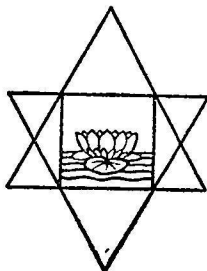


MOTHER INDIA

MAY 1953

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The Supramental is a truth and its advent is in the very nature of things inevitable...

I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth evolution.

SRI AUROBINDO

* * *

*A new Light shall break upon the earth,
a new world shall be born: the things that
were promised shall be fulfilled.*

Sri Aurobindo.

TRANSLATED FROM THE MOTHER'S
"Prayers and Meditations."

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

“Great is Truth and it shall prevail”

Managing Editor:

K. R. PODDAR

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CORRESPONDENCE WITH SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO'S FORCE

(Continued from the March issue)

Myself: I hasten to write this so that you may revise your opinion about my logic.

Sri Aurobindo: You have won all along the line; who could resist such a lava-torrent of logic? Slightly mixed but still! You have convinced me (1) that there never was nor could be an Avatar, (2) that all the so-called Avatars were chimerical fools and failures, (3) that there is no Divinity or divine element in man, (4) that I have never had any true difficulties or struggles, and that if I had any it was all my fun (as K.S. said of my new metres that they were only Mr. Ghose's fun), (5) that if ever there was or will be a real Avatar, I am not he..., (6) that all I have done or the Mother has done is mere sham sufferings, struggles, conquests, defeats, the Way found, the Way followed, the call to others to follow, everything—it was all make-believe since I was the Divine and nothing could touch me and none follow me. That is truly a discovery, a downright knock-out which leaves me convinced, convicted, amazed, gasping. I won't go on, there is no space; but there are a score of other luminous convictions that your logic has forced on me. But what to do next? You have put me in a terrible fix and I see no way out of it. For if the Way, the Yoga is merely sham fun and chimera—then?

Myself: You seem to attribute to me things which I never said, or is it my clumsy way of putting things? Probably that. But even then, you have put into my mouth exactly the opposite of what I have been trying to say. For instance: when did I say that you are not an Avatar? On the contrary I wrote to you that you *are* an Avatar.

Sri Aurobindo (marginal comment): You don't say, but if your theory or description of an Avatar is right, I am not one. I am proceeding on the necessary consequences of your logic.

●

MOTHER INDIA

Myself (continuing): When did I say that you or Mother had no difficulties or struggles? Did I not write that the Avatar accepts all terrestrial conditions, etc.? Yes, I did say that they are all shams, that is, not real but put on.

Sri Aurobindo: If they are shams, they have no value for others or for any true effect. If they have no value for others or for any true effect, they are perfectly irrational and unreal and meaningless. The Divine does not need to suffer, or struggle for himself; if he takes on these things it is in order to bear the world-burden and help the world and men; and if the sufferings and struggles are to be of any help, they must be real. A sham or falsehood cannot help. They must be as real as the struggles and sufferings of men themselves—the Divine bears them and at the same time shows the way out of them. Otherwise his assumption of human nature has no meaning and no utility and no value. It is strange that you cannot understand or refuse to admit so simple and crucial a point. What is the use of admitting Avatarhood if you take all the meaning out of it?

Myself (continuing): I don't think I said that there is no divinity in man. In the quotation I gave from the Gita it is said that man is made out of the Divine Substance but has a thick coating on him.

Sri Aurobindo: If your argument is that the life-actions, struggles of the Avatar (e.g. Rama's, Krishna's) are unreal because the Divine is there and knows it is all a Maya, in man also there is a self, a spirit that is immortal, untouched, divine; you can say that man's sufferings and ignorance are only put on, sham, unreal. But if man feels them as real and if the Avatar feels his work and the difficulties to be serious and real?

If the existence of the Divinity is of no practical effect, what is the use of a theoretical admission? The manifestation of the Divine in the Avatar is of help to man because it helps him to discover his own divinity, find the way to realise it. If the difference is so great that the humanity by its very nature prevents all possibility of following the way opened by the Avatar, it merely means that there is no divinity in man that can respond to the Divinity in the Avatar.

You make a flourish of reasoning and do not see the consequence of your reasonings. It is no use saying "I believe this or that" and then reasoning in a way which leads logically to the very negation of what you believe.

Myself: Also, I find that some important points on which my whole case stands and without which my "fury"¹ has no meaning, have been left out by you. I admitted that Avatars have many difficulties, but because they know, as Mother did, that they are Avatars, because the "real substance" shines through the alloy in all that they do, they have a fixed faith and conviction in their consciousness that they will never fail. Now take the case of man; he has usually no such conviction because of the blessed "coating". So he groans and writhes in agony, doubt and despair. How many times in the midst of struggles have I not said to myself that Yoga is beyond my capacities! Now, if I knew for certain that I was an extraordinary being, say an Avatar, I would not despair. This is why I said that the difficulties of Avatars are not real, but shams—not that they have no sting in them, but that the luminous consciousness bears them easily and goes on in spite of them.

Sri Aurobindo: You think then that in me (I don't bring in the Mother) there was never any doubt or despair, no attacks of that kind. I have borne every attack which human beings have borne, otherwise I would be unable to assure anybody "This too can be conquered". At least I would have no right to say so. Your psychology is terribly rigid. I repeat, the Divine when he takes on the burden of terrestrial nature, takes it fully, sincerely and without any conjuring tricks or pretence. If he has something behind him which emerges always out of the coverings, it is the same thing in essence even if greater in degree, that there is behind others—and it is to awaken that that he is there.

The psychic being does the same for all who are intended for the spiritual way—men need not be extraordinary beings to follow it. That is the mistake you are making—to harp on greatness as if only the great can be spiritual.

Myself (continuing): Regarding the divinity in man—what is the use of that divinity which is coated layer after layer with Maya? How many can really become conscious of it?

Sri Aurobindo: Exactly! Why admit any divinity then at all, if humanity is an insuperable bar to any following in the way pointed out by the Avatar? That was your contention that humanity and divinity are unbridgeably opposite

¹ Sri Aurobindo had written to me in one of his previous letters: "Peace, peace, thou fiery furious spirit—Calm thyself and be at rest."

MOTHER INDIA

things, that it is no use the Avatar asking others (except Arjuna) to follow in his Path—they being human cannot do it.

Let me make it clear that in all I wrote I was not writing to prove that I am an Avatar! You are busy in your reasonings with the personal question, I am busy more with the general one. I am seeking to manifest something of the Divine that I am conscious of and feel—I care a damn whether that constitutes me an Avatar or something else. That is not a question which concerns me. By manifestation, of course, I mean the bringing out and spreading of that Consciousness so that others also may feel and enter into it and live in it.

8-3-1935

NIRODBARAN

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MOTHER

(COMPILED FROM THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS)

COMPILER'S NOTE

Sri Aurobindo's correspondence with the sadhaks, spread over a period of about eight years, has by now become almost as famous as his larger works. But very few people know that whilst he was writing letters in reply to the queries of the disciples, the Mother, who has always stood side by side with him in all his work, was also carrying on a correspondence of the same nature. It was arranged at the time that whilst some of the sadhaks daily sent their note-books to Sri Aurobindo for his comments, the others were to send them to the Mother. This correspondence is now released here in a systematic form, and should prove of interest to our readers.

