; would it not be enough to say more modestly, simply a "policy" of reading? The appetite for reading, God knows, is great in France; we see the proof of that every day; but the means of satisfying this hunger, if they exist at all, exist only in confusion.

It is an unfortunate, but general, fact that the branch librarian in a city, the man in charge of the library in a small town, is not always an adviser on literature any more, alas, than the bookseller, and that, especially in the provinces, access to masterpieces (though these are apparently scattered to the point of profusion everywhere) is, in hundreds and thousands of cases, the happy issue of mere good luck.

One cannot always have good luck; one cannot always count upon the gods, when the gods no longer answer, one loses faith; and that is a tragedy. In youth, with all its swift readiness for enthusiasm, disillusionment comes quickly. And the mind

most eager in its curiosity towards things of the intelligence and of art is thrown back upon itself because it has not known how to find its orientation in confusion, because it has not received, *in time*, the nourishment which it needed and to which it had a right. So it is that all of us—insofar as we are participants in a civilization which no longer knows how to give their full place to the things that are non-utilitarian—are responsible, through lack of understanding and savoir-faire, through defect in organization, through negligence and laziness and transgression against the dignity of others, for a considerable quantity of spiritual sabotage....

We are told, sometimes, that difficulties and obstacles are good in themselves, that one must not spoil children too much, that it is wrong to make the road too easy for questing minds, and that nothing is worth so much, in short, as what is won by struggle and conquest. We are told that the lower the place the individual starts from, the greater

will be his merit in climbing high. But all this, which would be true if we were speaking of *effort*, is in the present connotation nothing more than a pack of lies. The people who hand us these aphorisms add that poverty is good for genius, and they cite great examples or illustrious instances. The case most frequently referred to is that of Balzac, of whom some go so far as to consider that if he had not been overloaded with debts he would not have written *La Comédie Humaine*. By this same reasoning, the "starvation period" would have been one of the conditions, if not the determining condition, of the talent of Gorki, of Knut Hamson, and of a number of famous American writers who turned their hands to all sorts of trades, even the most obnoxious, in their youth and obscurity.

This ill-applied ethic of the virtue of difficulty is nothing less than an apology for the creation, or the toleration, of obstacles in our fellows' way. One hardly sees how it can be justified except by a falsely romantic view of life, a view which is rather selfish, rather base moreover in its essence, and, all things considered, even more stupid than it is selfish and base.

It is not true that poverty and wretchedness are in their nature good. Poverty and wretchedness are always bad. They stifle everything—whether it be the poverty and wretchedness of the artist, who is dying of hunger, or that of the boy

and girl who have been taught to read but not *how* to read, and who will find themselves abandoned as soon as they have left school.

Once they are out of school, the state takes the attitude towards thousand of its children that one takes towards beggars, to whom one says, "I've given to you already", as one sends them away....

From now on, they must get through their hard times all by themselves, these young people, look for their own living, sometimes among the garbage cans. In other words, all their progress—if they make any progress—must be progress *against*.... What bitterness is there! And then, when all's said and done, they find themselves branded as "self-taught", with all the disdain that that term carries with it....

We do not know how to help, but we know very well how to hinder! And yet, is movement *towards* not to be preferred a thousand times to movement that opposes, that blocks the way? The life of the mind, the desire for knowledge, contemplation, research, do they not in themselves offer difficulties enough without going to look for difficulties elsewhere? Must one search for difficulties that are alien to those essentials towards which one is reaching, and which one yearns to love?

Difficulty and effort must always oppose each other—and have I not often said and written that it is

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vantaras of the Hindu theory. If its affirmation of cycles of world-existence is farther off from affirmation, it is because they must be so vast in their periods as to escape not only all our means of observation, but all our means of deduction or definite inference.

Instead of slow, steady, minute gradations it is now suggested that new steps in evolution are rather effected by rapid and sudden outbursts, outbreaks, as it were, of manifestation from the unmanifest. Shall we say that Nature preparing slowly behind the veil, working a little backwards, working a little forwards, one day arrives at the combination of outward things which makes it possible for her to throw her new idea into a realised formation, suddenly, with violence, with a glorious dawning, with a grandiose stride? And that would explain the economy of her relapses and her reappearances of things long dead. She aims at a certain immediate result and to arrive at it more quickly and entirely she sacrifices many of her manifestations and throws them back into the latent, the unmanifest, the subconscious. But she has not finished with them; she will need them at another stage for a farther result. Therefore she brings them forward again and they reappear in new forms and other combinations and act towards new ends. So evolution advances.

And her material means? Not the struggle for life only. The real law, it is now suggested, is rather mutual help or at least mutual accommodation. Struggle exists, mutual destruction exists, but as a subordinate movement, a red minor chord, and only becomes acute when the movement of mutual accommodation fails and elbow-room has to be made for a fresh attempt, a new combination.

The propagation of acquired characteristics by heredity was too hastily and completely asserted; it is now perhaps in danger of being too summarily denied. Not Matter alone, but Life and Mind working upon Matter help to determine evolution. Heredity is only a material shadow of soul-reproduction, of the rebirth of Life and Mind into new forms. Ordinarily, as a constant factor or basis, there is the reproduction of that which was already evolved; for new characteristics to be propagated in the species they must have been accepted, received, sanctioned in the vital and mental world; then only can they be automatically self-reproduced from the material seed. Otherwise they are private and personal acquisitions and are returned into the State exchequer, the treasury of the sub-conscious, and do not go to the family estate. When the mind-world and life-world are ready, they are poured out freely on fit recipients. This is the reason why it is predisposition that is chiefly inherited. The psychical and vital force in the material principle is first impressed; when that has been done on a

sufficient scale, it is ready for a general new departure and an altered heredity appears.

Thus the whole view of Evolution begins to change. Instead of a mechanical, gradual, rigid evolution out of indeterminate Matter by Nature-Force we move towards the perception of a conscious, supple, flexible, intensely surprising and constantly dramatic evolution by a superconscious Knowledge which reveals things in Matter, Life and Mind out of the unfathomable Inconscient from which they rise."

Challenge of Repression and Genocide —Continued from page 3

initiative. Militarily, here also we have no cause for doubting ultimate success, unless the U.N.O. and the Great Powers take measures against us, which is not probable in case of Pakistan's attacking us instead of *vice versa*. If the U.N.O. and the Great Powers keep out of the picture, Pakistan will hardly have a comfortable time. The Pathanistan movement is in full swing and Afghanistan is sore and impatient: they may, to say the least, greatly inconvenience her. Even otherwise, as a writer in the *Hindustan Times* has noted, she has no ordnance factories and industries to keep her army well supplied, and her only line of communications, north to south, runs close to the border and is liable to be cut any instant, thus severing her forces operating in the north from Karachi. Yes, we have little need to fear West Pakistan's sabre-rattling. Yet to precipitate war with her may not find favour before the world. East Bengal, however, is a different proposition, and a magnified police action as against Hyderabad though with a somewhat dissimilar moral and legal case should be perfectly in order according to international standards broadly and humanely interpreted. So, if an immediate military move is to be ours, the local character of it must be clearly explained, and we must leave West Pakistan severely alone and, while fully preparing to meet emergencies anywhere, cross only our eastern borders. Such a move seems the best answer to the challenge of repression and genocide.

