

MOTHER INDIA

Managing Editor:
K. R. PODDAR

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

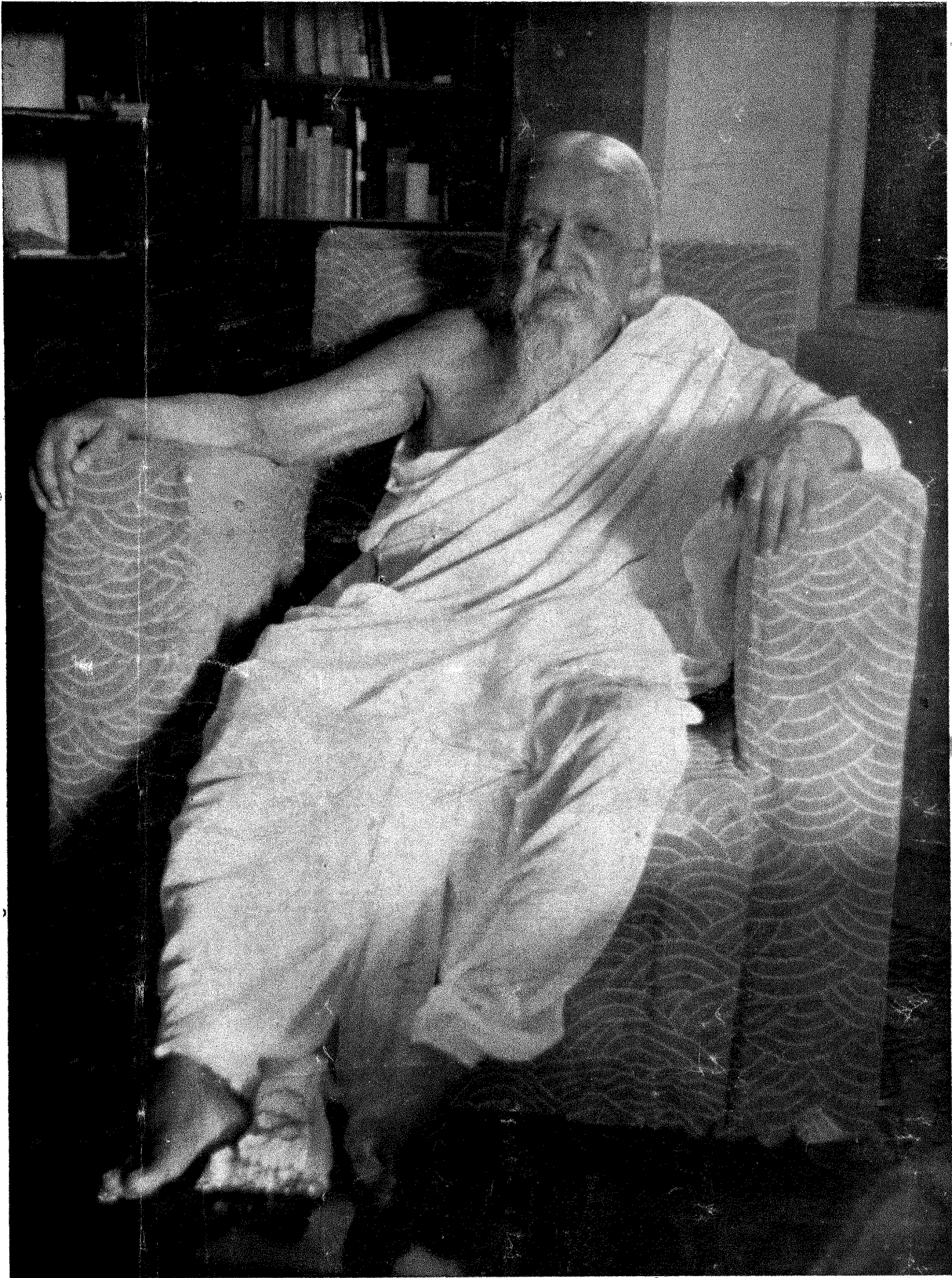
Editor:
K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

VOL. III, NO. 21.

Special Number : December 5, 1951

PRICE: AS. 4



August 15, 1872

December 5, 1950

SRI AUROBINDO

Photograph by Henri Cartier Bresson

MOTHER INDIA

Managing Editor:
K. R. PODDAR

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

Editor:
K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

VOL. III

Special Number: December 5, 1951

NO. 21.

CONTENTS

THE SACRIFICE OF SRI AUROBINDO	1	THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO	
THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE: TO THE CHILDREN OF THE ASHRAM	2	CHAPTER VII (Contd.): THE THREE STAGES OF SURRENDER	
THE COMING OF SRI AUROBINDO AND HIS PASSING (Poem)		by Rishabhchand	6
by Prithvi Singh	2	SRI AUROBINDO, THE LEADER OF THE EVOLUTION	
MOTHER (Poem) by Sahana	2	Part II of "The World Crisis and India" by "Synergist"	7
SRI AUROBINDO'S LETTERS		MYSTERIOUS SLEEP (Poem) by Rajanikant Mody	8
LITERARY VALUES AND SOME PERSONAL POINTS	3	THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA by Sisirkumar Mitra	9
THE PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION by Nathaniel Pearson	5	LOTUS-FLAME (Poem) by Romen	10
THE CROSS OF NEW CREATION (Poem) by Norman Dowsett	5	SRI AUROBINDO AND MAN'S SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT	
		by C. C. Dutt	11
		"SAVITRI", AN EPIC by A. B. Purani	12

THE SACRIFICE OF SRI AUROBINDO

1.26 a.m., December 5, 1950. A moment like any other, in a night like many a night—except to those who watched in the room where for over two decades Sri Aurobindo had lived. For them there was all human history coming to a cryptic climax: after summing up in himself the aspiration of man in entirety—man the soul, the mind, the life-force, the body—and after bringing a power of complete godhead to answer this fourfold aspiration, Sri Aurobindo was throwing away the earnest of the final and supreme triumph, a physical being in which the very cells were beginning to flower into a divine substance such as the world had scarcely dreamt of in even its most apocalyptic hours.

The doctors who were his attendants knew their patient to be no mere mortal: they treated his body for what they recognised it to be, a vehicle of supernatural light, and they had to accept the mysterious "No" he had categorically returned to their question: "Are you not using on yourself the sovereign spiritual force with which you have saved hundreds?" The body that seemed able to live without end by the protection of an all-transformative power was being allowed by its master to suffer extreme uraemia and pass into profound unconsciousness. Indeed the doctors were permitted—as if out of compassion for them—to try their palliatives; but there was no suspension of Sri Aurobindo's fiat that though he had the whole perfection of man in his own hands he should lay aside its last victory in himself and embrace death.

No doubt, it was not death in its utter commonness. The uraemia that preceded it had been unique. Every medical sign was there of its absolute hold over the body's reactions—save one: Sri Aurobindo, as if by an independence of comatose brain and nerve, could command consciousness again and again, inquire what the time was or ask for water. Unique also was the sequel of the uraemic poisoning. Between the instant when life clinically ended and the instant when the body was lowered into a special vault in the Ashram courtyard, more than four days passed without a trace of decomposition. And many saw with even their physical eyes the body glowing with what the Mother had called the concentration in it of the light of the Supermind, the Divine Consciousness in its integrality which Sri Aurobindo and she had been labouring with the patience of heaven-sent pioneers to bring down for the first time to suffering earth. Mortality in its normal form was not here; yet something of its age-old doom was present and that was a question-mark glaring in the face of every disciple and making most enigmatic that varied wonderful life of seventy-nine years, triumphant over all human difficulties.

The question-mark cannot be completely removed. Depths beyond depths lie in an event of this nature: the human mind is unable to compass them all. But a few significances gleam out for an initial understanding and set a general perspective in which our aching and groping gaze may rest.

There was no failure on Sri Aurobindo's part: this is certain from the psychological and physical details put together—of the preceding months as well as of the actual illness. There was only a strange sacrifice. And if Sri Aurobindo the indomitable gave the sacrifice, it must be one that was a sudden terrible short-cut to some secret victory for God in the world at the cost of a personal consummation. What occasioned the sacrifice appears to have been earth's insufficient receptivity to the Aurobindonian gift of the descending Supermind. Something in the gross constitution of terrestrial creatures would not thrill to the Grace from on high, would not appreciate with a response deep enough the colossal work that was being done at a selfless expense of energy and with a silent bearing of "the fierce inner wounds that are slow to heal". If the earth's consciousness had been more receptive, the crisis of the human body's conversion into terms of divinity would have begun in a less radical shape

and without so extreme an upshot for one individual in the van of life's fight towards perfection. Hence much of the responsibility for the upshot lies with the absence of co-operation by the mind of the race. It was as if the beings Sri Aurobindo had come to save had turned his enemies—not deliberately in all cases, yet with a dullness of perception and an inertia of the will that were as crucial.

This dullness and this inertia were not only an obstacle to the descending Divine: they were also perilous for the world itself. To the obscure occult forces—powers and principalities of darkness—which always oppose the Divine's work and which were reacting against the tremendous pressure of the Aurobindonian light in a vast upsurge, to these forces bent on a final calamitous counter-attack across the battlefield that is man, man's dullness and inertia gave a ground of support and thus signed his own doom. Sri Aurobindo, born to put his mission above everything else, could not but follow the course he did: how could he betray the long-invoked Supermind whose hour on earth was preparing to strike, or let the world which he had bound to his heart pay disastrously for its unreadiness before the divine advent? He gathered, as it were, the myriad antagonist spears into his own breast, took upon himself a globe-wide catastrophe. Most unlike him would it have been to do anything in the crisis save sanction the very worst that could happen to him because of humanity's unresponsiveness, and somehow weave it with his invincible spiritual art into the design of his own master mission.

That mission was the conquest of the very foundations of life's imperfect structure through the ages. Not only to build a golden dome but to transform what he symbolically called the dragon base in the Inconscience from which the universe has evolved: this was Sri Aurobindo's work. And it had to be done one way or another. There could have been a way of slow conquest, preserving his own body by a careful rationed spirituality which would run no deadly hazards for the sake of rapid salvation of the sorrow-burdened world. The way of revolutionary evolution, thrown open like an abyss, was to let his body admit an illness symbolic of the drive of the Inconscience from below and, after a limited though intensely significant contest, carry in an actual death its own godlike presence into the stuff of the Inconscience. Death was the glory-hole desperately blown into the massive rock of that stuff for the physical divinity of Sri Aurobindo to permeate in a direct and literal sense the darkness wrapped within darkness which the Vedic seers had long ago intuited to be Nature's cryptic womb of lightward creation. By identifying his physical divinity with that primal Negation of the Divine, he has effected an immediate entry into the heart of the enemy's camp: he has taken by surprise the central stronghold of all that frustrates and destroys, all that renders precarious the body's beauty, frail the life-energy's strength, flickering the mind's knowledge and swallows up in its monstrous void the marvellous legacy left to mankind by the hero and the sage.

By passing beyond the visible scene he has not passed to some transcendent Ineffable. He who had held incarnate within himself both the potency and the peace of the Transcendent—the creative Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness of the ultimate Spirit—needed no flight from the universe to reach the Highest. Nor like a background influence would he act now on earth, he whose whole aim was not only to widen and heighten the individual but make all wideness and height focus themselves and become dynamic in the individual instrument. Still in the foreground of events, in the thick of time's drama with eternity as his theme, still as a concentrated individualisation of the wide and the high, an organised being in whom the Supramental *kāraṇa śhāriṛa* or causal

Continued on next page

THE MOTHER'S MESSAGE

TO THE CHILDREN OF THE ASHRAM

THERE is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in this ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts. Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all his time to establish in himself this consciousness he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realise it.

You have the immense privilege of having come quite young to the Ashram, that is to say, still plastic and capable of being moulded according to this new ideal and thus becoming the representatives of the new race. Here, in the Ashram, you are in the most favourable conditions with regard to the environment, the influence, the teaching and the example, to awaken in you this supramental consciousness and to grow according to its law.