“Synergist”

A VEDIC EXPERIENCE

Q. One night I had a dream-experience, almost a waking vision. I saw two beings, whose faces I could not see, two tall and sturdily built persons, wearing what seemed to be heavy fur coats (later I thought they might have been carrying a big load of herbs on their backs, as some light was gleaming out at times); they approached me and looked at me. I had no fear at all, but simply said, “If you have come from the Mother, you can do what you like; if not, I have nothing to do with you, whoever you may be. I firmly withdraw from your influence and you cannot touch a hair of me.” With that I quietly started taking your name and withdrew into myself, yet observing their actions. They talked awhile with each other, I suspected they smiled at my remarks, then drew something from behind their backs which showed as the light gleamed. But other details I could not follow clearly. Then they slowly left the room and I was fully awake.

Well, I am curious to know who they were, looking almost like twins riding on horse-back. In such cases what is the attitude to take? Obviously there should be no fear, but is there any particular way by which a sort of occult tact can be developed to discern the true nature of the embodied force or the Being?

PS.

- A. Your attitude was quite correct and the best one to have in the occurrence. They might have been the Aswins, the twin riders, the healers.

18-2-1952

•
*

Q. What do dreams show—things that will happen or are happening or have happened?

- A. A dream concerns very rarely an event which has taken place or is going to take place physically.

14-12-1933

Q. It seems to me that a depression came over me when I woke up in the afternoon round about 3 o' clock, but I felt it only at 4-30. I don't find any reason for it. Will you please tell me how and why it came like this?

- A. In sleep one often gets into contact with forces and things which are hardly desirable and which drain one's vital forces; then when one awakes, one feels weak and depressed.

15-11-1933

Q. When depression comes, what should one do?

- A. Shake it off, as one shakes off the dust from one's feet.

8-11-1933

Q. I am having fever; what is the best way to get rid of it?

- A. Remain peaceful and confident and it will soon be over.

26-3-1935

Q. I have been having various kinds of small accidents and hurts and I feel troubled because all my efforts to avoid them seem to go in vain. What should I do?

- A. You need not torture yourself about these small things—they have no importance in themselves and their utility is to show us where inconstancy is still to be found in our nature so that we may put light there.

13-7-1937

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MOTHER

Q. How is it that although I am so careful about small things, I still lose them off and on?

A. It is because you do not *keep* the things sufficiently within your consciousness.

Q. I worry myself over being exact and regular and punctual. If I ever miss being so, even a little, I get upset and feel that I must hurry all the more. In matters of the inner life also, I incline to do the same. I think this tendency is to be discouraged.

A. Yes, it is not good to be impatient and agitated—you must do everything quietly and calmly without excessive haste.

Q. It is not for showing personal capacity that we ought to do the work here. Everything is for the Divine's manifestation and we must feel that you are doing things within us and through us. We should constantly keep watch, so that the ego may not interfere anywhere. Isn't that right?

A. Certainly this is correct; ambition is always a source of trouble and confusion.

16-5-1934

Q. X and Y are complaining to me that the boxes I have made for them are not so good as the one I had prepared for someone before. Why are they dissatisfied?

A. It is a movement of the vital to prefer always what belongs to others. One must not pay any attention to it.

2-6-1934

Q. You have given me the flower called "Vital Thoroughness". What does this signify for me?

A. It means that you must be attentive and thorough in all that concerns the movements of the vital.

Q. What is life-energy?

A. It is the energy which creates and sustains the life in the physical organism; it is this energy which, when it is ~~consecrated~~ consecrated to the Divine, is used for the transformation of the body and of its activities.

1-12-1933

MOTHER INDIA

Q. Sometimes the defects and impurities of our lower nature make us fretful and impatient. Shouldn't we give up bothering too much about them and rely solely on the divine Presence to do for us what it thinks best?

A. Yes, to live in the consciousness of the divine Presence is the only thing that matters.

2-6-1934

Q. I know that both inwardly and outwardly you are doing everything for us down to the minutest movements of our being. No need of ours escapes your attention and care. Is it then merely a satisfaction of our vital hankering to pray to you and express our aspiration?

A. It is never bad to express an aspiration. This gives force to it.

Q. I sometimes feel that I am not doing things seriously or intensely enough to be worthy of the inner spiritual life and the Divine's service. Surely this kind of thing cannot help progress. I feel remorseful and think that until the psychic is fully awakened, we cannot rest content at all.

A. It would be better not to torment yourself about matters concerning progress; for these tormentings only retard the motion. It is preferable to open yourself in all confidence and all simplicity to the divine help and to have faith in the Victory.

Q. I pray that I may serve you without the least encroachment or hampering by the ego—consciously and sincerely, and be inspired by you in everything.

A. Open yourself more and more to the Consciousness and you will receive inspiration.

9-5-1934

Q. What is symbolised by the waterfall in the picture you have given me? Is it not the current of your serene peace and of your divine force which constantly floods me?

A. Yes, it is the symbol of the descent of the divine forces upon the physical plane.

25-1-1934

PROBLEMS OF INTEGRAL YOGA

THE UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE OF SRI AUROBINDO

Compiler's Note

Many letters of Sri Aurobindo have already been published expressing his views on almost all matters concerning human existence and explaining the process of his Integral Yoga—the Yoga of Supramental Transformation. They have been presented in the form of a philosophical and psychological statement of his leading ideas, experience-concepts and spiritually realised truths, and consequently occupy an important place in the scheme of Aurobindonian literature. The object of this Series, however, is different—it is to present problems of Integral Yoga exactly as they were put before Sri Aurobindo by the disciples from time to time, together with Sri Aurobindo's comments on them. It is felt that a compilation of this type will be a really living document of his teaching and will help the reader to come to close grips with problems of this particular Yoga.

Often, the questions asked by the disciples will not be given when the nature of the problem discussed is easily understandable from Sri Aurobindo's reply; secondly, the letters published will not always be in answer to particular problems—they may either be important injunctions given to the disciples or of a purely informative nature.

“Synergist”

SECTION II: MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

Some questions from a disciple from abroad were sent to Sri Aurobindo for his comment by PS, one of the resident sadhaks. They are here published with Sri Aurobindo's replies. A letter written to an Ashramite on vital relations between people is added at the end.

COMMENTS ON A LETTER FROM ABROAD

ON MEDITATION

Q: Is meditation essential for the practice of this Yoga? This question constantly arises and it seems to me the answer is YES. Am I right?

A. Practice of set meditation although the usual rule, is not indispensable. There are sadhaks who are unable to meditate in that way, but they can move towards the Truth and realisation by selfless work such as described in the Gita, by strong devotion, by self-purification and self-consecration or by other means known to the Yogin.

ON A YOGIC EXPERIENCE

Q: Recently while meditating very still and quiet in the Light, it seemed as if the breath was suddenly drawn upwards out of the body, the experience was literally breath-taking, instantaneous and awe-inspiring, but resulting in a general sense of "lightening." The idea of death which had haunted me for about two years had been replaced by a new realisation of immortality, an intensive understanding, energy (through and through) and sense of being used. This new state of consciousness fluctuates of course, but the difference is marked.