Nevertheless, deep thought must be taken before we launch on any corrective action. Whatever is necessary cannot be lightly done and the Government must weigh every possible factor. Neither the public nor the Press should hustle those in authority who are best qualified for an overall view. If some delay is required, then it must be accepted, no matter how unpalatable. But not the smallest misgiving should there be in any quarter about our right to deal East Bengal a swift and crippling blow.

SRI CHAITANYA

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

By DILIP KUMAR ROY

Act One of this deep and moving play in *manipal* was published in the Special Anniversary Number of February 21. Act Two appeared in the issue of March 4. In Act One Sri Chaitanya secures—from his devoted mother Sachi, an exceptional woman who saw before her son's birth a vision of him as an Avatar—the permission to consecrate himself, a homeless mendicant, to the seeking of Sri Krishna, Lord of the universe, who has entranced his whole heart. In Act Two a couple of pundits, Keshav and Murari, the one a rigid formalist and dry intellectual, the other a flexible mind with both humour and human sympathy, argue with each other, while Roma, a young Brahmin widow, introduces the note of mysticism and of "bhakti" for Sri Chaitanya. Sri Chaitanya himself presently comes on the scene, modestly engages Keshav in a discussion, breaks through his guard by a supple sincerity and, by his intense love of God, thaws even the pundit's hard attitude, touches awake Murari's vaguely searching heart and makes Sri Krishna's presence a living reality attracting the human soul. All this happens on the eve of Sri Chaitanya's departure from Navadvip.

ACT THREE: ILLUMINATION

A year has passed. Sri Chaitanya has just returned to Navadvip without apprising his mother and wife. He has travelled far and wide and preached his message of love and intends to call on his wife and mother though he has to stay elsewhere, in the precincts of a temple of Vishnu.

It is evening now and Vishnupriya, the lovely wife of Sri Chaitanya, is seen in her private *puja* room praying before the Image of Vishnu. She offers her flowers, lights some incense sticks and then performs the *arati* ceremony (moving a censer of lighted candles round and round the face of the Image) and then starts singing in a moved voice.

VISHNUPRIYA

(sings)

O Thou, my father, mother and mate,
My friend unique! to Thee I call:
Who art my heart's one knowledge and wealth,
My God of Gods, my All-in-All!*

(Then she kneels before her Image and, with
folded hands, prays half aloud)

They say: thou art the Resident in our souls
And knowest all we do and feel and think—
Thy touch alone heals all the chronic ills
Afflicting human destiny and redeems
The anguish in our minds and lives and hearts.
So I appeal to thee: Oh hark to one
Who feels now like a derelict in mid-ocean,
Where only hurtle colossal waves, like demons,
Which shatter her hopes of ever coming to port
The asylum thou, Lord, builtest once for me
Now looks far-off even as a lovely dream
Which the dire waking to this pitiless world?
Of grim reality has dissipated!
Oh, why must all our roseate dreams thus founder
In a fortuitous storm—when these dreams flowered
In the heart's garden thou thyself hadst fostered?
Why must thou sow the seeds of tenderest blooms
In the virgin soil of our aspiration,
If these will wither swiftly leaving a bare
Memory that but deepens the lone sigh
Born of the pining for what might have been?
I came here, Lord, thou knowest, as a bride
Of twelve. For only seven years have I lived
In joys that pass all human understanding,
Inarmed by my one friend and guide and mate
Thou thyself gavest me in thy compassion.
I grew to love him day by day, a witness
To his growing Godly stature which overawed me,
And yet I hoped against hope, supplicating:
He may abide with me as my one stay.
But why hast thou my guileless prayer shattered
By a cruel blow and filched from me my all—
All I had hugged in rapture, treasuring
The very sound of his footfall in the vault
Of my maiden soul to feed for ever on
Its echoes when he was not by my side?
Was it because he made me pass thee by?
But how could I help that? O thou, who knowest
The deepest trends of the woman's dotting heart,

Must know why when she loves she will forget
The whole world for the one who makes her world.
Madest thou not this heart of hers thyself?
Why then wouldst thou now punish it for its native
Functioning? After making rivers flow
Why wouldst thou scold their waves for billowing seaward?
The pilgrim thou thyself hast fashioned, Lord,
And the goal, as well, which calls so hauntingly:
Then why rebukest thou the deep nostalgia
The goal induces in the aspirant's breast?
Why wouldst thou take such infinite pains to mould
Thy handiworks a gleam with loveliness
If their very loveliness becomes a cause
Of suffering for the ache it must engender?
O thou who art merciful! How can thy mercy
Be harmonised with the anguish it ordains?
Why didst thou give me one so beautiful,
An incarnation of thyself, if thou
Wouldst wrench him in the end from me for ever,
In whose one image I have day by day
Learned to conceive thy Self of flawlessness?
Why has he moved away from me, his loyal
Servant, who only dreamed to serve and tend him
With all I have and am?

(Tears course down her cheeks now)

'Tis not so hard

For those, O Lord, to journey through this life
Nectarless who have never once known the taste
Of nectar—as it is for those who have.
And I am one on whom thy bounty squandered
Not only the quintessence of deep nectar,
But in this thou wouldst daily make me dive
As in a sea of bliss which, strangely, drowns
One not to suffocate but make one swiftly
Eligible for Immortality,
As thou must know, being the Knower of all.

(She covers her face in her hands)

And yet why wouldst thou never answer when
I ask thee why thou ordainest thus? Oh why
Had he, who radiated but light and bliss
On all, even as the sun, to set for ever
From their horizons—leaving a legacy
Of gloom to those who were born as citizens
Of shadowless light and thornless flowers in bloom?
They tell me: others need his love and so
He was called, to live and serve them, to disclaim us
Who had penned him in our prison circumscribed
By our demands. But what were these demands
From which he was severed, and why? And how did we
Cabin him with our loves—we who but yearned
To spread our hearts beneath his dawn-rose feet
That not a thorn might hurt him even once?
Why in this cruel world must one for ever
Give pain to some that one may confer joy
On others? If thy great world has been built
To manifest thy Godly attributes,
Why must here even a Godly act entail
Suffering upon those who have but longed
To serve God through their daily aspiration,
Ministering to the happiness of all?
How have I erred except through my engrossing

* From a famous Sanskrit hymn:
Twameva mātā cha pitā twameva,
Twameva bandhuscha sakhā twameva,
Twameva vidyā dravinam twameva,
Twameva sarvam mama Devadeva!

SRI CHAITANYA—Continued from page 5

Devotion and fidelity to one
Whom thou thyself didst in thy pure compassion
Assign to me as my life's sun and moon?
Why comes he not back even once to us
On whom thy daylight falls as the fall of night?
(She closes her eyes and presently goes into a
trance. Some time elapses. Then in her trance
she has a strange clairvoyant vision. She sees
an open space on the bank of the Ganges,
about a furlong away, a group of devotees sur-
rounding Sri Chaitanya and singing with him)

Oh when shall, Lord, our tears outwell
At the mention of thy name.