Now, all depends on your will and your sincerity. If you have the will no more to belong to ordinary humanity, no more to be merely evolved animals; if your will is to become men of the new race realising Sri Aurobindo's supramental ideal, living a new and higher life upon a new earth, you will find here all the necessary help to achieve your purpose; you will profit fully by your stay in the Ashram and eventually become living examples for the world.

24th July, 1951.

The Coming of Sri Aurobindo and His Passing

Thy coming a miracle of a wonder dawn:

In the greyness of a twilight's mystic hour

There sprang from Nescience' heart a spirit-flower,

A God's caressing smile on Life's green lawn.

Thy passing a mystery of a trembling night:

Although the midnight's hour had passed, there lay

The black-cowled Darkness still in massed array—

Then Matter's base was struck by a Golden Light

Leaping out from Thy body's million cells.

The tremendous impact broke the guarded seals

Of the chamber where in trance awaits the soul

Its ultimate hour to rise with Victory's bells,

And now shall roll no more the Inconscient's wheels,

The fragment's law gives place to Truth of the whole.

PRITHVI SINGH

Mother

Mother! deep in my heart I find

A jewel glimmering in the night,

When every mortal sense is blind

It speaks to stars of unknown height.

Mother! a love-flame swift and sweet

Swaying along a path of gold,

It rises to your heavenly feet

Where sun and moon and stars you mould.

Mother! the flower of eternity

Unfolds its petals in my soul,

I sing to its light that unveils to me

A crystal tower, your shining goal.

Mother! in a lonely secret spot

I am cradled on your breast alone

Where all of me is gathered, brought

Into your dream of opening Dawn.

SAHANA

THE SACRIFICE OF SRI AUROBINDO —Continued from page 1.

divine body has descended into the *sukshma sharira* or subtle body of mind-stuff and life-stuff, he stands close to earth with his sacrificed physical substance as a firm irremovable base and centre in the Inconscience for spreading there his immortal light and changing earth's fate from the sheer bottom of things no less than from the sheer top.

This is how the occult eye sees the paradoxical climax whose anniversary falls today. And as one watches the holy spot that is Sri Aurobindo's *samadhi* in the midst of his Ashram and all about is the aroma of flowers and incense-sticks expressing the mute prayer of a thousand hearts to whom he is the Avatar of a super-humanity to be, the concrete close reality of the Master of the Integral Yoga requires no proof. But the entire sacrifice, with its immense mysterious potency, was possible because, commemorating the anniversary and conducting the Ashram, there is amongst us his co-worker, his manifesting and executive *Shakti*, the Mother. It is because, she, in harmony with his plan to fight from two bases, remains on earth to foster the golden future that he could draw back from the visible scene as if to pull more inward the taut string of the spiritual bow and make the God-tipped arrow fly swifter and farther. She who has been one with him in the Supramental attainment, one in vast vision and integral work, joint-parent of the new age in which the outer physical as well as the inner psychological is meant to be Godlike and wonderfully immune, she is the bridge across which Sri Aurobindo's triumph of winning all while seeming to lose everything moves in ever-increasing beauty and power into Matter's ignorant world of a life that is but death in disguise. Without her embodied mediation, without her

retention of the Aurobindonian consciousness in full visibility before us, the upward illumining of the Inconscience by Sri Aurobindo for Matter's transformation would lack in completeness of result. Her protective hold on earth justifies the withdrawal he has accomplished, her radiant presence fulfils the miraculous power of his absence.

By the co-operation between that absence and this presence a leap in spiritual evolution has been made. A hint of it is in a new expression that comes again and again over the Mother's face. The Supermind, whose realisation and subsequent descent are the Aurobindonian Yoga, seems now not only active as before from above, unfolding its gigantic downward dynamism in its own time, but also operative as a gleaming nucleus of World-Will from even the physical brain-level of the embodied consciousness that is the guru, day after day, to the Godward movement of our souls. In other words, the Supermind possessed overhead by the Mother is now commanded more and more by her from its own growing poise below. The wish of the very earth-self in her begins to be binding, so to speak, on the creativity of her own Supreme Self in the Transcendence. This means a developing adjustment of the incalculable time-rhythm of the Supramental descent from on high to the impatient beat of the aspiring human heart. The possibility dawns of a rapturous acceleration of the Truth-Consciousness's transforming process—and a greater, more luminous mastery of material life, a deeper invasion of the body by the Immortal Existence, a swifter and more palpable progress towards the conquest of darkness and death for which the secret decisive blow was struck in that strangely fateful moment in the dead of night a year ago.

SRI AUROBINDO'S LETTERS

(THE QUESTIONS ARE PUT BEFORE THE ANSWERS)

LITERARY VALUES AND SOME PERSONAL POINTS

(Continued)

(How is one to avoid intervals in the middle of writing a poem when the flow of inspiration ceases? If you yourself had ever to cope with the difficulty, how did you do it?)

"Inspiration is always a very uncertain thing; it comes when it chooses, stops suddenly before it has finished its work, refuses to descend when it is called. This is a well-known affliction, perhaps of all artists, but certainly of poets. There are some who can command it at will; those who, I think, are more full of an abundant poetic energy than careful for perfection; others who oblige it to come whenever they put pen to paper but with these the inspiration is either not of a high order or quite unequal in its levels. Again there are some who try to give it a habit of coming by always writing at the same time; Virgil with his nine lines first written, then perfected every morning, Milton with his fifty epic lines a day, are said to have succeeded in regularising their inspiration. It is, I suppose, the same principle which makes gurus in India prescribe for their disciples a meditation at the same fixed hour every day. It succeeds partially of course, for some entirely, but not for everybody. For myself, when the inspiration did not come with a rush or in a stream,—for then there is no difficulty,—I had only one way, to allow a certain kind of incubation in which a large form of the thing to be done threw itself on the mind and then wait for the white heat in which the entire transcription could rapidly take place. But I think each poet has his own way of working and finds his own issue out of inspiration's incertitudes."

(You write in your note to Harin about Toru Dutt and "Romesh of the same ilk" and Sarojini Naidu that you know of no other Indian than Sarojini to have published in English anything that is really alive and strong and original. I can understand your forgetting your own work, but how is it that you have omitted Harin himself? Surely he has published things that are bound to remain? Also, how was it that Oscar Wilde and Laurence Binyon could give praise to Manmohan Ghose? Has he done nothing that could touch Sarojini's level, though in another way?)

"I did not speak of Harin because that was a separate question altogether—besides, whether in criticising or in paying compliments, present company is always supposed to be excepted unless they are specially mentioned and for this purpose Harin and myself are present company. About Manmohan I said that I knew very little of his later work. As for his earlier work it had qualities which evoked the praise of Wilde. I do not know Binyon has written, but he is a fine poet and an admirable critic, not likely to praise work that has not quality. (Wilde and Binyon were both intimate friends of my brother,—at a time Manmohan was almost Wilde's disciple. If I were inclined to the Wildely malicious I might say that even Oscar's worst enemies never accused him of sincerity—of speech, so if he liked someone very much he would not scruple to over-praise his poetry but I think he considered my brother's poems to carry in them a fine promise. Binyon and Manmohan had almost the relations of Wordsworth and Southey in the first days, strongly admiring and stimulating each other.) Let me say then that my opinion was a personal one, perhaps born of brotherly intimacy—for if familiarity breeds contempt, fraternity may easily breed criticism—and based on insufficient data. I liked Manmohan's poetry well enough, but I never thought it to be great. He was a conscientious artist of word and rhyme almost painfully careful about technique. Virgil wrote nine lines every day and spent the whole morning rewriting and rerewriting them out of all recognition. Manmohan did better. He would write five or six half lines and quarter lines and spend the week filling them up. I remember the sacred wonder with which I regarded this process—something like this:

*The morn.....red.....sleepless eyes
..... lilac rest.*

Perhaps I exaggerate, but it was very much like that! That seemed to me to indicate an inspiration not very much on fire or in flood. But I suppose he became more fluent afterwards and I am ready to change my opinion if I have materials for doing so. I made no comparison with Sarojini. The two poets are poles asunder in their inspiration and manner. Sarojini has a true originality whatever its limits; even if she does not live for ever, she deserves to live. My brother was perhaps a finer artist, but has Manmohan's poetry similarly an unique and original power?"

(26-1-34)

(I spoke to Nirod and Jyoti that it has been a habit with me to reread and repeat and hum lines which I have felt or known to have come from very high sources. I mentioned your recent twelve poems as my aids to drawing inspiration from the overhead planes. I quoted also the famous lines from other poets which have derived from the highest levels. Jyoti begged me to type for her all the lines of this character. From your twelve poems I have chosen the following:

- (1) *O marvel bird with the burning wings of light and the unbarred lids that look beyond all space...*

- (2) *Lost the titan winging of the thought...*
- (3) *Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
An unvalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
Force one with unimagined rest.*
- (4) *My consciousness climbed like a topless hill...*
- (5) *He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
Rapt, thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
Unrolls the sign and form of being,
Seated above in the omniscient Silence.*
- (6) *Calm faces of the gods on backgrounds vast
Bringing the marvel of the infinitudes...*
- (7) *A silent unnamed emptiness content
Either to fade in the Unknowable
Or thrill with the luminous seas of the Infinite...*
- (8) *Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
Climbing high far ethers eternal-sunned...*
- (9) *I have drunk the Infinite like a giant's wine...*
- (10) *My soul unhorizoned widens to measureless sight...*
- (11) *Rose of God like a blush of rapture on Eternity's face,
Rose of love, ruby depth of all being, fire-passion of Grace!
Arise from the heart of the yearning that sobs in Nature's abyss:
Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life Beatitude's kiss.*

I shan't ask you to tell me in detail the sources of all these lines—but what do you think in general of my choice? Only for one quotation I must crave the favour of your closer attention. Please do try to tell me something about it, for I like it so much that I cannot remain without knowing all that can be known: it is, of course, Number 3 here. I consider these lines the most satisfying I have ever read: poetically as well as spiritually, you have written others as great—but what I mean to say is that the whole essence of the truth of life is given by them and every cry in the being seems answered. So be kind enough to take a little trouble and give me an intimate knowledge about them. I'll be very happy to know their sources and the sort of *enthousiasmos* you had when writing them. How exactly did they come into being?)

"The choice is excellent. I am afraid I couldn't tell you in detail the sources, though I suppose they all belong to the overhead inspiration. In all I simply remained silent and allowed the lines to come down shaped or shaping themselves on the way—I don't know that I know anything else about it. All depends on the stress of the *enthousiasmos*, the force of the creative thrill and largeness of the wave of its Ananda, but how is that describable or definable? What is prominent in No. 3 is a certain calm, deep and intense spiritual emotion taken up by the spiritual vision that sees exactly the state or experience and gives it its exact revelatory words. It is an overmind vision and experience and condition that is given a full power of expression by the word and the rhythm—there is a success in 'embodying' them or at least the sight and emotion of them which gives the lines their force." (4-5-37)

(You have nowhere said anything about Ferdausi, the epic poet of Persia, author of *Shahnameh*? Would you rank him with the other epic poets whom you consider absolutely first-rate—Homer, Valmiki, Vyasa? How is it that you who have made your own culture so wide by means of learning so many languages have allowed a serious gap in it by not knowing Persian?)

"I read Ferdausi in a translation long ago but it gave me no idea at all of the poetic qualities of the original. As for gaps in the culture—well, I don't know Russian or Finnish (missing the *Kalevala*) and haven't read the *Nibulungenlied* in the original, nor for that matter Pelaur's poem on the conquests of Rameses in ancient Egyptian or at least the fragment that survives. I don't know Arabic either, but I don't mind that, having read Burton's translation of the Arabian Nights which is as much a classic as the original. Anyhow, the gaps are vast and many." (13-7-37)

(Dr. Iyengar has given an interpretation to your poem *Thought the Paraclete*, which some other critic has fallen foul of. What is your own analysis of the thought-structure in this poem?)