A. There are various states of experience in which the expression 'taken up out of the body' would be applicable. There is one in which one goes up from the centres in the body to a centre of consciousness extending above the physical head and takes up a position there in which one is liberated from subjection to the body sense and its heavy hold and this is certainly accompanied by a general sense of lightening. One can then be in direct connection with the higher consciousness and its power and action. It is not altogether clear from the description whether this is what happened. Again, there are phenomena of the breathing which accompany states of release or of ascension. But the breath here perhaps stands, generally, for the life-principle.

ON SEX AND CELIBACY

Q: With regard to transformation of the sex-centre. One concludes that celibacy is required. But we are wondering about it with regard to parenthood and whether mastery is possible in the sense of abandonment of desire and enjoyment, while using sex solely as an instrument for that purpose, i.e. as 'sacrifice', in order to provide bodies for incarnating souls. The following quotation from Sri Aurobindo about the perfect Yogins seems applicable here. "For every part of human life has to be taken up by the spiritual" including "the dynamic, the vital and the physical—for none of these things or activities that spring from them will they have contempt or aversion. In each will they seek for its own proper means of conversion."

PROBLEMS OF INTEGRAL YOGA

A. Conversion is one thing and acceptance of the present forms in ordinary human nature is another. The reason given for indulging the sex-action is not at all imperative. It is only a minority that is called to the strict Yogic life and there will be always plenty of people who will continue the race. Certainly, the Yogi has no contempt or aversion for human nature; he understands it and the place given to each of its activities with a clear and calm regard. Also, if an action can be done with self-control without desire under the direction of a higher consciousness, that is the better way and it can sometimes be followed for the fulfilment of the divine will in things that would not otherwise be undertaken by the Yogin, such as war and the destruction which accompanies war. But a too light resort to such a rule might easily be converted into a pretext for indulging the ordinary human nature.

3-6-1948

★

VITAL RELATIONS

It is the way that vital love usually takes when there is no strong psychic force to correct and uphold it. After the first vital glow is over, the incompatibility of the two egos begins to show itself and there is more and more strain in the relations—for one or both the demands of the other become intolerable to the vital part, there is constant irritation and the claim is felt as a burden and a yoke. Naturally in a life of sadhana there is no room for vital relations—they are a stumbling block preventing the wholesale turning of the nature towards the Divine.

29-7-1933

QUARTET

I

Poise of the tense noon, tremulous between
Passion and worship, warm flesh and bare soul!
One touch of heat, and the whole heart breaks out
To clasp the body of earth—drunk, blind to heaven.
One touch of light, and love leaps all within—
The entire seducing greenness flecked with gold
Quivers to draw beyond its own bright curves
The hungry heart to the Unseen, the Unheard,
And with elusive farness wakens deep
On sudden deep in the mute dazzled mind.
Hermaphrodite hour, disclose my nature's truth,
So I may learn to catch ere evening's end
White Venus's wonder-word or plumb through night
A superhuman space of secrecies.

2

The unreachable horizon is my love—
All other marvels, delicate or vast,
End in the embracing: here alone the arms
Stand full for ever with the rapturous
Failure to exhaust the body of the Beyond.

O haunting line of infinite ocean-tone,
Touched by the luminous quiet of the sky,
Draw me aloof from lips that sing no surge
Of the homeless heart to bournless mystery!

QUARTET

3

Above my head I am one with God's huge gold,
Within my heart God's white-fire depth am I;
But both these freedoms like far dreams I hold,
Wonderful futures caught in a cryptic eye—
A light without lids—suspended timelessly
'Twiixt flickering glimpses of mortality.
I am they and yet no part of body or mind
Shares in their splendour: a nameless strength alone
Possesses every limb: a block of stone
Dead to all hungers, void of smile or sigh,
The outer self endures the strokes of time,
But feels each stroke flash from beyond, behind
The world of man, a smite of the God on high
And the God within to wake from the packed peace
Of that stone-block a shapeliness sublime
Which shall be God to the very finger-tips
By the falling of brute superfluities.
Treasuring that sculpture yet unborn, I wait
For the luminous outflowering of my fate—
Blindness that is a locked apocalypse!

A viewless Will like an undiscovered sun
Is fixed in an ether of trance above my brain.
These feet may stumble into night, these hands
Let fall the flambeau: still, in that happy blue,
Flickerless the gold of God masters all Time.
There is no failure save forgetfulness
Of the omnipotent Light whose spark is our soul.
The Eternal One whose word is victory
Is now the unpierceable secret of my life:
Nothing can draggle His epiphany,
None else than He can lift me from the mire,
His will alone is my serenity.
While He enhaloes the summit of the mind
And His dazzle is caught in the cavern of the heart
And all my limbs are a grope for His world-vast love,
Can mortal hungers hold me paradised?
Some giant loneliness breaks through each embrace!...
My faltering steps are a truth to human eyes,
But already the great sun-sight overhead
Has burnt it to ashes in the future's fire.
I wear mortality like a fading mask:
The white decree in the brooding spirit-space
Shall stop not till the immortal Sun is my face.

K. D. SETHNA

HILLS

Who will dare to come into the silence
 With bare feet washed in the saltness of the sea,
Mind a white-petalled and thin-pointed fire
 In the unutterable Potency?

For these faint indications without voices,
 These guiding torches needing no groping hand,
Tensions of joy and subtle mediations,
 Who may receive and dare to understand?

Quiet these hills are now. Still scored and broken
 Their sides as glaciers left them, one by one,
Yet set apart by Those who move about them
 Shaping Earth's courses in the vibrant Sun.

MARGARET FORBES

MOTHER INDIA

THE GOLDEN CERTITUDE

UPON my nude vacancies of time-born sleep
Came down a word of measureless lightning-noon
With all His flame-silence like a wallless boon
Stilling my cells, awaking my ageless deep
With diamond-throated bliss beyond belief:—
“O child of my own stupendous night-ward swoon
Thy head shall wear my tiara of height and soon
All thy night shall become my day blazing, nude, steep

My golden certitude lives in thy heart
That all thy shadows shall pass and nothing be—
My immortal strength is mightier than thy clay
And all its dubious dusk. It shall be a part
Of my lone and burning and changeless eternity.”
My light-startled self arose and fronted His Day.

ROMEN

INCOGNITO

Where falters human gaze in dark dismay,
Whence earthly ray returns—
In Atom's stormy, vibrant, viewless way
Whose vigil-torch-flame burns?

Where known and unknown meet in silence deep
And keep the secret law—
With giant strides there moves in streets of sleep
Our King incognito.

ANAND ANIKET

AN IDEAL UNIVERSITY

ANY university that aims at imparting something approximating to an ideal education must be based upon these three essential principles:

- a) Education should be man-making and not merely career-making;
- b) it should conduce to a harmonious development of all the parts and faculties of the human being;
- c) it should enable him to know himself, that is to say, know his essential, eternal Self and his expressional nature; to know the world, not only in its appearances, but also in its reality; and to know God, the sole and supreme Reality;

and d) it should lead him to the highest and completest fulfilment of his life by a transcendence of the ego and a dynamic oneness with God and with all existence.