And, living in thy truth, shall we
The illusive world disclaim?

When shall our body's every atom,
Partaking of thy Grace,

Become thy holy temple a gleam
With thy love's loveliness?

When shall our questionings and doubts
Dissolve like shadow clouds

At the advent of thy new sunrise
Thy cosmic maya shrouds?

(Suddenly she sees Roma and Murari and
Keshav who take up the recurring refrain)

The day will come, 'tis not afar
Since he is born again:

The Avatar of love and light,
In our dark world of pain.

(Suddenly a hubbub breaks in upon the chorus-
singing and the singers stop. The onlookers
grow restless when stifled cries are heard just
as Jagai and Madhai, two notorious roughts
and terrors of the neighbourhood, push
through the crowd in a drunken fury)

JAGAI

(in a shout to Sri Chaitanya)

Ah, here, at long last, are we face to face
With you, my precious, who will draw good men
And spoil all—

(he turns to Madhai, his moving spirit)
—what shall I say?

MADHAI

Not much to say,
Though we have a lot to do—to bring him back
To his senses.

SRI CHAITANYA
(amused)

But how will you two achieve that,
Since what you call light is dark night to the wise?

JAGAI

(showing him his fist)

We are come to teach you that—and you shall learn
Which is God's gleam and which the gorgon's gloom,
So that—what else, Madhai? You are not helpful.

MADHAI

You are wrong, for look—
(he suddenly spits on Sri Chaitanya's face and
laughs out exultantly)
—and my help begins like this.

ROMA

(with a startling scream)

O Lord, my Lord divine! How could the fiends—

SRI CHAITANYA

(reproachfully as he wipes his face)
There are no fiends on earth, my little mother!

MURARI

(indignantly)

I say there are—Oh hell-fiends! Now take this—
(But as he rushes forward to attack them
Keshav restrains him by coming between)

KESHAV

But wait—remember what he enjoins on us:
Insult and praise we must ignore.

SRI CHAITANYA
(in a pleased voice)

You are right.

Besides, I must ascertain why they feel
Infuriated with me.

ROMA

(bitterly)

Oh I know that:
Hell knows that Heaven wants to heal all pain.

MADHAI

(with a growl)

Shut up—or you will know what's hell, my girl!
(He turns to Keshav and gives a guffaw)
You did your friend, the sycophant, a good turn.
For he would have learnt a lesson he badly needs.

(Meanwhile the hum behind grows louder and
he turns sharply round)

Wag not your tongues, you jabberers! Stand aside!
(He brandishes his heavy-knobbed stick: the
humming vanguard fall back timidly. Then he
turns back fiercely upon Sri Chaitanya)

Now come, you knave! Give me—you must—your word
That you will pose no more as a saint—or I—

(He suddenly picks up from the ground a stray
broken piece of a pitcher with a sharp end
which he lifts up menacingly)

Will give you something—See?

JAGAI

(with a guffaw)

That's it—the thing!

SRI CHAITANYA

(laughing indulgently)

But you are wrong, friend, for 'tis *not* the thing
That will correct me into the shape you want:
The only thing that beats one into shape
Is His rod of All-will, which, curiously,
Is a rod made not of something hard, but soft
Even as cream and that is why it made me
What I am—a tender minstrel of His name
Vowed to singing from door to door, proclaiming
That His All-will is love and only love
Which made us see the light of day on this
Our beautiful earth sustained by His compassion.

JAGAI

A truce to ranting—to posing as oracle.
Nor are we here to be improved by sermons,
Rather we came to improve you, my pretender,
Till you know better than to confound and wreck
Good citizens of respectability.

(He brandishes his bamboo stick)

And this is what will put sense into you
So either mend your ways, fool—or—beware!

SRI CHAITANYA

(smiling)

Beware of what, my chastiser and mentor?
I am afraid of nought on earth today
For I told you a little while ago
That Krishna's love is soft like cream although
It can be, on occasion, tough and hard
As an armour of steel impervious to such
Frail weapons you now flourish in ignorance.

JAGAI

(a trifle uncertain)

Why are you silent, Madhai? Shall we start?
Or will you exercise your eloquence?

MADHAI

Oh that is not my line. For I mean business.
Nor can I talk the hind legs off a donkey
As this mytho-maniac can. But I say, fool!
I ask you for the last time: will you mend
Your ways or will you force us to bring home
To you some lessons your folly needs so badly?

SRI CHAITANYA

I only need, my friend, one lesson on earth:
The lesson of love which I am learning daily
Through His great Grace which makes now everything
I experience reveal a mystic truth,
A truth that frees from fear. And so I know
That you, my brothers, are come as messengers
Of this one Truth which the more I know the more
I thrill to know—for you can never imbibe
Too much of my Beloved's marvellous love.

JAGAI

Hey, Madhai! What does this impostor mean?
We come to him as messengers of whose love?
Why are you silent now? You should say something.

SRI CHAITANYA

But what can he say to help you, since he knows
No more than you? Suffer me to explain.

MADHAI

(gathering himself together)

But I have no patience—and I tell you this:

SRI CHAITANYA—Continued from page 6

That you give up this high-faluting talk
And go back to your family.

SRI CHAITANYA
(laughing)

But one can
Hardly go back to what one never left
Even for a moment—since Sri Krishna's Grace
Has made me see: that I live in my own
Family of brothers and sisters everywhere.

JAGAI

But what is all this nonsense? One is born
Into a family one calls one's own:
You live on the streets, you sleep out in the open
Under the trees hobnobbing with filthy beggars
And vagrants such as no man in his senses
Will choose to live with cheek by jowl and yet
You talk of brothers and sisters everywhere!

SRI CHAITANYA

I do because 'tis true, because I see
What He has made me see, by opening my
Twin eyes that once were closed and consequently
I failed to see what is the Truth of truths.

MADHAI

O hold your tongue—or—or you shall regret
For wagging it.

SRI CHAITANYA

There you are wrong again.
For 'tis not I who wag my tongue today
But He, the Lord of speech, who makes me now
Speak what I speak and sing what I do sing:
And 'tis but on one theme I improvise
At His behest I cannot disregard
No more, my brothers, than I can my heart's
To inhale His air so fragrant with His love.

JAGAI

Fragrant with His love? What rigmarole!

SRI CHAITANYA

But you would sing a different song, my friend,
If only you would cast off from your eyes
Your blinkers. For you would then see His love
Dripping dripping dripping everywhere,
And 'tis not difficult I tell you, brother.
For all that is exists by His one love,
That's one with light. The sun and moon and stars
Are but pale beams of His self-luminous love.
The seeds that sprout, the buds that blossom forth,
The rivers that flow, the birds that sing in springtide,
The dews that glisten in gladness, the worms that crawl,
The cows that graze and even the desert void
Of interstellar space are all sustained
By His invisible sap which is His love
And it stays invisible since your self-will chooses
To disown the Vision you could have for the asking.