"There is no thought-structure in the poem; there is only a succession of vision and experience, it is a mystic poem, its unity is spiritual and concrete, not a mental and logical building. When you see a flower, do you ask the gardener to reduce the flower to its chemical components? There would then be no flower left and no beauty. The poem is not built upon intellectual definitions or philosophical theorisings; it is something seen. When you ascend a mountain, you see the scenery and feel the delight of the ascent; you don't sit down to make a map with names for every rock and peak or spend time studying its geological structure—that is work for the geologist, not for the traveller. Iyengar's geological account (to make one is part of his *métier* as a critic and a student and writer on

Sri Aurobindo's Letters—Continued from page 3

literature) is probably as good as any other is likely to be; but each is free to make his own according to his own idea. Reasoning and argumentation are not likely to make one account truer and invalidate the rest. A mystic poem may explain itself or a general idea may emerge from it, but it is the vision that is important or what one can get from it by intuitive feeling, not the explanation or idea; *Thought the Paraclete* is a vision or revelation of an ascent through spiritual planes, but gives no names and no photographic descriptions of the planes crossed. I leave it there." (1944)

(It seems there was on P's part some sort of hesitation about publishing in the *Advent* my article on Art-Principles and that you gave some general directions apropos of it. May I have a copy of your remarks on P's letter?)

COPY

"There are three separate questions mixed together in this letter, (1) dealing with politics, (2) dealing with controversial questions, (3) the tone of the article with regard to X. The tone is that of lively and sometimes sharp controversy, but it is only an undue sensitiveness which could regard it as offensive. Nevertheless to avoid all objections I have erased or altered all references to X and his supporters except the two or three that are indispensable. In these there is nothing whatever that can be considered objectionable. As to politics, I presume that the prohibition referred to current politics. I cannot suppose that a dealing with political philosophy or with political ideas in general could come under the prohibition. It would not be, for instance, a violation of the rule if some passage from *The Ideal of Human Unity* were quoted in the *Advent*. Nor can we be debarred from differing with Marx's or Marxist ideas on history or philosophy or art or with the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism merely because it is sponsored by the Bolsheviks. Amal's article is not about politics but about a question of art theory. The fact that one of the ideas combated is that art must have social or political or proletarian inspiration does not make it political. I have erased certain sentences which might be regarded as too mordant allusions to present-day politics. As for controversy, it was I myself who insisted on there being no writing whether in the *Advent* or other of our journals embodying political, social or economic controversy; but I did this for my own reasons and not from any timorous concession to any Government or to the sensibilities of political leaders. Discussion, even if controversial, on other subjects such as philosophy, art or similar matters has not been prohibited, though there need be no acrimonious debate.

"I do not understand why the *Advent* should limit itself to expressing my views about the world's future only or why it should ban my views about the world's past or present. It seems to me that both have been referred to occasionally in the pages of the *Advent* and that remarks about current topics, not political, do occur there. I may add that the mere fact of some one being an eminent political leader does not debar us or any one from differing with his views about philosophy, religion, art or other matters. Current Indian politics have to be avoided in our publications, that is all." (13-6-46)

(It is a bit of a surprise to me that Virgil's

Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt is now considered by you "an almost direct descent from the Overmind consciousness". I was under the impression that, like

O passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem, it was a perfect mixture of the Higher Mind with the Psychic—and the impression was based on something you had yourself said to me in the past. Similarly, I remember your definitely declaring Wordsworth's

The winds come to me from the fields of sleep to be lacking in the precise Overmind note and having only the note of Intuition proper in an intense form. What has made you change your opinion in both the instances?)

"Yes, certainly my ideas and reactions to some of the lines and passages about which you had asked me long ago have developed and changed and could not but change. For at that time I was new to the overhead regions or at least to the highest of them—for the higher thought and illumination were already old friends—and could not be sure or complete in my perception of many things concerning them. I hesitated therefore to assign anything like Overmind touch or inspiration to passages in English or other poetry and did not presume to claim any of my own writing as belonging to this order. Besides, the intellect took still too large a part in my reactions to poetry; for instance, I judged Virgil's line too much from what seemed to be its surface intellectual import and too little from its deeper meaning and vision and its reverberations of the Overmind. So also with Wordsworth's line about the 'fields of sleep': I have since then moved in those fields of sleep and felt the breath which is carried from them by the winds that came to the poet, so I can better appreciate the depth of vision in Wordsworth's line. I could also see more clearly the impact of the Overhead on the work of poets who wrote usually from a mental, a psychic, an emotional or other vital inspiration, even when it gave only a tinge." (20-11-46)

(In that long letter on your own poetry, apropos my friend's criticisms, you have written of certain influences of the later Victorian period on you. Meredith's from *Modern Love* I have been unable to trace con-

cretely—unless I consider some of the more pointed and bitter-sweetly reflective turns in *Songs to Myrtilla* to be Meredithian. That of Tennyson is noticeable in only a delicate picturesqueness here and there or else in the use of some words. Perhaps more than in your early blank verse the Tennysonian influence of this kind in general is there in *Songs to Myrtilla*. Arnold has influenced your blank verse in respect of particular constructions like two or three "buts" as in

*No despicable wayfarer, but Ruru,
But son of a great Rishi,*

or

But tranquil, but august, but making easy...

Arnold is also observable in the way you build up and elaborate your similes both in *Urvasie* and in *Love and Death*. Less openly, a general tone of poetic mind from him can also be felt: it persists subtly in even the poems collected in *Ahana*, not to mention *Baji Prabhou*. I don't know whether Swinburne is anywhere patent in your narratives: he probably does have something to do with *Songs to Myrtilla*. Stephen Phillips is the most direct influence in *Urvasie* and *Love and Death*. But as I have said in my essay on your blank verse he is assimilated into a stronger and more versatile genius, together with influences from the Elizabethans, Milton and perhaps less consciously Keats. In any case, whatever the influences, your early narratives are intensely original in essential spirit and movement and expressive body. It is only unreceptiveness or inattention that can fail to see this and to savour the excellence of your work.)

"The influences I spoke of were of course only such influences as every poet undergoes before he has entirely found himself. What you say about Arnold's influence is quite correct; it acted mainly, however, as a power making for restraint and refinement, subduing any uncontrolled romanticism and insisting on clear lucidity and right form and building. Meredith had no influence on *Songs to Myrtilla*; even afterwards I did not make myself acquainted with all his poetry, it was only *Modern Love* and poems like the sonnet on *Lucifer* and the *Ascent to Earth of the Daughter of Hades* that I strongly admired and it had its effect on the formation of my poetic style and its after-effects in that respect are not absent from *Savitri*. It is only Swinburne's early lyrical poems that exercised any power on me, *Dolores*, *Hertha*, *The Garden of Proserpine* and others that rank among his best work,—also *Atalanta in Calydon*, his later lyrical poetry I found too empty and his dramatic and narrative verse did not satisfy me. One critic characterised *Love and Death* as an extraordinarily brilliant and exact reproduction of Keats: what do you say to that? I think Stephen Phillips had more to do with it." (7-7-47)

(In your sonnet *Man the Enigma* occurs the magnificent line:

His heart a chaos and an empyrean.

But I am much saddened by the fact that the rhythm of these words gets spoiled at the end by a mis-stressing in "empyrean". "Empyrean" is stressed currently in the penultimate syllable, thus: "empyre/an". Your line puts the stress on the second syllable. It is in the adjective "empyrean" that the second syllable is stressed, but the noun is never stressed that way, so far as I know. Perhaps you have a precedent in the Elizabethans? Or have you deliberately taken liberty with the accentuation? The same mis-stressing occurs also in Book II, Canto 11, of *Savitri*: page 62, line 4 from below:

Surprised in their untracked empyrean.

But you certainly do not always stress the noun like the adjective. In Book I, Canto 3, line 15 from below on page 16 is the splendid verse:

An empyrean vision saw and knew.

Here the penultimate syllable gets the ictus. May I have some explanation? Perhaps there are acknowledged alternative accentuations and I am just ignorant? I really hope so, for otherwise, while the line from Book II of *Savitri* can easily take a noun after "empyrean" or get its "empyrean" changed to "empyrean" and then take a noun, the sonnet-line will not have the same absolute grandeur of phrase as now if it is rewritten:

His heart is a chaos and an empyrean's span.

If it is to rhyme with "man", "plan" and "scan" in your sonnet-scheme it must bring in "span"—mustn't it?)

"I find in the Chamber's Dictionary the noun 'empyrean' is given two alternative pronunciations, each with a different stress,—the first, "empyre/an" and secondly, 'empyre/an'. Actually in the book the accent seems to fall on the consonant 'r' instead of the vowel. That must be a mistake in printing; it is evident that it is meant to fall on the second vowel. If that is so, my variation is justified and needs no further defence. The adjective 'empyrean' the dictionary gives as having the same alternative accentuation as the noun, that is to say, either 'empyre/al' with the accent on the long 'e' or 'empyre/real' with the accent on the second syllable, but the 'e' although unaccented still keeps its long pronunciation. Then? But even if I had no justification from the dictionary and the noun 'empyre/an' were only an Aurobindonian freak and a wilful shifting of the accent, I would refuse to change it; for the rhythm here is an essential part of whatever beauty there is in the line.

P.S.—Your view is supported by the small Oxford Dictionary which, I suppose, gives the present usage, Chambers being an older authority. But Chambers must represent a former usage and I am entitled to revive even a past or archaic form if I choose to do so." (4-8-48)

THE PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

By NATHANIEL PEARSON

At the beginning of this year the Mother prayed that we might be aided in the divine Transformation, that it should not only be our sole preoccupation but also our sole occupation, and so enter into all our activities. Thus the change of consciousness needed at this present hour, must necessarily become an active part of our life, and not merely a cherished ideal. The reason for this supplication for the Transformation to actualise and enter into our life and being, is not far to seek when we consider the Mother's words of just a little time before: that it was "the lack of receptivity of the earth and men that is mostly responsible for the decision Sri Aurobindo has taken regarding his body". It is obvious that the deficiency is in men's nature, and therefore if the divine Light and Truth are to penetrate the earth-darkness there must necessarily be a more active response and a wider awakening of humanity in general, particularly by a more radical and decisive turn towards the Divine,—even if it is only in the interests of man's own survival. (For it is obvious that the divine Light will come irrespective of humanity's persistent resistance). This is the present need, therefore;—to establish a wider turn towards the Divine. But it is by no means the whole of it; for the first steps of this transformatory change have yet in a more widespread way to be taken by the individual consciousness. What these are can best be realised if we turn to what Sri Aurobindo has written on the subject in *The Life Divine*.

To see the true goal of this worldly existence we must not only take cognisance of the Supernature—the Perfection that is seemingly beyond the gross imperfection around,—but also of the occult power and will that stands behind the whole evolutionary movement, since this power of Nature is itself a veiled power of God, whose instrument Nature in fact is. If we trace the working of this will more deeply we discover that it indicates the seeking to effectuate the manifestation of the embodied life of the Spirit here in the world,—though clumsily and circuitously as it seems to our surface mind. Thus is the ignorance, limitation and incapacity of the lower Nature, in its own blind groping way, seeking to grow out of its subterranean darkness into the light of eternal Day. And man who is purposefully involved in this struggle of Nature is the most consciously evolved element therein. This is the unique opportunity open to man: to grow himself, and to raise the world into the promised status of the divine manifestation.