Career-making is the growing craze and passion of most of the modern universities. Reduced to philosophical terms, it means a preponderant, almost an exclusive, stress upon the physical part of man, and a complacent acceptance of material well-being as the greatest good of life. This is, indeed, materialism with a vengeance, in which the soul is denied or ignored, the heart is left to languish or wallow in its turbid emotions, and it is only the surface mind and the body that are nourished and cherished as the sole constituents of the human personality. Instead of the whole being's following the guidance of the awakened soul and revealing its light and peace and harmony, it is the physical mind, the pragmatic intellect that pursues the lure of desire and scrambles for the flesh-pots of life. This kind of education, far from widening and deepening man's inner consciousness, enlightening his nature and adding to his spiritual stature, puts a premium upon his selfish and acquisitive instincts and makes mock of all ethical principles and restraints. "It fails", says Pitirim A. Sorokin, the renowned sociologist, "to develop character and a sense of altruism....The schools

of our sensate culture limit their educational functions chiefly to training the intellect. They pay scant attention to engendering a social outlook. If a pupil receives the prescribed quota of high marks in his courses, he is graduated with honours, though his conduct may be on the borderline between the legal and the criminal....The distinction between right and wrong is shattered by a barrage of positivistic, materialistic, relativistic and mechanistic artillery.. .The result is a sort of moral trauma. A pervading attitude of nihilism and cynicism divests students of their moral armament, making them sophisticated flotsam and jetsam, or else rampant egoists, ambitious fighters free from the restraint of ethical conventions, religious 'prejudices', and other 'superstitions', devotees of the cult of unlimited power and success, followers of the principle that 'everything is permitted if you can get away with it'....Even as an agency of pure intellectual training, our contemporary schools leave much to be desired, especially on the college level. They tend to cram the minds of the students with miscellaneous bits of information rather than to develop the powers of logical thought except in such departments as mathematics, physics and chemistry. They produce chiefly standardised specialists, picture-makers, music-makers, fiction-makers, show-makers, and mediocre technicians, physicians, architects, preachers, teachers, officials and business men, rather than original creators."¹ All this amounts to a crippling impoverishment of the inner life of man and a maddened chase, through an interminable series of clashes and compromises, after the fleeting objects of the senses. An ideal university, in order, therefore, to obviate these regrettable results, must concentrate first and chiefly on man and then on his career. It must set about developing in him the qualities and powers that can raise him from the half-animal level of his normal existence and compel the circumstances and conditions of his material life to contribute to his all-round perfection and fulfilment; for, it is only the inner worth of man, the will of his central being and the freedom and force of his integrated personality that can really carve a fit career for him, and not the freak of chance or the uncertain favour of outer circumstances. A developed manhood has the power to be the architect of its own destiny.

But what is developed manhood? A developed manhood is an integrated manhood, organically evolving towards its divine perfection. This integration is not a mere combination or coalition of the different parts of man, engineered by the intellect, but an inner organic correlation and harmonisation educed and furthered by the central being. Any education that proposes to bring about a harmonious development of man must, therefore, provide for the awakening

¹ "The Reorganisation of Humanity" by Pitirim A. Sorokin.

and growth of his central being. It may sound rather strangely metaphysical, or mystically idealistic, in connection with the aim and function of a university, to suggest the development of the soul or the central being of man; but if we study the ancient system of education, the ideals and objectives that the ancient universities followed and the remarkable results they produced, we shall understand that there can be no integration and no harmonious development of the manifold being of man except by the agency of his awakened soul and its unveiled leading. This is a simple psychological truth which we can ill afford to disregard at the present moment when the intellectual atmosphere is thick with so many new-fangled theories and therapeutics for the healing and harmonising of the human personality. The ancient method of education was the right one in as much as it tried to educe or bring out from their latency the various powers and potentialities of man by addressing itself, first and foremost, to his soul or the central being. It was not only the method of ancient Indian education, in which the teacher was always a spiritual person of sterling character, possessed of supra-intellectual knowledge and power, and competent to make the whole being of the student blossom under his touch; but it was, in some form or other, the method followed also in ancient Egypt and Assyria, and even in Greece, where the Socratic dialectic sought to turn the consciousness of the student inwards, so that he might know who he really was. Sanatkumar's statement to Narad in the Chhandogya Upanishad that all he (Narad) had studied—his studies comprehended the Vedas, Itihas-Puranas, grammar, biology, arithmetic, divination, dialectics, theology, phonetics, necromancy, the fine arts, dancing, medical science etc, etc,—was mere words till he attained the knowledge of the Self or Atman, was characteristic of the way in which education was viewed in ancient India; for, as it is said, since everything in the world has come out of the Self or Spirit, a knowledge of the Self or Spirit leads naturally to a knowledge of everything—*tasmin vijnate sarvamidam vijnatam bhavati*. An awakening and development of the soul and a knowledge of the Self or Spirit culminate, by progressive stages, in a union with the Supreme Being and the entire universe, and a perfection and fulfilment of the human life. Philosophy, sciences, languages, arts and crafts, all were taught in the ancient universities, but all irradiated by a growing knowledge of the soul and Spirit, and learnt in a concentrated atmosphere of soaring aspiration and unrelaxed self-discipline, brahmacharya, under the inspiring influence and fostering care of the Guru, who embodied noble ideals of high thinking and spiritual living. The personal touch of the Guru, his intuitive and intimate handling of the individual traits of every student, and deft tapping of his dormant possibilities were distinctive features of the ancient system and produced results which have been among the marvels of ancient Indian culture. Teaching was regarded as a sacred affair, a trust, a spiri-

tual obligation, which the teacher felt in duty bound to discharge. It was, indeed, a debt he owed to society. And the student's attitude was one of grateful devotion and spontaneous surrender, which precluded any thought of disobedience or revolt; for the guru was held to be the greatest benefactor, the opener of the eye of knowledge and the dispeller of the darkness of ignorance and suffering.

But times have vastly changed since those ancient days. Life has become infinitely more complex, the intellect of man has developed to a phenomenal extent and its multiplying ideas and interests have changed the very mould and pattern of human existence. It would, therefore, be unwise, even if it were possible, to think of reverting to the ancient system of education and building up a university exactly after the old pattern. But it would be equally unwise to repudiate the basic principles of that system which derived from profound spiritual knowledge of God and man and Nature and the meaning and significance of life. The failure of the modern universities to conduce to the growth of the whole man and impart to him a true knowledge of himself and the world in which he has to work out his destiny, calls for a new ideal that will meet the multiple demands of the present and salvage human society from the aching distraction in which it is plunged. If education is the key to the greatness of the future and the only effective means of escape from the present cultural debacle, then an ideal university, embodying the highest principles of education, founded upon the most indubitable truths of existence and a profound knowledge of human psychology, fully equipped to fulfil the aspirations of the present and having as its source of inspiration and guidance a towering spiritual personality devoted to the work of human perfection, is the most crying need of the hour.

The Sri Aurobindo International University founded at Pondicherry in 1952 proposes to meet this complex need. It is a unique institution for the following reasons:

1) Its founder, guide and presiding deity is the Mother, who is the spiritual head of the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo and about whom Sri Aurobindo says:

“There is one divine Force which acts in the universe and in the individual and is also beyond the individual and the universe. The Mother stands for all these, but she is working here in the body *to bring down something not yet expressed in this material world so as to transform life here*—it is so that you should regard her as the Divine Shakti working here for that purpose. She is that in the body, but in her whole consciousness she is also identified with all the other aspects of the Divine.”