JAGAI

I say, Madhai! Why not leave him alone?
For surely he is gone stark staring mad,
Too raving now, to count?

MADHAI

I beg to differ,
My brother. For what he says is dangerous.
And madness too is infectious like the fever.
The other day my own dear nephew left
His home and school to roam the streets with him
Swelling his troupe of vagrants. There he is.
(He glowers at a boy who slinks away hurriedly)
Well—you wait. Your turn will come, boy, in due time.
But the trunk of the prison-tree must first be felled,
Which emits such infectious, noxious fumes.

(Turning to Sri Chaitanya)

Look you, my sharper! We are not taken in
By this your abracadabra and so insist
We have come to teach you: not to learn from you.
And hark to our ultimatum: we demand
You give up this your pose of saintliness
This folly has gone much too far and must be
Either brought back to sanity here and now,
Or be eradicated root and branch.
So will you promise to behave yourself
And leave off souring honest milk with curd?

SRI CHAITANYA

But what is honesty and what is milk?
The only honest man is he who will
Own the one allegiance—to his heart's Lord,

Krishna who is the milk of tenderness.
Who knows him not has never known true milk
Which He still offers, in His great compassion,
To all who thirst but still prefer, alas,
The curd and so stay hungering all their lives.
But He, being Love in essence, will not force
His love on those who elect the lesser loves;
For love being of a piece with perfect freedom
Must be accepted voluntarily.

(With a sigh)

I only pity you my friend, since you
Choose to be drunk not only with vicious wine
But what is far worse—with these fatal fumes
Of pride which blind you to Sri Krishna's love,
The love that I have come to promulgate.

MADHAI

(enraged)

How dare you call me drunk, you insolent fool?
So I must teach you what is God's sobriety.

(He strikes Sri Chaitanya on his forehead with
the sharp end of the broken pitcher, so that
blood spurts out. The group of his adorers
who so long stood as if bewitched now break
out in a loud cry and pounce in fury on Jagai
and Madhai who, sobered now by the realisa-
tion of personal danger, struggle helplessly in
their grip till they are overpowered and felled.)

SRI CHAITANYA

(rushing into the fray)

O let them alone I say, if you love me.
Who deals them a blow has never accepted me.

(They set free the two brothers who totter up
cowering, the bullies transformed in a moment
into abject cowards.)

JAGAI AND MADHAI

(simultaneously)

O help, help—murder.

ROMA

It's you hell's own henchmen
Who have come, disguised as men, to murder Heaven.
Look, he is bleeding! Oh, what shall I do!
(She tears off a part of her sari to bandage him)

SRI CHAITANYA

(waving her aside and smiling)

A little blood has spilt out since I had
Too much of it, as my Lord doubtless thought.
(Then turning to the two culprits who are now
at bay, surrounded by the mob)
Come, come, my brothers! You have nought to fear.
I stand security for you. I hope
You are not hurt?

(To the group standing round them)

O run, give them some water.

Look, they are groaning!

(They are given water)

Now you come to me.

I will take you home. But come, my brothers, first
Let me embrace you. Have no fear: none will
Manhandle you now that you are armoured in
My love which my Lord gave me to soothe and heal
All suffering souls, who suffer for they are blind,
Alas, to His compassion. Come, you both
And claim from me but what belongs to you:
Sri Krishna's Love, the only refuge and harbour
In this our derelict, unhappy world.

(He embraces his stupefied assaulters together
and then turns on the equally stupefied onlook-
ers to whom he sings in ecstasy while the blood
streams down his face freely.)

Your ways are strange, my Lord, you come

To play in ever new guises

You fail us in our gala shows

And gleam in life's dark crises.

The light of day acts like a pall

On stars that shine on high:

The sun hides what the dark reveals

Through storms your barks you ply.

You lie in ambush when in pride's

Gay pomp in the world we move

When life's rich lamps all flicker out

You flash your moon of love

(And the crowd sing once more with him the
refrain)

SRI CHAITANYA—Continued from page 7

The day will come, 'tis not afar
Since He is born again,
The Avatar of love and light,
In our dark world of pain.

(As the song goes on the two rogues' eyes are
seen drowned in tears till they fall prostrate
at Sri Chaitanya's feet and cry out)

Forgive us sinners, though we belong to Hell.

SRI CHAITANYA

(sings ecstatically)

And what is hell and what is sin
We ask and ask in vain
Until, we, fools, your love repel
And know the answer of pain.
And yet when we disown you, Lord,
Your Grace still sings on high:
"My heaven to hell I barter away
For but one price: a sigh."

(During the trance Vishnupriya felt very faint,
especially when she saw Chaitanya attacked.
Then tears rained profusely down her cheeks as
she saw him embrace his assailants and heard
him sing the last quatrain. Then the vision
fades out and she comes to and gazes at the
Image of Lord Vishnu in a heave of emotion.)

VISHNUPRIYA

(with unshed tears glistening in her eyes)

O Lord, my Lord! Forgive a dotting woman
Who worshipped the very ground her idol trod:
Since it was this excess of adoration
That made her blind and sad. But could one ever
Reconcile oneself to a loss so great
And sudden which did sound to my scared heart,
Rendered desolate in my fool blindness,
As the trump of doom. And so I failed to see
That the one thou gavest me I could not claim
Far less possess as my sole treasure on earth.
I see now by thy Grace which opened my eyes
That he was vouchsafed to me but for a spell,
A magic interlude, which I must cherish
As the greatest boon conferred on me by life.
I see now I received far more than I
Could ever hope to claim, far less retain
For my own puny world which does not count.
One hails the sun and moon but still remembers
That their light's gift is meant for all and not
For a single hut to which they bring their blessing.
I see now, Lord, as never before, that he
Is even more than a sun and moon to worldlings:
Sun of thy joy and moon of thy compassion.
For what is joy if not the freedom born
Of the last emancipation for our craving
For a little living? And what is thy compassion
If not the all-forgiving sympathy
Which, at its peak, accepts to hug the blackest
Sinners whose sins its very touch absolves?
And this forgiveness I need most to-day
For surely my indictment of thy Grace
Is graver in its import than the acts
Of violence of those pitiful criminals
Who shed the blood of the holiest of thy saints;
Because they knew no better, and having never
Harked in their lost hearts to thy saints' heart-beat,
Their hearts have stayed the play-grounds of the demons
Whose puppets they become unwittingly.
But how can I, Lord, plead for mercy when,
After having savoured thy Immaculate Grace
Through the love of one thou madest with the stuff
Of thy pure love's quintessence, after having
Lived and moved in thine own being of bliss
Whom to see is but to know and experience
The incredible: that the drop could hold the deep,
That a human heart could beat in unison
With thy heart's primal throb and ultimate breath:
Yes, after having kissed the dust he trod
And felt myself enhalloved—I have failed
To appreciate thy great Compassion's boon
Which made me, a wick, glow with thy Being's fire
And yet be not reduced to pitiful ash.