Of the three radical stages that have been revealed to us as essential for the transformation of the world, the final and crowning event must be the descent of the divine Power itself,—in the dynamic form of the supramental Consciousness. This is a supreme act for which man can but prepare the way by his own aspiration and conscious endeavour, since its ultimate consummation is the veritable act of God. Without the descent of that higher Consciousness no permanent transformation can endure in the world. Yet our immediate concern is that the primary stages of the Transformation,—which are the emergence of the true soul-being, and the spiritualisation of man—are effected, for until these are sufficiently far advanced not even a beginning of the supramental change can come permanently into the world. Although it is the Avatar's God-given work to bring the supramental Consciousness into the world, and only then when the condition on earth is such that this descent can be accomplished, it is man's labour to effect the primary stages,—to lay the foundation in himself and around, so that the wider transformation will be possible. This preparatory stage, as Sri Aurobindo reminds us, is a long and difficult process which requires our constant and persistent effort,—but nevertheless it is a most necessary and urgent task. We must remember also that as man increasingly turns towards the Divine so will the Divine lean down to man and extend His Power and influence in the world.

What has been achieved so far by men in their quest for the spiritual Reality is quite evident from the accomplishments, in diverse degrees, of the mystics, saints and spiritual seekers of the world. But taken altogether they present a rather mixed and confusing picture of the possibilities that are open to us in our present spiritual advancement. It is only when we consider the two primary movements around which our whole spiritual effort and the ascent of man must revolve, that the picture begins to clarify and link itself to one's own aspiration and to the progressive needs and processes of our endeavour. The first or central pivot of this effort is naturally the awakening and emergence of the soul-being, while the second is a growing realisation of a higher Law of existence, and of a higher Light which can even enter into our earthly life. The development

and interaction of these two together constitute the necessary complete process of spiritualisation of our nature. But at the same time there must needs be the constant discipline and purification of the being, otherwise the efforts become either separated from each other, or too easily overwhelmed and engulfed by the all-devouring ego, and consequently entangled with all the lower impulses, desires and ignorant movements of our vital and lower mental nature, which of course reverses the uplifting effort we have made. It would, however, seem an easy and abbreviated course merely to cut oneself adrift from all this entanglement of the lower nature, but this step by no means provides us with the wherewithal for transforming our present nature. Indeed it moves us further away from the true solution which is envisaged as the future of the world. Sri Aurobindo points out the way clearly and expositoryly in *The Life Divine*. We have to patiently follow this unfoldment step by step, and above all to mould our thinking to the diverse facets of Truth successively revealed to us.

What is meant specifically by the spiritual change is the awakening and opening of the higher levels of mind, particularly the wider, clarified and discriminative levels wherein the higher Truths can be reflected without becoming distorted or cramped as they are on our ordinary level of thinking. The psychic change, on the other hand, is the awakening of the inner soul-being,—which does not mean the surface desire-soul so closely attached to our vital emotions and under the sway of the ego,—but the deeper soul reality that is as yet subliminal, or rather veiled in us. It is this innermost principle of our being that has to emerge in its own sovereign right, and become the central nucleus of a newly emergent personality—the real "I" in us in place of the narrow self-centred individual into which the ego restricts us. But these changes do not imply merely a change of heart or a change of attitude in terms of universal brotherhood, as they have so often been interpreted. For though these latter are obvious resultants of the true transformation, in themselves they only prove to be superficial changes that leave the real inner core of our nature unresolved. The spiritual Truths themselves must become an integral part of our actions, just as the soul must become the true Person and action-centre of the being.

We have said that these two processes must be concurrent. And this necessity is clear when we see how in the past they have been alienated only to the detriment of the spiritual effort. Thus a soul-development that ignores the necessity of mental clarification and the opening of mind to the higher Truths has only led (even as we see in the lives of well-advanced saints who were too greatly transfixed by the ecstasy of divine love) to all the obscurantist influences and distorting currents that sweep in unchecked through a mind as yet immersed in or too greatly identified with the ignorance of the world. Likewise, a mental seeking, however lofty, which ignores the need to bring out the hidden psychic being in one—and hence the true spiritual reality into one's active life,—succeeds either in cutting one off from the very roots of life, only to seek escape into a world of one's own mentalised ideals, or merely in leading one to seek only the Transcendent Reality (beyond this world of apparent unreality) as the One, the All and the Absolute. By ignoring the sovereign potency of a higher Knowledge we leave the way open for the spiritual values themselves to become distorted and even discredited. Equally by ignoring the soul reality and the direct contact it brings with the Divine, we by-pass our real function in the world as an instrument of the Divine. One merely loses oneself in a Beyond which cuts completely away from the pressing problems of the world and the future of man.

It is clear, therefore, that the first stirring spark or the upward shooting flame of the soul must be diligently fed and nurtured by the direct rays of illumined Knowledge issuing through a clarified mind. And similarly the unceasing quest of mind for the greater Perfection and higher Truths beyond must be firmly rooted to the soul-seed implanted in the innermost depths of us. For it is this secret inner soul that has to emerge and reveal itself as the real personality, and around which the individual can grow and develop into the fully spiritualised being. It is only on this fundamental transformation that the supramental Consciousness can eventually come and operate through humanity and so uplift the world to the divinised status open to it—and, if not through or by the aid of humanity, then through a new Being created to fulfil the conditions of the supramental descent into the world.

The Cross of New Creation

Throw off the world-clamour awhile!
Listen to a Voice which penetrates
To where men sleep—
An insistent Power beats
Where slowly stirs from drowse
The Leviathan mind of earth.
Look to the heights!—
A Promise long foretold,
Brilliant in gold and flaming like the sun,

Beguiles the bridal Dawn.
And from cyanic vasts
A cube-like form appears,
A crystal cruciform Nativity
Begins to shape.....
O white intensity! so pure—
From earth's own heart of tears,
A Cross is made
No blood can ever stain.

NORMAN DOWSETT

THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO

By RISHABHCHAND

CHAPTER VII (Continued)

THE THREE STAGES OF SURRENDER

The First Stage

All our turning towards God is caused by the soul or psychic being from behind. It is the soul that infuses its influence, little by little, into the most developed part of our being, whether it is the mind or the heart or the will in the vital, and then diffuses it into the other parts by a general penetration and expansion. When our mind begins to think of God or the Infinite or of something transcending our ignorance and mortality; when, more or less released from the thralldom of the body and the vital desires, it seeks an Absolute of Light or an Absolute of Peace or an Absolute Bliss, it is invariably the soul that has inspired the seeking. But our egoistic personality is not aware of this occult influence and inspiration. It feels that it is itself thinking of the Eternal or the Absolute, or that there is naturally developing a love of God and devotion and an attitude of self-offering in its heart. It takes the credit of this spiritual orientation to itself and derives a secret proud satisfaction from the change. And certainly there is nothing unnatural or undesirable in it. So long as the soul does not come to the front of our consciousness, it is always the ego that is the organiser and ruler of our nature. It may be a tamasic ego, wallowing in inertia and indolence and sheer physical amenities; or it may be rajasic, drunk with desires and revelling in strife and struggle for power and possession; or it may be sattvic, stationing itself in the growing light of the intelligence (*buddhi*) and progressing in comparative peace and purity; but none the less it is the ego all through, living in a constant sense of its separateness from others and emphasising its personal inclinations and preferences. But a stage arrives in the evolution of the human individual, when he comes to perceive that his separateness is an illusion, a hollow and uneasy illusion, and that behind it there is something infinite and eternal, of which it is a finite and fugitive figure. This Infinite and Eternal appears to be more than a mere immutable, impersonal immanence—it looms as a Being, as the supreme Master of our existence, as God. This perception kindles in the individual a new faith and aspiration and reverses his poise from self-seeking to self-surrender. The more he evolves, the more he realises his cabined littleness and his undeniable dependence on God, who enfolds and exceeds him. Not only does he feel that he is sustained and supported by the infinite Being, but that his very will is a tool of His will and that all his decisions and determinations are but disfigured and diminished reflections of His inscrutable decrees. This perception is the right step towards knowledge taken by the individual, and it initiates the first stage of surrender. It is his voluntary surrender to that which contains and transcends him.

As we have said above, this change in man is really engineered from behind by the soul which is evolving in him; for, left to itself, his egoistic personality would never have come by this liberating knowledge of its essential dependence on God. But in the beginning the soul works from behind the veil, and it is the ego that is the overt leader of the nature. It is, therefore, the ego that makes the surrender. Enlightened and fired with aspiration, it says, in effect, to God, "Take me, take my all, and make me Thine; for, in truth, I belong to Thee. Deliver me from myself, and let me be Thy servant." Not "I" and "mine", but "Thou" and "Thine" becomes then the burden of its heart's song. This stage of surrender is characterised by personal effort. Instead of seeking to arrogate every desirable object to itself, it yearns with a greater and greater sincerity to offer all it is and all it has to the All and Beyond-All. In the Integral Yoga this surrender tends to be integral, that is to say, it becomes the surrender of the mind with its thoughts and ideas, of life with its will and emotions and desires, and of the body with its movements and activities,—a synthetic progress in Jnanayoga, Bhaktiyoga and Karmayoga, though the start may be only with one of these, or, as in some cases, with two or all together. Constantly and conscientiously, the individual offers all his mind's thoughts, all his heart's love and devotion and all his works to the Divine Mother, and transforms his whole existence into a happy and loving sacrifice, into an unremitting *Yajna*, as the Gita calls it. At this stage of surrender, the seeker and lover of God becomes His servant; therefore, we call it the stage of the servant,—the long and arduous stage of self-consecration by personal effort. It is a stage of the transference of the centre of gravity from the ego to the Divine. It is a stage of relentless self-observation, constant self-purification, unsleeping vigilance and persistent, unreserved surrender. "A tamasic surrender refusing to fulfil the conditions and calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection."*

The Second Stage

In proportion as the self-offering through personal effort becomes more or less integral, the sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) begins to feel that the hold of the ego on him is slackening, and that the Mother's Power is entering into him, replacing his personal effort. The sense of his being a servant tends then to disappear gradually into the growing experience of becoming an instrument of the Mother's Will. This transition takes long

to be complete, for the ego dies hard and the integral surrender is not an easy achievement. However, a sincere call of the whole being and its self-opening to the Mother wears down the residual resistances in the nature and clears the way for a more and more manifest working of the Mother's Force. At times one feels the Force streaming in and impelling certain actions and then going out; at other times, it enters and occupies the being, lighting up some tracts of the mind, intensifying the Godward emotions and firing up the will. It initiates some or many actions in the nature, the sadhaka remaining peacefully passive and receptive. He becomes an instrument, having learnt not only the surrender of his will to the Mother, but also of his outer actions; and detached from the urges of ignorant desires, contemplates the world and the play of its dualities with the calm gaze of a dispassionate witness. The more his surrender is sincere and pervasive in the nature, the greater is the tangibility and effectiveness of the Mother's Force, and, feeling the Force working in him, initiating his actions and carrying them out, he is strongly confirmed in his experience and attitude of the instrument, and ceases to be the worker or the servant. This second stage is called the stage of the instrument. The illusory sense of oneself being the doer of one's actions is dispelled now for ever. One comes in concrete contact with the Mother's Force, universal, all-seeing and all-achieving, and passive in its hands, like the machine in the hands of the mechanist, sees one's life and nature being re-moulded and transformed in the image of the Divine, and giving out an unwonted music of unearthly harmonies. Thought, feeling, emotion, volition, action,—nothing is repressed or restricted, but all are originated, guided and consummated by the Mother's Will and Force.

But, at this stage, there is the possibility of a danger, which has to be carefully guarded against. When the sadhaka has learnt to be passive in the hands of the divine Mother, the forces of darkness, which may still be lurking in some neglected nooks of his nature or around him in the environment, may try to take advantage of this passivity and manoeuvre him into a deflection from the path. He has to be alert and vigilant, and plastic and passive only to the Mother's Force and to no other. The transparent sincerity and genuineness of his surrender will, however, be his safeguard against the machinations of the hostile agencies; for, sincerity can never fail to assure the Grace and protection of the Divine, but it must be an integral and unflawed sincerity, which seeks the Divine and nothing but the Divine.

At this stage the sadhaka may find in the beginning that though the egoism of the worker or the servant has disappeared, the subtler egoism of the instrument has taken its place. His consciousness has receded into the depths from where he knows and regards his triple nature of mind, life and body as not himself and separate from his real self; and yet there is a subtle relation, faintly felt, and growing fainter, which seems to keep up the illusion of his being an instrument. This egoism of the instrument, too, has to be blotted out of the consciousness and the entire being given over to the Mother to whom it really belongs.