The Mother's work in the University as well as in the Ashram is not only the opening of the human consciousness to the splendours of the Spirit and the liberation of the human being from the shackles of ignorance and suffering, but the raising of the human consciousness to the divine Supermind or the infinite Truth-Consciousness and making the Supermind descend into human nature and transform it into the divine nature. It is this specific work of a far-reaching consequence that gives a transcendent value to the presence and guidance of the Mother in the development of the University. It is not the half-lit human mind groping its way through a tangle of obscure possibilities, but a spiritual vision and all-comprehending knowledge that leads the University along firmly chosen lines towards the great goal it has set before itself—the transformation of human nature into the divine nature and the establishment of the Life Divine upon earth. The guidance of the Mother is a guarantee of the psychic or soul awakening in the students and a consequent harmonious flowering of their nature.

2) It is an institution free from all binding affiliations, either to the traditions of the past or the ideologies of the present, though it incorporates the essence of all that was great and enduring in the past, and is pregnant with the possibilities of the present. It is equally free from any affiliation to any of the credal religions or dogmatic philosophies, or moral or humanitarian ideals, which fetter the natural expansion of the human consciousness. Its ideal is a free growth of the students from within and a manifold expression of the inner truth in terms of the outer nature. It is neither spiritual in the narrow sense of being theological or monastic or metaphysical, nor is it secular in the sense of being crudely utilitarian and materialistic, and sceptical of the unfolding truth of the Spirit. It embraces all human knowledge in its scope, from mysticism and philosophy to the physical sciences, and is preparing to extend the utmost facilities to the teachers and students alike for every kind of efficient research work. It attaches a great deal of importance to the study of the sciences and technology, and seeks to develop in the students a power of control and command over the material things of life. It aims, in short, at illumining every facet of human life with the authentic Light of the Spirit.

3) Untrammelled by any bias and predilection, ethnic, national and regional, and uncantered by any commercial interest, it is the only university in the world today where East and West can meet in a universal culture and cosmopolitan outlook and realise the unity of man in the unity of God. All political, economic, social, cultural and ethical approaches to human unity are bound to fail, till the unity is realised in the depths of man's being, in the Self or Spirit,

which is one in all. And once it is realised and made the stable basis of all individual and collective relations, it will deploy and sustain endless diversities and distinctions, all colourful play of progressive life, without letting in a single note of discord to disturb the orchestral harmony. Freedom, equality and fraternity, the three godheads of the socio-political idealism of the modern age, can be securely and permanently realised only in the all-embracing life of the Spirit, and not in the quicksands of mental and physical accommodations.

But the universal culture we have spoken of does not imply an eclectic amalgam or an idealistic hybrid so satisfying to a superficial universalist; nor does it imply an exclusion or repudiation of the great cultures of the world. It evolves naturally out of the free growth of the human soul, which knows no barriers of race and creed, and respects and harmonises with itself all that is deep and distinctive in the various cultures of the nations. True spiritual freedom never restricts or repels, but always stimulates and encourages the individual genius of each unit of the universal humanity,—it delights in concordant diversity. There will be ample scope in the University and a definite inspiration for an unimpeded flowering of the ethos of the eminent cultures of the world.

The Sri Aurobindo International University, inspired by the teachings of the Mother and the Master, has embarked upon the stupendous work of sowing the seeds and promoting the growth of a new humanity upon earth, a humanity that shall take the next evolutionary step forward from mind to Supermind and live in the infinite Truth-Consciousness of the Divine, manifesting His Light and Peace and Harmony through its transfigured nature.

RISHABHCHAND

THE FUTURE POETRY

THE POETS OF THE DAWN

THE superiority of the English poets who lead the way into the modern age is that sudden almost unaccountable spiritual impulse, insistent but vague in some, strong but limited in one or two, splendid and supreme in its rare moments of vision and clarity, which breaks out from their normal poetic mentality and strives constantly to lift their thought and imagination to its own heights, a spirit or Daemon who does not seem to trouble at all with his voice or his oestrus the contemporary poets of continental Europe. But they have no clearly seen or no firmly based constant idea of the greater work which this spirit demands from them; they get at its best only in an inspiration over which they have not artistic control, and they have only an occasional or uncertain glimpse of its self motives. Thus they give to it often a form of speech and movement which is borrowed from their intellect, normal temperament or culture rather than wells up as the native voice and rhythm of the spirit within, and they fall away easily to a lower kind of work. They have a greater thing to reveal than the Elizabethan poets, but they do not express it with that constant fullness of native utterance or that more perfect correspondence between substance and form which is the greatness of Shakespeare and Spenser.

This failure to grasp the conditions of a perfect intuitive and spiritual poetry has not yet been noted, because the attempt itself has not been understood by the critical mind of the nineteenth century. That mind was heavily intellectualised, sometimes lucid, reasonable and acute, sometimes cloudily or fiercely romantic, sometimes scientific, minutely delving, analytic, psychological, but in none of these moods and from none of these outlooks capable of understanding the tones of this light which for a moment flushed the dawning skies of its own age or tracing it to the deep and luminous fountains from which it welled. Taine's grotesquely misproportioned appreciation in which Byron figures as the colossus and Titan of the age while the greater and more significant work of Wordsworth and Shelley is dismissed as an ineffective attempt

to poetise a Germanic transcendentalism, Carlyle's ill-tempered and dyspeptic depreciation of Keats, Arnold's inability to see in Shelley anything but an unsubstantially beautiful poet of cloud and dawn and sunset, a born musician who had made a mistake in taking hold of the word as his instrument, are extreme, but still characteristic misunderstandings. In our own day we see the singers who lead the van of the future entering with a nearer intimacy into the domains of which these earlier poets only just crossed the threshold, but the right art and technique of this poetry have been rather found by the intuitive sense of their creators than yet intellectually understood so as to disengage their form from the obstruction of old-world ideas and standards of appreciation.

Each essential motive of poetry must find its own characteristic speech, its own law of rhythms,—even though metrically the mould may appear to be the same,—its own structure and development in the lyric, dramatic, narrative and, if that can still be used, the epic form and medium. The objective poetry of external life, the vital poetry of the life-spirit, the poetry of the intellect or the inspired reason, each has its own spirit and, since the form and word are the measure, rhythm, body of the spirit, must each develop its own body. There may be a hundred variations within the type which spring from national difference, the past of the civilisation, the cultural atmosphere, the individual idiosyncrasy, but some fundamental likeness of spirit will emerge. Elizabethan poetry was the work of the life-spirit in a new, raw and vigorous people not yet tamed by a restraining and formative culture, a people with the crude tendencies of the occidental mind rioting almost in the exuberance of a state of nature. The poetry of the classical Sanskrit writers was the work of Asiatic minds, scholars, court-poets in an age of immense intellectual development and an excessive almost over-cultivated refinement, but still that too was a poetry of the life-spirit. In spite of a broad gulf of difference we yet find an extraordinary basic kinship between these too very widely separated great ages of poetry, though there was never any possibility of contact between that earlier oriental and this later occidental work,—the dramas of Kalidasa and some of the dramatic romances of Shakespeare, plays like the Sanskrit *Seal of Rakshasa* and *Toy-Cart* and Elizabethan historic and melodramatic pieces, the poetry of the *Cloud-Messenger* and erotic Elizabethan poetry, the romantically vivid and descriptive narrative method of Spenser's *Faerie Queen* and the more intellectually romantic vividness and descriptive elaborateness of the *Lime of Raghu* and the *Birth of the War-God*. This kinship arises from the likeness of essential motive and psychological basic type and emerges and asserts itself in spite of the enormous cultural division. A poetry of spiritual vision and the sense of things behind life and above the intellect must similarly develop from its essence a characteristic voice, cry, mould of speech, natural way of development, habits of structure.