(A noise is heard outside. She hears a familiar
voice, starts and, putting her hands on her
heaving breast, springs up trembling with an
uncontainable emotion. Sri Chaitanya enters.
She gazes at him for a moment, then falls down
at his feet in a swoon. He calmly draws near

and places his hand on her head and remains
still for a little, his eyes closed, only his lips
moving, repeating the Name of his heart's
Lord: "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna,
Krishna" She comes to after a few
minutes, then rises and again bows down and
kisses his feet. He looks at her tenderly and
places his hand again on her head and when
she rises he gazes into her eyes steadfastly).

SRI CHAITANYA

(tenderly)

Do you now see?

VISHNUPRIYA

(in a low voice with bowed head)

Yes. . . .

SRI CHAITANYA

Then why still so sad?

VISHNUPRIYA

You know my prayer. . . . Why then do you ask?

SRI CHAITANYA

One prays not to enlighten Him, but because
Through prayer one offers oneself more to Him.

VISHNUPRIYA

But can one offer more than what one has?

SRI CHAITANYA

Yes: what one is, and that is always harder
And this is why He smiles on prayer—because
It delves down into the heart's invisible core
Where the hidden sap of strength still waits untapped
Without which none can ever fare to the Lone.

VISHNUPRIYA

That I have learnt, my Lord, to my bitter cost.

SRI CHAITANYA

But bitterness, my love, is not approved
Of Him. We ask for bliss which is our birthright,
But in ignorance we knock at the wrong door
Of desire. And those of us He would call sooner
To the right door He would sooner disenchant,
Denying us nothing but the alms of pain
Which would have been our heritage everlasting
If the wrong door had opened to our knocking.
One must accept and not presume to judge
At least, till one knows more

VISHNUPRIYA

I stand rebuked,

And yet what answer shall I make to-day
Especially when one knows one has been weighed
And found wanting? Because, in my ignorance,
I asked for the moon.

SRI CHAITANYA

Brood not over the past.

The Dance of our great Lord is executed
Through rhythms whose deep import we fail to scan,
For they sound like false steps to our human scanning.
But the Artist knows how His art must evolve
And even a discord He, our Great Composer,
Weaves regally into a richer harmony.

VISHNUPRIYA

I accept it all with bowed head even when
I fail to grasp it fully. But my Lord—

SRI CHAITANYA

Yes? Why do you pause?

VISHNUPRIYA

Because I know not what

To say. So I will only add, my Lord,
I wait upon your wish: will you not tell me
What you attend from me from now on earth?

SRI CHAITANYA

I will, my dear beloved, with all my heart.
I only know of one path in this life:
The path our hearts' one Guide calls us to tread
His marvellous love-songs to manifest.
The only thing He attends from us, in Grace,
Is that we be conscious of the jarring notes
We bring in through our self-will and false pride,
And ask sincerely that we may not wish
To assert them and so mar the symphony
He will compose for His last diapason.
At any given moment He is at work
To build out from deep warring elements
An edifice of beauty and perfection.
'Tis not for us to inveigh against His planning,

SRI CHAITANYA —Continued from page 8

Because our human eyes, being heavily blinkered,
Can never appraise His divine architecture
In the right perspective. From the niche of Time
Can one even glimpse the total Dance of the Timeless,
Each step entailing endless repercussions
Of Karma redeemed by Grace? How shall the mind
Conceive what is beyond the mind? And yet,
Such is His *lila* that it's given to us,
Infinitesimal specks of life, to joy
In His cosmic multitudinous play of life
And offer all we have that He may build
With human things a masterpiece divine.

VISHNUPRIYA

I see this more and more, my Lord, and so
I do aspire more and more, I assure you,
That I may offer more and more my self-will
To the Master Architect, that He may use
This useless life of mine too for His mansion,
That I may surrender at His feet what little
I have to offer and without demur
Accept what He ordains. My only prayer
Now is that I may not in ignorance
Lend my being to forces which vitiate
His harmony: that my self-will, I repeat,
Be sunk ever more and more in His All-will;
And since you, my heart's Pilot and Dictator,
Are pleased, in your great mercy, to appear
Before my twin eyes, hungering still for you,
I would implore one precious boon of Grace.

SRI CHAITANYA

My dear beloved! Know you not that all
I have and all I ever shall win are meant
For all—since now I see in all but the One
Whose utter slave I am and whose Compassion's
One touch has made the whole world kin to me
By revealing His one Self in the forms of all
Though they, being blind, hold soul's last vision suspect
And eyelessness alone attain.

VISHNUPRIYA

(her eyes glisten)

My Lord, address me not so tenderly,
For not only am I unfit to be loved by you,
But what my heart has come now to dread most
Is lest your love for me pollute your soul
By even so much as a chance proximity.
For you yourself have opened my eyes to what
They in deliberate blindness would not see.
So I pray to you in tears: Oh give me strength
Not love—which please bestow on the deserving.

SRI CHAITANYA

Be not so sad, my love! and above all
Say not such foolish things. For how can you
Conceive Love as a judicial guest who deigns
To visit only those who are deserving?
And what's more, whom do you call the deserving?
'Tis time you realised that those who deemed
Themselves as worthy of His Love Divine
Must, by that very claim, forfeit the title
To being adjudged as worthy. No, my dear!
The Love Divine looks not with our human eyes.
If pick and choose it must, it will invite
First those who are more conscious of their flaws
And undeservingness to claim its favour,
Rather than those impeccable, upright souls
Who preside in their world of self-complacency.
'Tis the low lands that yield the richest harvests
And not the highest peaks which stay for ever
Barren and gaunt, hugging their haughty glare.
The great saints will nor flare nor dazzle like these
But sparkle even as grass athrill and bowing
With divine humility. If you I call
'My dear beloved', 'tis not from a mere
Impulse to shower an empty blandishment,
I hold you dear to me as my heart's breath
Because I have cherished you for what you are:
A thing of beautiful humility
Which made you glimpse in pain the apocalypse
Of His Grace conceded but to the pure of heart.

VISHNUPRIYA

(riveting her eyes on him)

What else could one be, O my Lord, but humble
Who has one sole asset: sterility?

(She gives a melancholy smile)

And can you wonder why I now implored you
To address me never more as your 'beloved'?

And shall I tell you something else—a thing
I kept from you so long—yes, even from you?