The Third Stage

The third stage comes when the consciousness of the sadhaka has completely identified itself with the consciousness of the Mother and regards itself neither as a worker nor as an instrument. The soul, the central being in him, liberated from the bondage of Nature, though possessing it and enjoying its play, rests in the arms of the divine Mother, and its terrestrial being is sovereignly used by Her for the manifestation of the Divine. All egoism has faded out of his nature, all drive of desire has ceased for ever. He has become a child of the Mother, an eternal portion of Herself. Referring to this stage, Sri Aurobindo says, "Always she (the Mother) will be in you and you in her; it will be your constant, simple and natural experience that all your thought and seeing and action, your very breathing or moving come from her and are hers. You will know and see and feel that you are a person and power formed by her out of herself, put out from her for the play and yet always safe in her, being of her being, consciousness of her consciousness, force of her force, ananda of her Ananda. When this condition is entire and her supramental energies can freely move you, then you will be perfect in divine works; knowledge, will, action will become sure, simple, luminous, spontaneous, flawless, an outflow from the Supreme, a divine movement of the Eternal."* This is the stage of the child.

These are the three stages of the triple or integral surrender and this last the crowning result. The ego, the desire-soul, having been renounced, what marvels of knowledge and power and bliss pour upon our delight-soul, the *Antarātman!* Transported from the blind struggle and suffering of the life of ignorance, we live in the unity and harmony of the Life Divine. Free in the soul and free in the transformed nature, clasped by the Transcendent and moved by His Immanence, we live, even as the Divine lives, in the triune glory of His self-existence—*Sat-Chit-Ananda*. And that is the destiny to which the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo leads us.

* "The Mother" by Sri Aurobindo.

* "The Mother" by Sri Aurobindo.

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

(ii) KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVINE REALITY

POWERS OF MIND AND SUPERMIND

(Continued from the issue of November 10)

The possibility of attaining to the Higher Knowledge because of an inherent three-termed identity* between God, man and the universe was pointed out in the last essay; also the manner in which through self-knowledge one can rise to possess God-knowledge and world-knowledge—how it is within man's power to trace through his own being the Universal Force to its source and become aware of its world-action, and how by ascending in consciousness to his highest self in the Supermind he can become one with the Divine Truth-consciousness. Further, it was shown that over and above this three-termed identity, there was another veiled identity—that between the manifested principles in terrestrial creation, matter, life, soul, and mind, and their source principles transcendent to the cosmos—Existence, Consciousness-Force, Bliss, and Supermind; it was stated that this secret identity between Supermind and its subordinate principle, mind, made the acquisition of the Higher Knowledge possible.

In this essay, the problem of the powers and faculties of the mind, like observation, judgment, reason, memory, imagination, the capacity to analyse and synthesise, as well as those of the intuitive mentality, like inspiration and revelation, receiving a corresponding gnostic action on the Supermind level, is discussed. The statement made here should help to allay the fears of the rationalists who believe that any knowledge acquired through non-sensory and non-rational means must necessarily be of a highly dubious character, and that if reason is abandoned the knowledge acquired would inevitably be based on emotional responses and vague imaginings. It will be clear from what follows that as one abandons the ordinary rationalistic way of knowing and seeing and rises into the spiritual ranges above,† one gives up the use of the mental faculties and instead develops equivalent gnostic powers, with the result that instead of the usual uncertain indirect and separative knowledge, one begins to possess direct and immediate and certain knowledge. The mind sees through a glass, darkly, but the Supermind sees clearly and directly through identification in essence and dynamism and knows with certitude, because it is the Truth-consciousness itself—a Consciousness always holding within itself the complete truth of the Divine and His manifestation.

But it must not be supposed that the acquired gnostic powers are supernatural faculties, occult and spiritual powers, added on to the normal consciousness which can be made available for use whenever required; rather, they are intrinsic to the gnostic consciousness—they are its instruments of knowledge and its means of effectuation. As Sri Aurobindo says: "The transition from mind to supermind is not only the substitution of a greater instrument of thought and knowledge, but a change and conversion of the whole consciousness. There is evolved not only a supramental thought, but a supramental will, sense, feeling, a supramental substitute for all the activities that are now accomplished by the mind."

In one of the preceding essays a brief statement was made about the powers of mind and Supermind—that observation is replaced on the Supramental level by a direct truth-vision, judgment by an inherent discrimination, a self-luminous discernment, the usual reasoning process of the logical mind by "a swift intuitive proceeding which sees the conclusion or fact at once and all the evidence by which we arrive at it not as its evidence, but as its circumstances and relations seen in one comprehensive view", and imagination by a truth-inspiration; the ordinary memory which stores knowledge in the depths of the subconscious becomes a thing consciously and luminously possessed, as something contained in one's consciousness which can be brought forward at will and seen in self-vision.

We shall now take up the mental faculties individually and examine in detail the nature of their gnostic equivalents. The reader is once again reminded that these powers described by Sri Aurobindo no doubt belong to the Supermind, but not to the Supermind poised in its utter Truth-

consciousness; they belong to the Supermind leaning down to the level of the Overmind and modifying itself to get attuned to its workings. In Sri Aurobindo's own words: "...the Supermind when it descends into the overmind plane and takes up the overmind workings and transforms them. The highest Supermind or Divine gnosis existent in itself is something that lies beyond still and quite above." Therefore, the powers described here are not purely gnostic or Supramental, for at first they have a limited action; they develop into instruments of the highest knowledge only when the summit of the Supermind is reached. The planes above the mind are not shut off from one another, each plane having powers absolutely different from those of the others; they are gradually shaded off into one another, forming tiers of a graded gnostic hierarchy. Consequently, it is not impossible for an individual to possess some of these powers without attaining to the Supermind; of course, on the lower planes their action will not be as illumined as on that of the Supermind; they will also be narrow in range and limited in capacity.

As the gnostic powers can only be accurately described by one who possesses them and knows how to use them effectively, the author has given their description here in Sri Aurobindo's own words. He is sure the reader will be greatly interested in reading it, as this is the first time in the history of human thought that some one has been able to give a detailed philosophical exposition of these supra-rational faculties and powers. In this intellectual and sceptical world of ours, mere parables, cryptic sayings and aphorisms, even philosophical "talks", however profound they may be in content, cannot satisfy the mind in its quest of the highest and completest truth; only an exposition of the type Sri Aurobindo gives can be really satisfying. He speaks to the intellect, but an intellect freed from its rationalistic bias—he speaks to the reason, but to the reason of Plato, not to that of the rationalists. The reason of Plato at its best shakes itself free of its "irascible and concupiscent" influences, rises above mere sense-perception and opinion into the realm of essences and archetypal ideas to gaze upon the perfect heavenly patterns of earthly realities, ultimately to behold the Supreme Good—it is reason opening itself to a Reality which transcends it, it is reason with its face turned heavenwards. He says in *The Republic*: "The power of elevating the highest principle of the soul* to the contemplation of that which is best in existence,† may be compared to the raising of that faculty which is the very light of the body‡ to the contemplation of that which is brightest in the visible world.§" (*Jowett's translation.*) It is only when the reason is able to do this that the philosopher can become "the spectator of all time and all existence", a seer, a rishi; otherwise he remains a sophist like Protagoras and others, the rationalists and positivists of ancient Greece. Therefore, what Plato means by the term reason is obviously not what most of the modern thinkers mean by it. It is to this liberated reason, the elevated mind, that Sri Aurobindo speaks; the inability to get poised in this higher reason is perhaps the cause of many intellectuals failing to understand the argumentation of *The Life Divine*; when reading it they seem to be as out of their depths as the sophists were when listening to Socrates.

Sri Aurobindo begins his exposition here by drawing the attention of the reader to the fact that though the Supramental cognition is described in terms which are usually employed for the mental way of knowing, he must understand that in this description they begin to acquire a different connotation for they express a supra-rational mode of knowing and seeing. For example, during the ascent to the Supramental level, as the individual begins to grow into the gnostic consciousness, a new form of thought, which is described below, takes shape in the consciousness, what Sri Aurobindo calls "the supramental thought". This "thought" is not similar to mental thought, only more powerful in action and more accurate in perception; it is fundamentally different because the change in the psycho-epistemic basis of ideation brings about a corresponding change in the mode of apprehension; the same is true for the other powers, like observation, judgment, reason, memory, and imagination. Sri Aurobindo writes:

"The ordinary language of the intellect is not sufficient to describe this action, for the same words have to be used, indicating a certain correspondence, but actually to connote inadequately a different thing. Thus the supermind uses a certain sense action, employing but not limited by the physical organs, a thing which is in its nature a form consciousness

* The author has here called this identity a three-termed identity in order to avoid a misunderstanding which may occur in minds of some of the Western reader—they may be led to compare this experience-concept of Sri Aurobindo with the basic ideas of the Identity philosophers like Schelling. The *identitätsphilosophie* leads to pure Pantheism; from the previous essays, especially those which described the metaphysical status of the Supreme and His cosmic manifestation, His Static and Dynamic and His Personal and Impersonal aspects, it is obvious that Sri Aurobindo's philosophy cannot be designated as pure Pantheism. As a matter of fact, it would be metaphysically inaccurate to place it under such rigid classifications—it is too subtle, complex, multi-aspected, and global.

† This is absolutely necessary, for if one contacts the infra-rational regions one will be led astray; as we have seen, the intimations and communications arising from there are mostly of an unhealthy and even dangerous character. The subliminal ranges are not mentioned here because their powers have already been discussed.

* The rational.
‡ The physical eye.

† The Supreme Good.
§ The material sun.

POWERS OF MIND AND SUPERMIND —Continued from page 7

and a contact consciousness, but the mental idea and experience of sense can give no conception of the essential and characteristic action of this supramentalised sense consciousness. Thought too in the supramental action is a different thing from the thought of the mental intelligence. The supramental thinking is felt at its basis as a conscious contact or union or identity of the substance of being of the knower with the substance of being of the thing known and its figure of thought as the power of awareness of the self-revealing through the meeting or the oneness, because carrying in itself a certain knowledge form of the object's content, action, significance. Therefore, observation, memory, judgment too mean each a different thing in the supermind from what it is in the process of the mental intelligence."

"This supramental knowledge is not primarily or essentially a thought knowledge. The intellect does not consider that it knows a thing until it has reduced its awareness of it to the terms of thought, not, that is to say, until it has put it into a system of representative mental concepts, and this kind of knowledge gets its most decisive completeness when it can be put into clear, precise and defining speech. It is true that the mind gets its knowledge primarily by various kinds of impressions beginning from the vital and the sense impressions and rising to the intuitive, but these are taken by the developed intelligence only as data and seem to it uncertain and vague in themselves until they have been forced to yield up all their content to the thought and have taken their place in some intellectual relation or in an ordered thought sequence..." But the supermind knows most completely and securely not by thought but by identity, by a pure awareness of the self-truth of things in the self and by the self, *âtmani atmânâtmânâ*. I get the supramental knowledge best by becoming one with the truth, one with the object of knowledge; the supramental satisfaction and integral light is most there when there is no further division between the knower, knowledge and the known, *jnâta, jnânâtmânâ, jneyam*. I see the thing known not as an object outside myself, but as myself or a part of my universal self contained in my most direct consciousness. This leads to the highest and completest knowledge; thought and speech being representations and not this direct possession in the consciousness are to the supermind a lesser form and, if not filled with the spiritual awareness, thought becomes in fact a diminution of knowledge. For it would be, supposing it to be a supramental thought, only a partial manifestation of a greater knowledge existing in the self but not at the time present to the immediately active consciousness. In the highest ranges of the infinite there need be no thought at all because all would be experienced spiritually, in continuity, in eternal possession and with an absolute directness and completeness. Thought is only one means of partially manifesting and presenting what is hidden in this greater self-existent knowledge. This supreme kind of knowing will not indeed be possible to us in its full extent and degree until we can rise through many grades of the supermind to that infinite. But still as the supramental power emerges and enlarges its action, something of this highest way of knowledge appears and grows and even the members of the mental being, as they are intuitivised and supramentalised, develop more and more a corresponding action upon their own level. There is an increasing power of a luminous vital, psychic, emotional, dynamic and other identification with all the things and beings that are the objects of our consciousness and these transcendings of the separative consciousness bring with them many forms and means of a direct knowledge.