THE FUTURE POETRY

The great poets of this earlier endeavour had all to deal with the same central problem of creation and were embarrassed by the same difficulty of a time which was not ready for work of this kind, not prepared for it by any past development, not fitted for it by anything in the common atmosphere of the age. They breathed the rarity of heights lifted far beyond the level of the contemporary surrounding temperament, intellect and life. But each besides had an immense development of that force of separate personality which is in art at least the characteristic of our later humanity. Each followed his own way, was very little influenced by the others, was impelled by a quite distinct spiritual idea, worked it out in a quite individual method and, when he fell away from it or short of it, failed in his own way and by shortcomings peculiar to his own nature. There is nothing of that common aim and manner which brings into one category the Elizabethan dramatists or the contemporaries of Pope and Dryden. We have to cast an eye upon them successively at their separate work and see how far they carried their achievement and where they stopped short or else deviated from the path indicated by their own highest genius.

SRI AUROBINDO



A RENDERING FROM THE "RAMAYANA" *

THE WIFE

BUT Sita all the while, unhappy child,
Worshipped propitious gods. Her mind in dreams
August and splendid coronations dwelt
And knew not of that woe. Royal she worshipped,
A princess in her mind and mood, and sat
With expectation thrilled. To whom there came
Rama, downcast and sad, his forehead moist
From inner anguish. Dark with thought and shaken
He entered his august and jubilant halls.
She started from her seat, transfixed, and trembled,
For all the beauty of his face was marred,
Who when he saw his young beloved wife
Endured no longer; all his inner passion
Of tortured pride was opened in his face.
And Sita, shaken, cried aloud, "What grief
Comes in these eyes? Was not today thine hour
When Jupiter, the imperial planet, joins
With Pushya, that high constellation? Why
Art thou then pale, disturbed? Where is thy pomp,
Thy crowning where?"

No foam-white softness silk
With hundred-shafted canopy o'erhues
Thy kingly head, no fans o'erwave thy face
Like birds that beat their bright wings near a flower;
Minstrel nor orator attends thy steps
To hymn thy greatness, nor are heralds heard
Voicing high stanzas. Who has then forbade
The honeyed curds that Brahmins Veda-wise

* From old writings—Editor.

Should pour on thy anointed brow,—the throngs
 That should behind thee in a glory surge,—
 The ministers and leading citizens
 And peers and commons of the provinces
 And commons metropolitan? Where stays
 Thy chariot by four gold-clad horses drawn,
 Trampling, magnificent, wide-maned? thy huge
 High-omened elephant, a thunder-cloud
 Or moving mountain in thy front? thy seat
 Enriched with curious gold? Such are the high
 Symbols men lead before anointed kings
 Through streets flower-crowned. But thou com'st careless, dumb,
 Alone. Or if thy coronation still,
 Hero, prepares and nations for thee wait,
 Wherefore comes this grey face not seen before
 In which there is no joy?" Trembling she hushed.
 Then answered her the hope of Raghou's line:
 "Sita, my sire exiles me to the woods.
 O high-born soul, O firm religious mind,
 Be strong and hear me. Dussaruth my sire,
 Whose royal word stands as the mountains pledged
 To Bharath's mother boons of old, her choice
 In her selected time, who now prefers
 Athwart the coronation's sacred pomp
 Her just demand; me to the Dundac woods
 For fourteen years exiled and in my stead
 Bharath, my brother, royally elect
 To this wide empire. Therefore I come, to visit
 And clasp thee once, ere to far woods I go.
 But thou before King Bharath speak my name
 Seldom; thou knowest great and wealthy men
 Are jealous and endure not others' praise.
 Speak low and humbly of me when thou speakest,
 Observing all his moods; for only thus
 Shall man survive against a monarch's brow.
 He is a king, therefore to be observed;
 Holy, since by a monarch's sacred hands
 Anointed to inviolable rule.
 Be patient; thou art wise and good. For I
 Today begin exile, Sita, today

MOTHER INDIA

Leave thee, O Sita. But when I am gone
Into the paths of the ascetics old
Do thou in vows and fasts spend blamelessly
Thy lonely seasons. With the dawn arise
And when thou hast adored the Gods, bow down
Before King Dussaruth, my father, then
Like a dear daughter tend religiously
Cowshalya, my afflicted mother old;
Nor her alone, but all my father's queens
Gratify with sweet love, smiles, blandishments
And filial claspings;—they my mothers are,
Nor than the breasts that suckled me less dear.
But mostly I would have thee show, beloved,
To Shatrughna and Bharath, my dear brothers,
More than my life-blood dear, a sister's love
And a maternal kindness. Cross not Bharath
Even slightly in his will. He is thy king,
Monarch of thee and monarch of our house
And all this nation. 'Tis by modest awe
And soft obedience and high toilsome service
That princes are appeased, but being crossed
Most dangerous grow the wrathful hearts of kings
And mischiefs mean. Monarchs incensed reject
The sons of their own loins who durst oppose
Their mighty policies, and raise, of birth
Though vile, the strong and serviceable man.
Here then obedient dwell unto the King,
Sita; but I into the woods depart.”
He ended, but Videha's daughter, she
Whose words were ever soft like one whose life
Is lapped in sweets, now other answer made
In that exceeding anger born of love,
Fierce reprimand and high. “What words are these,
Rama, from thee? What frail unworthy spirit
Converses with me uttering thoughts depraved,
Inglorious, full of ignominy, unmeet
For armed heroical great sons of Kings?
With alien laughter and amazed today
I hear the noblest lips in all the world
Uttering baseness. For father, mother, son,

Brother or son's wife, all their separate deeds
 Enjoying their own separate fates pursue.
 But the wife is the husband's and she has
 Her husband's fate, not any private joy.
 Have they said to thee 'Thou art exiled'? Me
 That doom includes, me too exiles. For neither
 Father nor the sweet son of her own womb
 Nor self, nor mother, nor companion dear
 Is woman's sanctuary, only her husband
 Whether in this world or beyond is hers.
 If to the difficult dim forest then,
 Rama, this day thou journeyest, I will walk
 Before thee, treading down the thorns and sharp
 Grasses, smoothing with my torn feet thy way;
 And henceforth from my bosom as from a cup
 Stale water, jealousy and wrath renounce.
 Trust me, take me; for, Rama, in this breast
 Sin cannot harbour. Heaven, spacious terraces
 Of mansions, the aerial gait of Gods
 With leave to walk among those distant stars,
 Man's wingèd aspiration or his earth
 Of sensuous joys, tempt not a woman's heart:
 She chooses at her husband's feet her home.
 My father's lap, my mother's knees to me
 Were school of morals, Rama; each human law
 Of love and service there I learned, nor need
 Thy lessons. All things else are wind; I choose
 The inaccessible inhuman woods,
 The deer's green walk or where the tigers roam,
 Life savage with the multitude of beasts,
 Dense thickets; there will I dwell in desert ways,
 Happier than in my father's lordly house,
 A pure-limbed hermitess. How I will tend thee
 And watch thy needs, and thinking of no joy
 But that warm wifely service and delight
 Forget the unneeded world, alone with thee.
 We two shall dalliance take in honied groves
 And scented springtides. These heroic hands
 Can in the forest dangerous protect
 Even common men, and will they then not guard