(She clears her voice, thick with tears)

Lord, when I saw you first, seven years ago,
My heart and soul upheaved and I surrendered
All I possessed: my pride and gift of beauty.
But one thing still I could not give away:
My yearning that you would remain for ever
My own and only mine. I worshipped you
With every atom of my blood and marrow:
But even then I dimly saw, although
I strove to close my eyes to what I had glimpsed,
That I gave my all to claim your all: I loved,
To win your love: I dreaded even the thought
That others might come to claim your love and so
Curtail the quota that was due to me
I failed to see, nay, I declined to see
That you were made not of the common stuff,
Nor destined to stay mine alone for ever
And I was vowed to an unconfessed desire
To reserve your love for my poor love alone.
I stifled my deep malaise, for I knew,
And this knowledge only grew with passing time,
That all the time I deified you, I was
Deifying but my arrogating self;
Entering like a servant of the King
To grow into the status of his mate
And ministering angel and guiding star.
I wanted to make a God of you because
I longed to be the beloved of a God.
This motive I inhibited with loud
Reasons I fabricated to kill my qualms.
And to rid myself from this my sense of shame
I vindicated all I did and argued
That you I served to joy in your sole glory
And not in the mirror of my dotting self
Which shone with the bright lustre it reflected.
And 'twas for this my sin of sins I lost you:
My light's last fount, one sun to my pining moon!
(She covers her face in her hands and sobs disconsolately)

SRI CHAITANYA

(placing his palm gently on her head)

Oh be not over-repentant, my beloved,
For a failing that is an adjunct of our egos
Whose blind desires dog us ever on earth
Branding us with self-pity and pain and sorrow.
Nor lash yourself too hard for what may well be
Likened to spots that are born with the leopard's birth,
A heritage of our terrestrial life.
Who ever was born perfect on our earth?
The One who overbroods his creatures knows
Their natures' flaws which cling to them like their shadows.
And being the soul of patience and compassion,
He sets us tasks but not as a task-master.
For even when we fail Him signally
He knows why we do fail impelled by forces
Of sceptred instincts that have ruled for ages
Through a long line of births in diverse forms.
Nor is He fain to judge us by our lapses
Nor by our lamentations of remorse:
He takes our measure by our aspiration
And our hearts' sincerity and deepest dreams.
And, seeing all from His last peak, He knows
We are seldom as responsible for our deeds,
Far less for our impulses and thoughts and feelings,
As the moralist proclaims omnisciently,
Menacing us with Hell's dread chastisements,
In the name of God he will conceive in the image
Of his high moral and judicial self.
And least of all can one in the realm of love
Hope to comport oneself as one aspires.
For in love's intense ambit the ego derives
The fiercest joy from finding the freest play.
So 'tis in this realm desire reigns supreme,
The fulcrum whereon Nature's mechanics rest.
And life's desires being self-regarding
Must war for ever with true love which is
In essence a deep urge to lose one's self.

VISHNUPRIYA

I know, my Lord, or rather, shall I say:
I came to learn through bitter experience
But you will pardon me if I confess
I cannot stifle a sigh when I feel thus
Humiliated, lost in my own eyes.
The anguished question comes then to the fore:
Why are we born under one flag on earth

SRI CHAITANYA—Continued from page 9

If we must disclaim it driven by suffering
To seek the aegis of another? Oh why?

SRI CHAITANYA
(smiling indulgently)

To answer this I must repeat, my love,
What I told you a little while ago:
That the human mind can never truly plumb
The primal Purpose which brought into being
The evolving architecture of the Master
Architect. And may I add that this
Our human mind behaves still like a child
Asking deep questions without understanding
Even the import of their curiosity,
Far less the answers of the soul.

(He smiles abstractedly)

Our mind

Has yet to know how little it can know
With all its loud pretensions. And this was
Borne home to me of late in Orissa,
Where I came to know a lovely maiden, a Princess.
Her father, vowed to make his daughter happy,
Insisted on her having for spouse a Prince,
A handsome youth of twenty, who was smitten
By her mystic elusive beauty. But she loved
Krishna alone and swore she never would marry.
The rational father, a born sceptic, laughing
To scorn a legend, was resolved to bless her
With a youth afire with passion and large as life,
And the wedding bells rang out at his command.
The daughter, in her desperation, swallowed
Some fatal poison. I was summoned when
She lay in the palace gasping. But as I
Drew near her bed she opened her mystic eyes
And gave me a smile dripping pure ecstasy!
I was amazed: for her frail body was
Writhing intermittently in agony
But she calmly said: "Please bless me that I may
Be havened at the feet of my Beloved."
And I prayed as her frail frame shook in the grip
Of the deadly poison. But, to the last, there passed
Not a shadow of regret across her face
Radiant with the beatific smile,
And her eyes a picture of ineffable bliss,
Even when her limbs were twisted in the throes
Of dire convulsions the like of which I never
Have witnessed heretofore! Before the end
She gave me a last look and, smiling, said:
"The fools are cursing Krishna and call him cruel
For ordaining such a horrible fate for me!
But how can they divine His Love's deep import
Whose souls have never hearkened to His Flute-call?
I tell you I can feel my soul's Beloved
Breathing into my soul when this my body
Is tortured in the clutch of grisly Death.
Not all the bliss of earth or paradise
Could rival my beatitude as I
Pass out inarmed by Him, my King of kings,
Who made me a pauper Princess but to change me
Into a faithful slave of His and show
The difference between the moon and marsh-light:
He lured me with a phantom opulence
To countervail it with His mystic Flute-call
And lead back to His Bliss for which He made me
Draw my last breath in pain." . . . She gave a smile
As in a trance, heaved a sigh and murmured:
"But how can the worldings' hooded eyes even glimpse
The iridescence of His rainbow Grace
Which affords me an exit into the Life Divine
Through the dark portals of death agony!"
And she hummed a song of mine she had heard me sing,
Of Radha's everlasting pledge to Krishna,
And, improvising with a rare emotion,
Her virgin soul she poured forth as she sang:
(And he suddenly breaks out passionately into song)
Whether he tramples on me, my Lord,
Or hugs me tenderly:
My life is given to Him alone
For all eternity.
Whether He spurns me from His door
Or will abide with me:
My thoughts will dwell in Him alone
In pain or ecstasy.
Whether He courts me or consorts
With the fickle frivolously:
My heart will bow to Him alone,

None else my King shall be.*

(His face becomes flushed with emotion and
his eyes fill. . . . He pauses for a little, then
fastens his gaze upon her and clears his voice
deep with tears)

Her eyes took on a hue unknown to light
And then a strange thing happened: I felt a Presence
I knew so well. . . . and. . . . thrilled, I sang with her
When, lo, on a sudden, oblivious to us all,
She hoisted herself from her bed and babbled
In ecstasy: "My Lord, my Lord, my Lord!"

(Vishnupriya wipes her eyes. He goes on)

Her people thought she was delirious
And rushed to her side to put her back to bed
But she eluded them and fell down forward
Prostrate upon the floor—when I too saw Him,
The King of kings in person, aureoled
In a blue light, His eyes deep with compassion,
And the magic smile upon His magic lips!
I lost all count of time. . . . And when at last
I woke to earth—He was there no more, nor the one
He came to take back home to His Vaikuntha.†

(He pauses and holds her eyes)

Her parents could not see what she had glimpsed
And so dubbed Krishna or a fiend or myth.
But, as she said, His smile is lost on those
Who will not win to the deeper vision, and so
When I burnt my boats they said, unanimously,
That I lost everything when I lost only
My chains and blinkers. And yet such is His
Inscrutable maya that we fail to see:
He leads us often to His Heaven through Hell. . . .