"The supramental knowledge or experience by identity carries in it

as a result or as a secondary part of itself a supramental vision that needs the support of no image, can concretise what is to the mind abstract and has the character of sight though its object may be the invisible truth of that which has form or the truth of the formless. This vision can come before there is any identity, as a sort of previous emanation of light from it, or may act detached from it as a separate power. The truth or the thing known is then not altogether or not yet one with myself, but an object of my knowledge: but still it is an object subjectively seen in the self or at least, even if it is still farther separated and objectivised to the knower, by the self, not through any intermediate process, but by a direct inner seizing or a penetrating and enveloping luminous contact of the spiritual consciousness with its object. It is this luminous seizing and contact that is the spiritual vision... It is to the spirit what the eyes are to the physical mind and one has the sense of having passed through a subtly analogous process. As the physical sight can present to us the actual body of things of which the thought had only possessed an indication or mental description and they become to us at once real and evident, *pratyaksha*, so the spiritual sight surpasses the indications or representations of thought and can make the self and truth of all things present to us and directly evident, *pratyaksha*.

"The sense can only give us the superficial image of things and it needs the aid of thought to fill and inform the image; but the spiritual sight is capable of presenting to us the thing in itself and all truth about it. The seer does not need the aid of thought in its process as a means of knowledge, but only as a means of representation and expression,—thought is to him a lesser power and used for a secondary purpose. If a further extension of knowledge is required, he can come at it by new seeing without the slower thought processes that are the staff of support of the mental search and its feeling out for truth,—even as we scrutinise with the eye to find what escaped our first observation. This experience and knowledge by spiritual vision is the second in directness and greatness of the supramental powers. It is something much more near, profound and comprehensive than mental vision, because it derives direct from the knowledge by identity, and it has this virtue that we can proceed at once from the vision to the identity, as from the identity to the vision. Thus when the spiritual vision has seen God, Self or Brahman, the soul can next enter into and become one with the Self, God or Brahman.

"This can only be done integrally on or above the supramental level, but at the same time the spiritual vision can take on mental forms of itself that can help towards this identification each in its own way. A mental intuitive vision or a spiritualised mental sight, a psychic vision, an emotional vision of the heart, a vision in the sense mind are parts of the Yogic experience. If these seeings are purely mental, then they may but need not be true, for the mind is capable of both truth and error, both of a true and of a false representation. But as the mind becomes intuitivised and supramentalised, these powers are purified and corrected by the more luminous action of the supermind and become themselves forms of a supramental and a true seeing. The supramental vision, it may be noted, brings with it a supplementary and completing experience that might be called a spiritual hearing and touch of the truth,—of its essence and through that of its significance—that is to say, there is a seizing of its movement, vibration, rhythm and a seizing of its close presence and contact and substance. All these powers prepare us to become one with that which has thus grown near to us through knowledge."

Mysterious Sleep

Mysterious Sleep! Twin-Sister of the Night!
Dream-winged Angel! Solemn, sombre, Sphinx!
Caught by thee the world-wearied Spirit sinks
Into the enchanted planes of occult Light
And glimpses there his vast eternities.

Dark-robed gate-keeper! thou hast all the keys
That open up the tightly-bolted gates
Of Being's deeper, inner, loftier states
Where Consciousness is lifted into reveries
Of her own Home, beyond the waking thought.

The lines of the Poem of conscious life are not
End-stopped by thee: the rhythms overflow
From waking life into the twilight glow
Of dreaming. Modulations do not blot
The one eternal conscious cosmic base.

Along with Death, thy Brother, all thy ways
Look dark, O Sleep! to one who does not know.
But those who question you, to them you show
The hidden Harmony in apparent maze.
And the thick-wrapped veil becomes a diaphanous screen
Which no longer stems the Eternal's Light Serene.

RAJANIKANT MODY

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA —Continued from opposite page

not very different from that of India. But as the wars which have disgraced European history in the past and the quarrels and rivalries that enfeeble the League of Nations in the present only too clearly show, that the inhabitants of Europe are very far from being imbued with the sense of unity which distinguishes the inhabitants of India. We cannot, in short, speak of a "European" with the same appropriateness as we can speak of an "Indian", who, in spite of differences of colour, caste and creed, looks upon all other Indians as his fellow-countrymen and upon India as his home."

Says Sir J. Sarkar, the eminent Indian historian, in his *India through the ages*: "The Indian people of to-day are no doubt a composite ethnical

product; but whatever their different constituent elements may have been in origin, they have all acquired a common Indian stamp, and have all been contributing to a common culture and building up a common type of traditions, thought and literature. Even Sir Herbert Risley, who is so sceptical about the Indians' claim to be considered as one people, has been forced to admit that 'Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and religion, which strikes the observer in India, there can still be discerned a certain underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin.' There is in fact an Indian character, a general Indian personality, which we cannot resolve into its component elements.' (*People of India*).

(To be continued)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA

By SISIRKUMAR MITRA

Continued from previous issue

Nature's Bounties

Covering an area of 1,623,015 sq. miles, India has the peculiar phenomenon of having almost the same length, about 2000 miles, from north to south, as the breadth from east to west. Her coast line is about 4000 miles in length, and is washed by the two embracing arms of the Indian Ocean—the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Roughly speaking, India is thirteen times as large as the British Isles, but only half the size of U.S.A., or five-sixths of the size of Europe. Her land area is 3.4 per cent of the surface of the globe, but her population is a fifth of the world's. For the variety of her flora and fauna she has no equal in the world; at least, no country of equal extent has such a variety. India has 17,000 species of flowering plants belonging to 174 natural orders. She has a fourth of the world's bovine stock, and her jungle area, an immense source of the country's wealth, is nearly 30,000 sq. miles. She is no less remarkable for her mineral resources. She is the world's main source of mica and is possessed of perhaps the world's largest reserve of high-grade iron-ore. But there are still very many sources of minerals untapped in the country.

Races, Languages, Religions

Equally varied is the human content of India. But this diversity is not so distinct and sharp as it is made out to be by the orthodox scientist. No theory of race-origins has had universal acceptance. The one, however, that is held in common by most ethnological thinkers is that all members of the human species are fundamentally alike. In the long course of man's physical evolution there have doubtless been changes in the surface traits, such as, pigmentation, shape of hair, nose, face and head, formation of eye, and certain biochemical changes in the blood. These are caused by the force of variation due to which every offspring is sure to have some traits, both in his mental and physical make-up, which are different from those of their parents, and have often been new. If in India today we find a number of different types, it does not follow that these types have not been evolved here, but are the result of early migrations. This is not to say that India has had no strain of foreign blood in her population. There has certainly been such intermingling of blood in the course of her long history.

It is well known that from early times India's fabulous wealth and the priceless treasures of her thought have attracted people from outside who came in the wake of the conquerors and plunderers. Likewise many foreigners came in peace time for merchandise as much as for ideas and ideals. Many of these settled down in India and, when their numbers were small, were gradually absorbed in her population, adopting, more or less, the manners and customs, sometimes the religion of the people. Broadly distinguished, such foreign elements were the Greek, Iranian, Mongolian, Scythian, Hun, Semetic and some even of what constitutes the modern European. How far the characteristic features of these types are present in the human mass of India is a problem yet to be solved.

The existence in India, however, of various ethnic types does suggest that as in other aspects of her life and culture too, she should present an interesting heterogeneity such as would indicate the likelihood of the evolution on this soil, one day, of a grand synthesis of human life and culture.

The vast population of India is, as it were, a mosaic of peoples, each with some traits of its own. There are the tall fair Kashmiri and the enterprising Punjabi in the north, the artistic Bengali, Assamese and Oriya in the east, the intellectually alert Andhra, Tamilian, Malayali and Kannadiga in the south, and the hardy Maratha, the chivalrous Rajput and the business-minded Gujarati and Sindhi in the west, with a great block of virile Hindi-speaking people in the centre, and the even more virile and sturdy tribes of the Himalaya and other adjacent frontier regions. Each of these has its own language and its distinctive mode of dress. These sartorial, linguistic and physical varieties—rich, powerful and interesting elements in the nation-body,—are the result of a long process of growth in those regions and also of intermingling under conditions not always congenial.

India represents the three primary divisions of mankind—the Caucasian or the white type, with its subdivisions of blonde and dark, the Mongolian or the yellow type, and the Ethiopian or the black type; the first two make up the bulk of the population of India proper and the last are the inhabitants of the Andaman Isles. The physical features of these peoples have led ethnologists to trace them to some types which embody these common features. This, let us repeat, may not always mean that these types belong to markedly different branches of human family having, in every case, their origins outside India. But we shall come to this point again in the next chapter. We shall now see how peoples of particular regions are generally classified as belonging to racial entities which in early days took on certain characteristics distinguishing them from others.

In Kashmir, the Punjab and Rajputana can be seen the Indo-Aryan type with tall stature, fair complexion, dark eyes, plentiful hair on the face and narrow, prominent nose. Most of the higher sections of north

India belong to this type. The bulk of the south Indian population is composed of the Dravidian type. But the term Dravidian does not at all mean any ethnic type. The loose use of this term has been responsible for much confusion in the understanding of things south Indian. An eminent scholar of south India holds, and rightly, that 'Dravidian' is essentially a linguistic term and is used in regard to a group of languages. Ethnology has not yet been able to give an exact idea of the race-origin of the peoples of south India. For want of a more appropriate term the word Dravidian has gained currency. The Dravidian type has short stature, dark complexion, plentiful hair, long head and broad nose, inhabiting almost the whole of Peninsular India south of the Vindhya ranges. The Turko-Iranian type is found in N.W. Frontier, Baluchistan and the regions to the west of the Sindhu, having a stature above the medium, complexion fair, head broad, nose long and narrow. East of the Sindhu, Gujarat and western India represent the Scytho-Dravidian type, comprising the Indianised Sakas or Scythians who were an Alpine race of western Asia and ruled in western India for more than two hundred years in the early centuries of the present era. Most of the east Punjab, U.P. and Bihar are inhabited by the Aryo-Dravidian or Hindusthani type with long head, complexion varying from brown to black, and nose from medium to broad and stature below the average. It is said to be a mixture of the Indo-Aryans with the Dravidians. The Mongoloid type is found in Burmah, Assam and the sub-Himalayan tract. It has broad head, dark, yellowish complexion, scanty hair on the face, short stature, flat face and oblique eyelids. This type is attributed to Mongolian invasions of those regions from Tibet and China. The outstanding characteristics of a type which is tentatively called the *Bengali* type, found in Bengal and Orissa, are broad head, dark complexion, plentiful hair on the face, medium stature, medium nose with a tendency to broadness. It was called *Mongolo-Dravidian*, a blend of those elements. There is reason to think, however, that it is an Alpine type which is spread along the west coast from Gujarat to Coorg, and also from Banaras to Bihar, and markedly in Bengal. Thus there exists between Bombay and Bengal a kind of racial affinity which is also traced between the Bengalis and Malayalis on the west coast, both of them bearing striking physical resemblances. These resemblances may also be attributed to another less known fact that migrations of brahmins had twice taken place from Bengal to the South, once during the height of Buddhist influence and another when the country suffered the aggression of Islam.