MOTHER INDIA

A woman and the noble name of wife?
I go with thee this day, deny who will,
Nor aught shall turn me. Fear not thou lest I
Should burden thee, since gladly I elect
Life upon fruits and roots, and still before thee
Shall walk, not faltering with fatigue, eat only
Thy remnants after hunger satisfied,
Nor greater bliss conceive. O I desire
That life, desire to see the large wide lakes,
The cliffs of the great mountains, the dim tarns,
Not frightened since thou art beside me, and visit
Fair waters swan-beset in lovely bloom.
In thy heroic guard my life shall be
A happy wandering among beautiful things,
For I shall bathe in those delightful pools,
And to thy bosom fast-devoted, wooed
By thy great beautiful eyes, yield and experience
On mountains and by rivers large delight.
Thus if a hundred years should pass or many
Millenniums, yet I should not tire or change,
For wandering so not heaven itself would seem
Desirable, but this were rather heaven.
O Rama, Paradise and thou not there
No Paradise were to my mind. I should
Grow miserable and reject the bliss.
I rather mid the gloomy entangled boughs
And sylvan haunts of elephant and ape,
Clasping my husband's feet, intend to lie
Obedient, glad, and feel about me home."

But Rama, though his heart approved her words
Yielded not to the entreaty, for he feared
Her dolour in the desolate woods; therefore
Once more he spoke and kissed her brimming eyes.
"Of a high blood thou comest and thy soul
Turns naturally to duties high. Now, too,
O Sita, let thy duty be thy guide;
Elect thy husband's will. Thou shouldst obey,
Sita, my words, who art a woman weak.
The woods are full of hardship, full of peril,

And 'tis thy ease that I command. Nay, nay,
 But listen and this forestward resolve
 Thou wilt abandon: Love! for I shall speak
 Of fears and great discomforts. There is no pleasure
 In the vast woodlands drear, but sorrows, toils,
 Wretched privations. Thundering from the hills
 The waterfalls leap down, and dreadfully
 The mountain lions from their caverns roar
 Hurting the ear with sound. This is one pain.
 Then in vast solitudes the wild beasts sport
 Untroubled, but when they behold men, rage
 And savage onset move. Unfordable
 Great rivers thick with ooze, the python's haunt,
 Or turbid with wild elephants, sharp thorns
 Beset with pain and tangled creepers close
 The thirsty tedious paths impracticable
 That echo with the peacock's startling call.
 At night thou must with thine own hands break off
 The sun-dried leaves, thy only bed, and lay
 Thy worn-out limbs fatigued on the hard ground,
 And day or night no kindlier food must ask
 Than wild fruit shaken from the trees, and fast
 Near to the limits of thy fragile life,
 And wear the bark of trees for raiment, bind
 Thy tresses piled in a neglected knot,
 And daily worship with large ceremony
 New-coming guests and the high ancient dead
 And the great deities, and three times 'twixt dawn
 And evening bathe with sacred accuracy,
 And patiently in all things rule observe.
 All these are other hardships of the woods.
 Nor at thy ease shalt worship, but must offer
 The flowers by thine own labour culled, and deck
 The altar with observance difficult,
 And be content with little and casual food.
 Abstinent is their life who roam in woods,
 O Mithilan, strenuous, a travail. Hunger
 And violent winds and darkness and huge fears
 Are their companions. Reptiles of all shapes
 Coil numerous where thou walkest, spirited,

Insurgent, and the river-dwelling snakes
 That with the river's winding motion go,
 Beset thy path, waiting. Fierce scorpions, worms,
 Gadflies and gnats continually distress,
 And the sharp grasses pierce and thorny trees
 With an entangled anarchy of boughs
 Oppose. O many bodily pains and swift
 Terrors the inhabitants in forests know.
 They must expel desire and wrath expel,
 Austere of mind, who such discomforts choose,
 Nor any fear must feel of fearful things.
 Dream not of it, O Sita; nothing good
 The mind recalls in that disastrous life
 For thee unmeet; only stern miseries
 And toils ruthless and many dangers drear."

Then Sita with the tears upon her face
 Made answer very sad and low; "Many
 Sorrows and perils of that forest life
 Thou hast pronounced, discovered dreadful ills.
 O Rama, they are joys if borne for thee,
 For thy dear love, O Rama. Tiger or elk,
 The savage lion and fierce forest-bull
 Marsh-jaguars and the creatures of the woods
 And desolate peaks, will from thy path remove
 At unaccustomed beauty terrified.
 Fearless shall I go with thee if my elders
 Allow, nor they refuse, themselves who feel
 That parting from thee, Rama, is a death.
 There is no danger, Hero, at thy side
 Who shall touch me? Not sovran Indra durst,
 Though in his might he master all the Gods,
 Assail me with his thunder-bearing hands.
 O how can woman from her husband's arms
 Divorced exist? Thine own words have revealed,
 Rama, its sad impossibility.
 Therefore my face is set towards going, for I
 Preferring that sweet service of my lord,
 Following my husband's feet, surely shall grow
 All purified by my exceeding love.

O thou great heart and pure, what joy is there
 But thy nearness? To me my husband is
 Heaven and God. O even when I am dead
 A bliss to me will be my lord's embrace.
 Yea, thou who know'st, wilt thou, forgetful grown
 Of common joys and sorrows sweetly shared,
 The faithful heart reject, reject the love?
 Thou carest nothing then for Sita's tears?
 Go! poison or the water or the fire
 Shall yield me sanctuary, importuning death."

Thus while she varied passionate appeal
 And her sweet miserable eyes with tears
 Swam over, he her wrath and terror and grief
 Strove always to appease. But she alarmed,
 Great Janac's daughter, princess Mithilan,
 Her woman's pride of love all wounded, shook
 From her the solace of his touch and weeping
 Assailed indignantly her mighty lord.
 "Surely my father erred, great Mithila
 Who rules and the Videhas, that he chose
 Thee with his line to mate, Rama unworthy,
 No man but woman in a male disguise.
 What casts thee down, wherefore art thou then sad,
 That thou art bent thus basely to forsake
 Thy single-hearted wife? Not Savitri
 So loved the hero Dyumathsena's son
 As I love thee and from my soul adore.
 I would not, like another woman, shame
 Of her great house, turn even in thought from thee
 To watch a second face; for where thou goest
 My heart follows. 'Tis thou, O shame! 'tis thou
 Who thy young wife and pure, thy boyhood's bride
 And bosom's sweet companion, like an actor,
 Resign'st to others. If thy heart so pant
 To be his slave for whom thou art oppressed,
 Obey him thou, court, flatter, for I will not.
 Alas, my husband, leave me not behind,
 Forbid me not from exile. Whether harsh
 Asceticism in the forest drear