(He smiles ironically)

No wonder we quail to answer His dangerous call
As I too once did, summoned to cut away
From my old moorings I so dearly loved. . .
But none can ever attain the summit bliss
Until he bid farewell to the lower strands;
And nowhere is renunciation more
Imperative than in Love's deep domain.
For although nought can rival love's deep raptures
Yet nowhere else can pain be paramount
As in the empire of what we call love.
But when we will not do His will through joy
The initiation is taken in hand by pain
Which visits not to make us derelict
But to spur us ever onward, onward till
We find a harbour lovelier than the one
From which nought but the storm of pain could wean us.

(He looks at her tenderly for a little, then puts
his hand on her shoulder, very gently)

But since you ask me to enlighten you
I will say only this: trust not your heart
Too much to the keeping of that wise fool, Reason,
Whose glimmer, at its best, is like a glow-worm's
Which cannot quell the gloom that dogs our lives
But only show its dense profundity.
I would enjoin on you to accept on faith
What mental reason cannot reach: that we
Are born to a nature with two diverse urges:
One would cajole us to stay where we are,
The other goads us to climb ever higher
Leaving the stagnant bogs we learn to cherish.
And every joy on earth becomes a bog:
Yes, every haven save that pledged by the highest.
And nowhere holds this truer than in the realm
Of human love and nowhere is the prison
More stifling than where lust is dominant.
For lust can never win to lasting bliss
Because its rhythm falls out of step with love's.
For lust by its very nature will exult
In its instinct of possession whereas love's
One impulse is to give away its all
Without reserve or fear of thought of the morrow:
Ever squandering, never garnering,
Ever offering, never questioning.
But this movement, being essentially divine,
Is dreaded by us, humans, till we learn
To see with wisdom's eyes the limitation

*From Sri Chaitanya's own poem:

Ashlishya vā pādaratam pinashtu mām
Adarshanāt marmahatām karōtu vā
Yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampato
Matprānanāthastu sa eva nāparah.

†The Home of Narayana, the Archtype of Krishna.

SRI CHAITANYA—Continued from page 10

Of every impulse acting on the human level
 But to see clear and far one must discard
 The stained glass of desire and this occasions
 Often a pain so great to its votary
 That he would even smite His hand of Grace
 (Which can alone wipe off desire's stains
 And lead us to the vision that gives salvation),
 He even would curse the hand that comes to bless
 Rather than hail the boon of bliss it offers.

(He holds her hand tenderly)

And that is why you suffer misconceiving
 The message of true love which, in its essence
 Is a message of surrender unbargaining
 Which whispers in the heart: "Give all you have
 And are to Krishna and never in return
 Ask even for the meed of His answering Love."

But alas, it sounds like madness to the wise,
 And so I sing this only to the crazy
 Whom I adore today since none but they
 Will respond to Folly's message which declares
 (Reversing the prudent value of sanity):
 "None but the fool who squanders all he counts
 As the most precious of this earth-life's boons
 Shall win to His last pinnacle of Bliss
 Through Love which, starting as a flickering flame,
 Must grow till its apocalyptic sun
 Will burn away the dross of our desires
 And this shall be achieved when we will learn
 To merge, like moths, in Krishna's Fire—of Love."

(Sri Chaitanya pauses and closes his eyes.
 Tears stream down his cheeks. Vishnupriya
 falls at his feet.)

THE END

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

Continued from page 12

and in the language of the material Brahman,—it is not really explained; but let that pass,—having failed to carry that way of knowledge into other fields beyond a narrow limit, we must then consent to scrutinise life and mind, by methods appropriate to them and explain their facts in the language of the vital and mental Brahman. We may discover then where and how these tongues of the one existence render the same truth and throw light on each other's phrases, and discover too perhaps another, high, brilliant and revealing speech which may shine out as its definitive all-explaining word. That can only be if we pursue these other sciences too in the same spirit as the physical, with a scrutiny not only of their obvious actual phenomena, but of all the countless untested potentialities of mental and psychic energy and with a free unlimited experimentation. We shall find out that their ranges of the unknown are immense. We shall perceive that until the possibilities of mind and spirit are better explored and their truths better known, we cannot yet pronounce the last all-ensphering formula of universal existence. Very early in this process the materialistic circle will be seen opening up on all its sides until it rapidly breaks up and disappears. Adhering still to the essential rigorous method of science, though not to its purely physical instrumentation, scrutinising, experimenting, holding nothing for established which cannot be scrupulously and universally verified, we shall still arrive at supraphysical certitudes. There are other means, there are greater approaches, but this line of access too can lead to the one universal truth."

Q. 6: What will remain as the lasting contribution of the materialistic thought when the progressive mind of humanity has passed beyond it into higher truths of existence?

A. "Three things will remain from the labour of the secularist centuries; truth of the physical world and its importance, the scientific method

of knowledge,—which is to induce Nature and Being to reveal their own way of being and proceeding, not hastening to put upon them our own impositions of idea and imagination, *adhyaropa*,—and last though very far from least, the truth and importance of the earth life and the human endeavour, its evolutionary meaning. They will remain, but turn to another sense and disclose greater issues. Surer of our hope and our labour, we shall see them all transformed into light of a vaster and more intimate world-knowledge and self-knowledge."

THE ROUGH ROAD

Continued from page 4

always a shame and a scandal to add to the unhappiness of men?

When I was a child there were very few books in my father's house. To tell the truth, there were none at all, except a thick volume of prayers which belonged to my grandmother, who had never known how to read (so it happened that at Mass she would hold her book quite simply upside down when there was no picture to guide her). I was going to elementary school, I was learning to read, and sometimes the teacher used to tell us some lovely story. A little later, when I was already in high school, I discovered the *Feuille Littéraire*, which cost two sous, and in that I read Ibsen, Tolstoy, Balzac, Gorki, Musset, Gogol, and others, at the age of fourteen. It would make a long story to tell all about that now, it would show how one must have

good luck indeed to deliver one's heart from distress and frustration—and one's head too! But it is a long story, and for another day Meanwhile, before I had made these great discoveries, an extraordinary adventure befell me in the street one Sunday afternoon. As I was coming home from a walk with my father, we met a man selling newspapers, on a little square. What paper he was selling, I have no longer the slightest idea. What I do know is that with the paper he used to offer a "premium", and that on this day the premium was a little yellow book, very thin, which he put into my hand: Racine's *Andromaque*.

There, if I may be permitted to say so, was the beginning (along with courses in adult education) of the effort toward popular culture.

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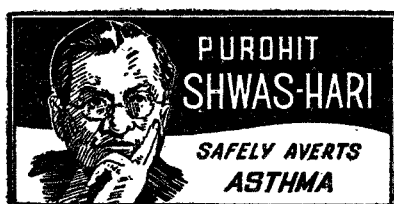
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LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(25)

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: Why did materialism become so powerful a force in the last century? Was its influence derived from some basic universal truth to which it gave a distinctive formulation?