These human groups apart, there are the aboriginal peoples of India who have never developed a written language of their own, whose economic life has been the simplest, who have made no progress in agriculture and handicrafts. Yet they are well ahead of their more civilised countrymen in their moral qualities. A Bhill of the Aravalli or Satpura hills, a Sontal of the Sontal Parganas, a Munda of Chhota Nagpur, a Gond of the Central Provinces, a Toda of the Nilgiris, a Garo or a Khasia of Assam still keeps, more or less, to a primitive life in forest areas. He is ordinarily a truthful man and has a well-regulated but simple social existence. None of these tribes can be called prehistoric, though they were in India before the Dravidians. They, even the most primitive amongst them like the Veddas of Ceylon, belong to the species known to anthropology as *Homo Sapiens*. Of these the Todas alone have regular features. All the others have more or less irregular facial formations. There is no beauty whatsoever in their eyes and lips and nose. The tribes of eastern India show Mongolian characteristics in their faces, while the Gonds are absolutely free from such peculiarities as slanting eyes and flat noses. In their religious life they propitiate evil spirits. They are intensely fond of dancing in a rhythmic undulating movement. The Mundas have adopted the title of *Adi-vasis*—meaning original inhabitants—a title that well describes most of these people. Besides these tribes who lead a more or less settled life, there are still many aboriginal peoples who are absolute nomads, who are ever on the move.

The diversity of ethnic types in India, each of which is named after certain early immigrant groups, does go to indicate how in the chemistry of racial intermingling, original types were lost or modified and new ones emerged, and how this process contributed to a rich and strong composition of India's human material. But it is not that in early days men moved into India from outside only: in the country itself there have been many such movements from one region to another, apart from the original expansion of racial groups, with the result that one may meet with people of an obviously Indo-Aryan or an obviously Dravidian type in any part of India and in any caste. Indians of higher caste, particularly the brahmanas, generally show a tendency to have fairer skins and lighter hair than the average, which is ascribed to a larger strain of Aryan blood. Nevertheless, "this admixture of races" says C. E. M. Joad, "has had important effects on India's past history and present outlook. The first of these is a sense of fundamental unity far more vivid and persistent than can be accounted for by the circumstances of propinquity in the same geographical area. Europeans live together in a geographical area whose size is

Continued on opposite page

LOTUS-FLAME

PART IV: THE SELF-KNOWLEDGE

By ROMEN

Continued from the issue of November 10

It was for this boundless aim and promise surpeme
That, from above, the nameless, timeless Light
Urged the nude self-oblivious Lotus-flame
To open his heart to its radiance unknown
And revive the splendour of his eternity
Locked like a shining sky-seed in his soul,
A sleeping might without vesture and without form,
A sapphire-white core of bliss immaculate
Sealed behind doors of self clinging yet to earth.
Though estranged from the dark bosom of the dust
And escaped from the deep tyranny of gloom
And risen to an altitude of voicelessness
Visioning greater worlds and realms and heights,
He missed his great spirit's index absolute.
Yet was he a kernel of the universe
Striving to reach the peak of the Unconned,
Not a fallen godhead reaching back to his peak
Out of the ink-grey oceans of somnolence.
Yet he could not behold the pinnacle-blaze
That hounded on his path and urged him on
Towards a goal that was to him unknown;
A hidden effulgence goaded his soul to leap
Into the vast arms of an infinite expanse
And breast the Measureless in his wide open heart,
As if the Mother of all the worlds and beings
Had yearned to clasp her lost infant to her breast,
The wide breast of the soundless seas of the Blue,
The deep breast of the sky and its far star-flames,
The ever moving breast of her creation's whirls.
Though drawn to the centre of the cosmic heart,
The splendid play-field of the spirit unveiled,
Wakened to light behind the curtain of time,
He was unaware of the radiance of his soul,
The Sun-cave from where all the suns and lights
Are born, created, instilled with life and fire,
The source of all the sources and all the founts,
The Beginning of all the dawns and all the dusks,
One Vast whence came the universal whole.
From drunk and blind and waylost humanhood
To the zenith of far diamond vastnesses
Is a span and gulf too unfathomable, large
To be imagined, conceived or crossed at a stride,
A high labour too precarious and immense.
Taking the dire burden of humanity
On his breast like an incalculable weight,
He trudged his way to his lofty sun-spans.
Unburdened without the robe that is our birth,
He could soar upon the lightning-wings of his soul
And reach the goal and the apex of his height
In luminous ease and wallless ascent's flight.
But he came not on the soil to be free from chains—
From matter's burden and mortal ignorance;
Rather to lift this globe to the summit-vast,
This global-speck carried on his azure wings,
To be changed, transfigured into a gloried fire,
An illumined sun-awakened vastitude;
To create a vacuum in the heart of Time
For the ray eternal to rush in that space
Of earth's obscure and unresponsive breast
And robe its nakedness with radiance-touch,
Outpour of the faultless fount of paradise.
This was the giant mission for which he came
Down to the abysmal base of eve-pale sleep—
This was the marvel goal for which he climbed
The Olympian altitude and span and stretch
Of the giant splendid and primordial sun
To bring to man the immortal pollen of fire
Culled from the depth of the eternal Gold.
And after crossing now the dominon
Of dusk, he came to a plane of equipoise
And glowing rapture-beats of freedom and ease;
Opening wide his earthhood to the worlds
Reflecting greater light and deeper bliss
He sensed that his upward-flight must know no end
Till he had discovered his identity-gleam
Of inner light and power and poise divine.
He felt that a greater self than that of earth
Lay hidden unconceived, remote, unmanifest,
Elusive like the distant horizons of the Blue,

Far off like the majestic solar orb,
Yet nearer than his very heart or soul,
Vibrating in his blood with a mystery occult,
Turning his existence into a marvel-being
Of intimate kinship with the stars and seas.
All these he sensed, divined and dimly guessed,
But the true shape of his self illimitable
Remained a light beyond the ken of his sight.
For, covered was his golden immensity
By the dark, unillumined shroud of birth
And by the dusk-mind's pall of time and sense
And by the dull mantle of earthliness
And the subtler wings of the ideal of the hour
Veiling him and his absolute sheer light.
He had crossed the sky-lines of birth and form and name,
Of time and sense and little humanhood;
But the diaphanous mask of the ideal
Lingered on to obstruct the unwallled sense,
The bourneless vision and unhorizoned seeing
Into his vast Being's countenance supreme;
As if he dared not eye his veiless face,
Meet the eyes of his stark regal flame
And face the ungarbed divinity within.
Torn from the terrestrial nescience and gloom,
He saw himself as the pure heavenly child,
He visioned himself as an angel of the stars
That was above him and behind his mould,
Guiding his life and mind and day-born frame,
Exalting his deeps to undimable truth-peaks,
Changing his ignorance to sentient sight,
Raising the curtain of his human bonds
To reveal an occult and mystic field of sight
And a vista tremourless and undespoiled
That looks at the phenomena of the worlds
For ever undisturbed, immobile, calm.
He came to take his moveless topless stand
Upon this sphere and saw the universe
Move and fret and toil perpetually,
Himself a witness-mind standing aloof.
But still he felt not himself the single soul-light
Of all creation and its manifold shapes,
The paramount puissance above all worldly things,
The measureless Being high and unborn and true,
The unique radiance dateless, spaceless, sole.
He saw himself not as the heaven-flame
Instilling power into the atomic seas,
The single meaning and breath of life and the worlds,
An endless cosmic sempiternal zero,
A white Brahmic existence that had been
Before the birth of time and space and earth
And will be after the great giant course
Of all the universes numberless
Collapses into a total featureless nought.
But he would be the luminous carrier
Of the ultimate blaze, the fire absolute,
No shadowless child of the rapt summit alone
But an incarnation and theophany,
A gold-white palpable living godhead on earth;
And in him the far gods toiled to remove
The last webs and the final shreds of dust;
They worked unseen yet very near his heart,
And he felt the global dusk fading within
His self and life and his vast spirit-dome.
A whiter gleam stole into his tranquil brain;
An intenser love captured his heart-expanse
And he sensed the chains of destiny and birth
Fall back like clouds before the dawning sun;
A great, new orb of blaze appeared above
The horizons of his being's oceans of hush;
All his senses were ravished, wonder-swept,
Transmuted by an unseen alchemy;
Thrilled were the large continent-spans of his life;
Silenced was the body glowing with a ray
Burning invisible above his subtle matter's gulf;
His teeming calm mind felt the passage wide
Of the glorious footfalls of the super-heights;
Into the chamber of his mental worlds
A huge Himalayan burden of peace

Continued on page 11

SRI AUROBINDO AND MAN'S SOCIO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

By C. C. DUTT

Continued from previous issue

Two devices of absolutism have been tried—one negative, the other positive. The first worked by suppression of free thought, oppression of the life and soul of the community and by the methods of the taboo and the inquisition. The other device, positive, worked by means of the State religion, with the priest as the helper of the King. Both devices proved useless in the long run. They failed by decay and by the revolt of the oppressed. Still, this stage was necessary in human evolution, "for the absolutist monarchical and aristocratic State was the father of the modern idea of the absolutist socialistic State, which seems now to be in process of birth." Only thus could the rational self-governing society firmly evolve. Unity and uniformity constitute the principal trend of modern progress. How else could this complex human life be made calculable and manageable by rational intelligence and unified will? "Socialism," says Sri Aurobindo "is the complete expression of the idea." This socialism, in one form or another, bids fair to be the key-note of man's collective life in the future.

The history of the growth of the State is, thus, a history of centralisation, of a growing uniformity in the various aspects of life. It is a change from a natural organism to a rational organisation. The unity of the human race implies the eventual formation and organisation of a world-State out of the already existing nation-units. Circumstances are becoming more and more favourable daily to the growth of such a state. "Science, commerce and rapid communications have produced a state of things in which the disparate masses of humanity, once living to themselves, have drawn together by a process of subtle unification into a single mass which has already a common vital and is rapidly forming a common mental existence." A great transforming shock was also necessary and that has now been furnished by the two world wars. The idea of a single state is no longer confined to the mind of the isolated thinker but has appeared in the consciousness of humanity at large. Two distinct types of a world-union present themselves before us. One is based on the principle of centralisation and uniformity, and the other on the principle of liberty. The union of the world may be brought about in various ways—"by a mutual understanding or by the force of circumstances or by a series of new and disastrous shocks."

Having indicated two alternate possibilities, Sri Aurobindo goes on to affirm that "the idea of a world-union of free nations and empires, loose at first, but growing closer knit with time and experience "appears to be the only form immediately practicable, if the will to unity becomes rapidly effective in the mind of the race. On the other hand, the state idea, which has so far proved to be the most effective means of unification, is the one to which the human mind has grown accustomed. So it is surmised that even if there is a loose union to begin with, it would rapidly grow into a stringent form of World-State. The ideal of human unity is no longer a Utopian ideal. Even if it be not immediately practicable, it proves nothing. In history, a scheme that looks absurd and unpracticable to one generation has often been acclaimed and put through effectively by the next. But there are certain indispensable conditions to be fulfilled here. A central organ of power standing for the united will of the component nations is necessary to begin with, and then there must follow the unification of all power—military, administrative, judicial, economic, etc. But what is going to be the form of the central governing authority? Czars and Kaisars, Imperators and Chakravartis, are obsolete. A kingship like that of Great Britain is ornamental, a survival and nothing more. Britain's great gift to the world today is her Commonwealth of Nations and not her Constitutional Monarchy which was boosted so much in the last century. The King, today, has indeed less power than the French President and infinitely less than the head of the U.S.A. Monarchy as an institution has been more or less discredited everywhere. The Hapsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, the Romanoffs, have departed for good. Italy, too, has discarded her King. If Japan

still has a Mikado, China has declared definitely in favour of a republic—although a communist one. As far as Moslem countries go, Persia has still a Shah and Egypt a Khedive, but Turkey has got rid of her-Sultan. So, the future World-State is by no means likely to be an autocracy.

The republican ideal is, no doubt, European in origin. But modern Asia has accepted it whole-heartedly. The two halves of old India—India and Pakistan—have decided against monarchy. Even an old fashioned State like Hyderabad has accepted without serious demur a democratic constitution. The new institution of Rajpramukhs is an evident compromise, a transient device at best. The Caliphate of Turkey has vanished, but the Mikado of Japan and the Dalai Lama of Tibet still cling to their sacrosanct authority. But even in Tibet, it cannot last long—half a century at the most. Japan, may in the future decide to keep a sort of a monarch on the throne; but we can safely predict that he will be without his divine trappings.

The monarchical idea can survive only if it serves as a convenient symbol of unification. But, since we find that in the component units the symbol has been dispensed with quite successfully, there is no reason why the World-State should require it. If the example of Britain encourages the world-union to have a King, there is also the example of the U.S.A. to pull it in a contrary direction. A world monarchy must necessarily be very much more democratic than anything we can imagine today. The two World Wars we have been through of late have set up a strong reaction in favour of nationalism, and Internationalism has received a serious check. This we can see clearly in spite of the U.N.O. and its altruistic efforts. It is very difficult to predict anything about the political ideals of tomorrow, for, the world is passing through a definite transition—"a bourgeois World-State is not a probable consummation." The old parliamentarianism of the nineteenth century has been challenged in Soviet Russia and in the Fascist countries. Fascism has met with a rebuff for the time being, but the Soviet scheme of collective life is in full force and appears to have at least as much vitality as any other. It is extremely unlikely that the proletariat world acquiesce in the domination of the bourgeoisie a minute longer than it must. Sri Aurobindo goes over various possible forms of economic organisation and says, "If any of these things were done, any movement towards a World-State would then take the same direction and evolve a governing body of the same model." But in considering these various alternatives we must not lose sight of "nationalism and the conflicting interests and tendencies it creates." It has been supposed that a world-parliament would overcome these difficulties. But there are serious obstacles in the way.

Parliamentarianism, very useful as it has been in the past, has been always an instrument either of a modified aristocratic or of a middle class rule; over and above, there has always been the danger of the tyranny of a majority, even a very small majority. All this would certainly be a more serious evil in the World-State and might lead to discontent, disorder and even revolution. A parliament of nations must, after all, be a united body made up of free nations. The present distribution of power in the world is anomalous. Sri Aurobindo warns us, "The Asiatic problem alone, if still left unsolved, would be a fatal obstacle, and it is not alone." A Supreme Council of free and imperial nations of the existing world system has also its difficulties. It could only be successful, if controlled by an oligarchy of a few imperial nations. But it is very doubtful if national egoism would permit such control. Whichever way we turn "the question of the form of a World-State is beset with doubts and difficulties." But the form of Government is not the really important thing, "the real problem is that of the unification of powers and the uniformity which any manageable system of a World-State would render inevitable."

To be continued

LOTUS-FLAME —Continued from page 10

Descended and into all his dust's abode.
 Into his mind emptied of all gloam-thoughts,
 Into his life immune from all the waves,
 Into his soul stripped clean of earth's sense-knots
 That hold it bound to the abysmal clay
 Came a broad plenitude of hush that holds
 Within its wide immobile transcendent breast
 Creation and its grandiose domains;
 A hush not of the spaceless, echoless skies
 But a tranquillity that bears the worlds
 From the high flame-covered omniscient Word
 Of the cosmic and all-abiding spirit-truth
 To the ignorant prattle of unillumined man.
 In it was the summit-secret, the last core
 Of light that made possible all these domains.
 In it were the bottomless nether abysses
 That lie supine below the spheres of our clay
 Like mute sentinels guarding ceaselessly

A wealth and splendour hidden from mortal eye.
 In it were the vast realms of Thoughts and Forms,
 Tangible gleams, unexpressed realities
 And the high magical word inexpressible;
 And he sensed rising from his inmost deeps
 A grandeur and an immensity of blaze
 Across his heart and the caverns of his soul
 And athwart his mind's solitary peak of poise,
 A mountain of flame and light formidable,
 To the welkin distances of Truth's abode.
 A giant cliff rising out of a calm
 Moveless and voiceless ocean of solitude,
 It rose up like a dauntless array of steeds
 Marching fire-hearted to conquer the altitudes
 Of Olympian wideness unassailable
 Or golden star-winged eagles multitudinous
 Governing the Blue with their unnumbered shapes,

Continued on page 12

“SAVITRI”, AN EPIC

BY A. B. PURANI

Continued from previous issue

Throughout *Savitri* one finds the question of Eternity and Time and their relation constantly repeated in different contexts to bring out their interdependence, or rather, the dependence of Time on Eternity. It is the Timeless Eternity of the Absolute that wells out into the flow of Time-Eternity, carrying with it the unrolling of the cosmos. “The Eternal’s quiet holds the cosmic act” (p. 110) says Sri Aurobindo. There are two ends of Eternity visible in *Savitri*. One is the Eternity below, facing man with its unfathomable depth of darkness of the Nescience which may be called the Dark Eternity described in the Veda as “darkness covered thickly by darkness” in which there was neither “being nor non-being.” The other is the Eternity of the Divine Absolute, beyond the realms of the three supernals—Sat, Chit and Ananda. Many have felt an irreconcilable opposition between the Timeless Eternity of the Absolute and the Time-Eternity which is constantly flowing. Time is posited as something contradictory to the Timeless, the Eternal. It is maintained that the Eternal beyond Time alone, is the Real and that the Time-movement is unreal and even non-existent. *Savitri* throughout gives the vision of the truth about this opposition. It shows us the Nescience, the dark Night, as a mask of the Divine, the Eternal and whenever an opportunity occurs it also shows that the Absolute’s Timeless Eternity is the fount and origin of Time and that the Divine is Himself the creator and dynamic support of the cosmos behind the veil. The conception of a Time-Eternity as a dynamic Reality depending organically upon Timeless Eternity is one enunciated clearly for the first time by Sri Aurobindo in the world of thought. He constantly speaks of the two ladders, one of descent of the Absolute into the Nescience and the other of ascent from Nescience to the Supreme. Far from Eternity being in opposition to Time-movement the grand vision of *Savitri* constantly brings Eternity in moments of Time. The opposition between Time and Eternity is, in fact, a result of our mind’s divided consciousness and its inability to reconcile what seems to it the opposites. Mind commits the error of applying its own logic, which is that of the finite, to the Infinite whose logic is different. The result is that we get only a partial view of the Infinite. In any supreme vision of the Reality the two—Eternity and Time—are not only reconciled but become organic and indivisible. Viewed as an expression of the supreme Divine—on some date in the “calendar of the Unknown”—the moments of Time become replete with the presence of the Eternal and then the whole cosmos from the infinitesimal material particle to the highest Infinite being is seen pulsating with such a multiple and vast play of Eternity that the word “Eternity” itself seems to gain an ineffable significance on that great vision. It is about such a moment of realisation that *Savitri* says “a marriage with eternity divinised Time”. It is possible that the mind may continue to ask “why” at all this movement, this cosmic manifestation from the Supreme and Silent Eternity. The answer—one among the many poetical answer—is:

That the eyes of the Timeless might look out from Time

And the world manifest the unveiled Divine (p. 67).

To another question—How did this miracle happen?—the Seer says that it is Life that “has lured the Eternal into the arms of Time” (p. 162). It is true that man does not feel this Eternity in his present state of consciousness because there it is hidden by the movement of Time which exclusively occupies him. But even there it is present behind the veil. Sri Aurobindo expresses it most poetically: “Lulled by Time’s beats eternity sleeps in us” (p. 155). We then feel the justification of the line which says “spiritual beauty” “squanders eternity on a beat of Time” (p. 7), and also of the description of *Savitri* as “a prodigal of her rich divinity” (p. 8) who

gave herself and all she was to men. The poet speaks of Aswapathy, the human king, as “a colonist from immortality” because in his inner being he was conscious of his origin in the Eternal. He sees the relation between Eternity and Time-movement:—

*Ascending and descending twist life’s poles
The seried kingdoms of the graded Law
Plunged from the Everlasting into Time,
Then glad of a glory of multitudinous mind
And rich with life’s adventure and delight
And packed with the beauty of Matter’s shapes and hues
Climbed back from Time into undying Self,
Up a golden ladder carrying the soul,
Tying with diamond threads the spirit’s extremes* (p. 81).

Let us for a moment suppose that Eternity is realised here in Time and man succeeds in manifesting the Divine in life. What then would happen? Sri Aurobindo envisages an endless divine unfoldment in time. Says he:

*The Spirit’s greatness is our timeless source
And it shall be our crown in endless Time* (p. 101).

The opposition between Eternity and Time seems to be resolved in human life by the intervention of a power of the Divine. It is She who acts as an “ambassador” between Eternity and Time. She embodies herself forth in the form of divine Love, or rather, of a being carrying the saving power of the Divine Love within herself. The highest ideal of love conceived by man is really speaking a manifestation of this “infinity’s centre”. Love is that embodiment of the Eternal in Time which carries with it the stamp of immortality.

*Eternity drew close disguised as Love,
And laid its hands upon the body of Time* (p. 215).

In the language of the Master—“death is a shadow of love”. This love “wider than the universe” is really the Divine Love. Love and Death seem to embody two contradictory principles, one affirming the divine Eternity and Immortality, the other insisting on the eternity of the Nescience, of mortality. In three of his poems this subject of love has been treated by Sri Aurobindo and it is in *Savitri* that it reaches its highest height. In *Urvashi* Pururavas struck by the shaft of immortal Love, denied fulfilment by the power of the gods, at last gains his immortal love on the heights of Heaven. In *Love and Death* Ruru recovers Priyuvada from the dark nether regions of Death by the power of the charm of the supreme Mother and that of the God of Love. In both of these poems the immortality and eternity of Love is affirmed. It is in *Savitri* that Love divine comes as the embodiment of the Supreme Grace to deliver the soul of man out of the clutches of Death. Here the whole problem is raised to its cosmic proportions and brings in the necessary divine elements whose intervention alone can lead to the successful solution of the opposition. The colloquy between *Savitri*, Love Divine incarnate, and Death is among the most inspired utterances of the world’s poetry. Conquest over death, attainment of immortality has been the dream of man from the dawn of his awakening. It finds expression in the Vedic hymns, in the famous aspiration of the seer of the Upanishad who chanted “from death lead me to immortality”, and who affirmed in a mortal world the immortality of man’s soul by addressing men as “children of immortality”. *Savitri* takes up the subject, brings out all the necessary conditions for the realisation of this dream of man. It affirms the necessity of the birth of a new Power, the Power of Divine Grace, or Love, which alone can save man from the reign of Ignorance which is Death.

To be continued

LOTUS-FLAME —Continued from page 11

Lifting in a body to a home remote.
So rose this hushed colossus of holy flame
To consume his smaller orbit of the soil,
The pale ignorance that lurked within his base,
And burn away the cotyledon of birth.
The quivering flame with myriad tongues and mouths
Annihilated his past mortality
In a quick lightning-footed flash and spark
And he was left alone upon the marge
Of the endless play-fields of the Infinite
In entire nudity and stark nothingness,
Sole, unaccompanied, remote from Time.
All his earthly robes had been shorn away;
All the limits expunged from his domains;
All narrowness and crudeness vanished like a dream;
All twilight-shades unpeopled his spirit-home;
His clod clasped the sheer Superconscient’s top;
His mind bosomed the Unbound in a close embrace

And his soul grew one with God’s endlessness.
Now he was a true child of the Altitude
Casting away humanness and rise and fall.
Now he would, unperturbed, ascend to the sun,
Calm, vestureless without any tag or chain.
Now he would rise to his godhead’s greatnesses
And bournelessness and golden ubiquity,
The infant of the Ultimate and the One.
Born on earth, he was a child of the clay,
Born anew on the vast expanse of his soul,
He was now a child of the Infinities.
All his mortality lay dead at his feet
Like an obscure corpse he had cast aside
To enter the crystalline domains of his self.
And the flame that burned ceaseless from his heart’s fount,
The magical Agni beyond death and fate,
Urged him to wing to greater summit-light
And discover his true self’s bright continents.

To be continued