A: "The intellectual force of materialism comes from its response to a universal truth of existence. Our dominant opinions have always two forces behind them, a need of our nature and a truth of universal existence from which the need arises. We have the material and vital need because life in Matter is our actual basis, the earthward turn of our minds because earth is and was intended to be the foundation here for the workings of the Spirit. When indeed we scan with a scrupulous intelligence the face that universal existence presents to us or study where we are one with it or what in it all seems most universal and permanent, the first answer we get is not spiritual but material. The seers of the Upanishads saw this with their penetrating vision and when they gave this expression of our first apparently complete, eventually insufficient view of Being, 'Matter is the Brahman, from Matter all things are born, by Matter they exist, to Matter they return,' they fixed the formula of universal truth of which all materialistic thought and physical science are a recognition, an investigation, a filling in of its significant details, elucidations, justifying phenomena and revelatory processes, the large universal comment of Nature upon a single text."

Q. 2: But since the truth of matter is only the first fact of our normal experience and not the complete or final truth, why was it taken to be the sole truth of existence to the exclusion of all other higher universal truths?

A: "Matter surely is here our basis, the one thing that is and persists, while life, mind, soul and all else appear in it as a secondary phenomenon, seem somehow to arise out of it, subsist by feeding upon it,—therefore the word used in the Upanishads for Matter is *annam*, food,—and collapse from our view where it disappears. Apparently the existence of Matter is necessary to them, their existence does not appear to be one whit necessary to Matter. The Being does present himself at first with this face, inexorably, as if claiming to be that and nothing else, insisting that his material base and its need shall first be satisfied and, until that is done, grimly persistent with little or with no regard for our idealistic susceptibilities and caring nothing if he breaks through the delicate net of our moral, our aesthetic and our other finer perceptions. They have the hope of their reign, but meanwhile this is the first visage of universal existence and we have not to hide our face from it any more than could Arjuna from the terrible figure of the Divine on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, or attempt to escape and evade it as Shiva, when there rose around him the many stupendous forms of the original Energy, fled from the vision of it to this and that quarter, forgetful of his own godhead. We must look existence in the face in whatever aspect it confronts us and be strong to find within as well as behind it the Divine."

Q. 3: But why should science which impartially seeks for the complete truth of phenomena rule out from its inquiry all the evidence of the greater and independent truths of our biological, psychological and spiritual existence or explain them away as merely secondary powers dependent on the primary and the fundamental reality of matter?

A: "Physical science must necessarily to its own first view be materialistic, because so long as it deals with the physical, it has for its own truth's sake to be physical both in its standpoint and method; it must interpret the material universe first in the language of the material Brahman, because these are its primary and its general terms and all others come second, subsequently, are a special syllabary. To follow a self-indulgent course from the beginning would lead at once towards fancies and falsities. Initially, science is justified in resenting any call on it to indulge in another kind of imagination and intuition. Anything that draws it out of the circle of the phenomena of objects, as they are represented to the senses and their instrumental prolongations, and away from the dealings of the reason with them by a rigorous testing of experience and experimentation, must distract it from its task and is inadmissible. It cannot allow the bringing in of the human view of things; it has to interpret man in the terms of the cosmos, not the cosmos in the terms of man. The too facile conclusion of the idealist that since things only exist as known to consciousness, they can exist only by consciousness and must be creations of the mind, has no meaning for it; it first has to inquire what consciousness is, whether it is not a result rather than a cause of matter, coming into being, as it seems to do, only in the frame of a material inconscient universe and apparently able to exist only on

the condition that that has been previously established. Starting from Matter, science has to be at least hypothetically materialistic."

Q. 4: But though this may be an initial necessity for science for firmly establishing the truth of matter, must it not, after that necessity is over, break through the narrow shackles of the materialistic theory and widen out its inquiry into the greater realms of Life, Mind and Spirit?

A: "When the action of the material principle, the first to organise itself, has been to some extent well understood, then can science go on to consider what claim to be quite other terms of our being, life and mind. But first it is forced to ask itself whether both mind and life are not, as they seem to be, special consequences of the material evolution, themselves powers and movements of Matter. After and if this explanation has failed to cover and to elucidate the facts, it can be more freely investigated whether they are not quite other principles of being. Many philosophical questions arise, as, whether they have entered into Matter and whence or were always in it, and if so, whether they are for ever less and subordinate in action or are in their essential power greater, whether contained in it only or really containing it, whether subsequent and dependent on its previous appearance or only that in their apparent organisation here but in real being and power anterior to it and Matter itself dependent on the essential pre-existence of life and mind. A greater question comes, whether mind itself is the last term or there is something beyond, whether soul is only an apparent result and phenomenon of the interaction of mind, life and body or we have here an independent term of our being and of all being, greater, anterior, ultimate, all matter containing and contained in a secret spiritual consciousness, a spirit the first, last and eternal, the Alpha and the Omega, the OM. For experiential philosophy either Matter, Mind, Life or Spirit may be the Being, but none of these higher principles can be made securely the basis of our thought against all intellectual questioning until the materialistic hypothesis has first been given a chance and tested. That may in the end turn out to have been the use of the materialistic investigation of the universe and its inquiry the greatest possible service to the finality of the spiritual explanation of the universe."

Q. 5: What are the gates of escape by which materialistic knowledge can get away from its self-imprisoning limitations?

A: "Physical science has before its eye two eternal factors of existence, Matter and Energy, and no others at all are needed in the account of its operations. Mind dealing with the facts and relations of Matter and Energy as they are arranged to the senses in experience and continuative experiment and are analysed by the reason, would be a sufficient definition of physical science. Its first regard is on Matter as the one principle of being and energy only a phenomenon of Matter; but in the end one questions whether it is not the other way round, all things the action of Energy and matter only the field, body and instrument of its workings. The first view is quantitative and purely mechanical, the second lets in a qualitative and a more spiritual element. We do not at once leap out of the materialistic circle, but we see an opening in it which may widen into an outlet when, stirred by this suggestion, we look at life and mind not merely as phenomenon in Matter, but as energies, and see that they are other energies than the material with peculiar qualities, powers and workings. If indeed all action of life and mind could be reduced, as it was once hoped, to none but material, quantitative and mechanical, to mathematical, physiological and chemical terms, the opening would cease to be an outlet; it would be choked. That attempt has failed and there is no sign of its ever being successful. Only a limited range of the phenomena of life and mind could be satisfied by a purely bio-physical, psycho-physical or bio-psychical explanation, and even if more could be dealt with by these data, still they would only have been accounted for on one side of their mystery, the lower end. Life and Mind, like the Vedic Agni, have their two extremities hidden in a secrecy, and we should by this way only have hold of the tail-end, the head would still be mystic and secret. To know more we must have studied not only the actual or possible action of body and matter on mind and life, but explored all the possible action of mind too on body and life; and that opens undreamed vistas. And there is always the vast field of the action of mind in itself and on itself, which needs for its elucidation another, a mental, a psychic science.

"Having examined and explained Matter by physical methods

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