Or paradise my lot, either is bliss
 From thee not parted, Rama. How can I,
 Guiding in thy dear steps my feet, grow tired
 Though journeying endlessly? as well might one
 Weary, who on a bed of pleasure lies.
 The bramble-bushes in our common path,
 The bladed grasses and the pointed reeds
 Shall be as pleasant to me as the touch
 Of cotton or of velvet, being with thee.
 And when the storm-blast rises scattering
 The thick dust over me, I, feeling then
 My dear one's hand, shall think that I am smeared
 With sandal-powder highly-priced. Or when
 From grove to grove upon the grass I lie,
 In couches how is there more soft delight
 Or rugs of brilliant wool? The fruits of trees,
 Roots of the earth or leaves, whate'er thou bring,
 Be it much or little, being by thy hands
 Gathered, I shall account ambrosial food,
 I shall not once remember, being with thee,
 Father or mother dear or my far home.
 Nor shall thy pains by my companionship
 Be greated; doom me not to parting, Rama.
 For only where thou art is Heaven; 'tis Hell
 Where thou art not. O thou who know'st my love,
 If thou canst leave me, poison still is left
 To be my comforter. I will not bear
 Their yoke who hate thee. And if today I shunned
 Swift solace, grief at length would do its work
 With torments slow. How should the broken heart
 That once has beaten on thine, absence endure
 Ten years and three to these and yet one more?"
 So writhing in the fire of grief, she wound
 Her body about her husband, fiercely silent,
 Or sometimes wailed aloud; as a wild beast
 That maddens with the fire-tipped arrows, such
 Her grief ungovernable and like the streams
 Of fire from its stony prison freed,
 Her quick hot tears, or as when the whole river
 From new-culled lilies weeps,—those crystal brooks

Of sorrow poured from her afflicted lids.
 And all the moonlight glories of her face
 Grew dimmed and her large eyes vacant of joy.
 But he revived her with sweet words; "Weep not;
 If I could buy all heaven with one tear
 Of thine, Sita, I would not pay the price,
 My Sita, my beloved. Nor have I grown,
 I who have stood like God by nature planted
 High above any cause of fear, so suddenly
 Familiar with alarm. Only I knew not
 Thy sweet and resolute courage, and for thee
 Dreaded the misery that sad exiles feel.
 But since to share my exile and o'erthrow
 God first created thee, O Mithilan,
 Sooner shall high serenity divorce
 From the self-conquering heart, than thou from me
 Be parted. Fixed I stand in my resolve
 Who follow ancient virtue and the paths
 Of the old perfect dead; ever my face
 Turns steadfast to that radiant goal, self-vowed
 Its sunflower. To the drear wilderness I go.
 My father's stainless honour points me on,
 His oath that must not fail. This is the old
 Religion, brought from dateless ages down,
 Parents to honour and obey; their will
 Should I transgress, I would not wish to live.
 For how shall man with homage or with prayer
 Approach the distant Deity, yet scorn
 A present godhead, father, mother, sage?
 In these man's triple objects live, in these
 The triple world is bounded, nor than these
 Has all wide earth one holier thing. Large eyes,
 These therefore let us worship. Truth or gifts,
 Or Honour or liberal proud sacrifice,
 Nought equals the effectual force and pure
 Of worship filial done. This all bliss brings,
 Compels all gifts, compels harvests and wealth,
 Knowledge compels and children. All these joys
 And human boons great filial souls on earth
 Recovering here enjoy, and in that world

MOTHER INDIA

Heaven naturally is theirs. But me whatever
In the strict path of virtue while he stands,
My father bids, my heart bids that. I go,
But not alone, o'ercome by thy sweet soul's
High courage. O intoxicating eyes,
O faultless limbs, go with me, justify
The wife's proud name, partner in virtue, Love,
Warm from thy great high-blooded lineage old
Thy purpose springing mates with the pure strain
Of Raghous ancient house. O let thy large
And lovely motion forestward make speed
High ceremonies to absolve. Heaven's joys
Without thee now were beggarly and rude.
Haste then, the Brahmin and the pauper feed
And to their blessings answer jewels. All
Our priceless diamonds and our splendid robes
Our curious things, our couches and our cars,
The glory and the eye's delight, do these
Renounce, nor let our faithful servants lose
Their worthy portion." Sita, of that consent
So hardly won sprang joyous, as on fire,
Disburdened of her wealth, lightly to wing
Into dim wood and wilderness unknown.

(Ayodhya Kanda : Cantos 26-30)

SRI AUROBINDO

THE TASK BEFORE OUR STUDY CENTRE

(Gist of speech delivered by Dr. S. K. Maitra, President, Sri Aurobindo Study Centre, Benaras on the occasion of the celebration of the third anniversary of the foundation of the Centre on the 21st February, 1953)

ON this occasion of the third anniversary of the foundation of this Study Centre, the thought that is uppermost in our minds is: Where do we stand? There is no doubt that our Centre has been able to attract public attention—witness the large number of ladies and gentlemen that have assembled this evening to join our celebrations. There is also cause for gratification in the fact that the Centre has been able to hold practically every Sunday, except during recesses, meetings where lectures on different aspects of Sri Aurobindo's teachings were delivered or readings given from different writings of Sri Aurobindo. There is room for self-complacency no doubt in these things, but the question is: Are these enough?

For we should not obscure from ourselves the fact that the object of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo is something different from the establishment of a number of Yoga centres where people live together for their spiritual advancement. Individual spiritual advancement is no doubt a great thing but it is not the sole or even the chief aim of Sri Aurobindo's teachings. Moreover, there is no complete individual realization possible without a cosmic realization. That is why Sri Aurobindo has said, "Our Yoga is not for ourselves". Like the Buddha, he has a vision of a larger mission which embraces not only his own devotees but the great world outside and the entire race of mankind. This comes from his realization of the essential divinity of man and also of the entire universe, by virtue of which it is man's prerogative to attain divinity, and that, too, not by cutting himself away from the world but by remaining in the world, for the world also shares with man this birthright of divinity and consequently is not to be despised. It is necessary for us to remind ourselves of this essential feature of Sri Aurobindo's teachings and also to acquaint our patrons who are gathered here to encourage us by their presence, of this. This is, however, no innovation of Sri Aurobindo's but a conception of man held by our ancient forefathers and repeated times without number in our great Scriptures which record their great revelations. Take, for instance, the following two mantras of the Rig-Veda:

“अदित् प्रलस्य हेततो ज्योतिष्पश्यन्तिवासस्य् । परोर्यदिध्यते दिवा” (Rig Veda 8-6-30)
“उद्वय तमसस्यहि ज्योतिष्पश्यन्तउत्तहम् । देवदेवत्रा सूर्यमगन्य ज्योतिहात्तमम्” (do 1-50-10)

This we may translate as follows:

“The seers see the light of the primeval Root-Cause, the light which is all-pervading like that of the day, that which, being in the Supreme Being, pervades the entire heavens.”

“That light which is the remover of all darkness, that light is ours—that light, again, which is the Supreme Light and which moves the world of the devas, that all-pervasive and all-moving Supreme Light of the Sun—that light we have obtained”.

The translation, we may say by the way, does not convey even a fraction, of the spiritual import of these famous mantras, for it lacks that thrill which each word, nay each syllable, of these mantras gives. But imperfect as it is, it gives some idea of the great truth which they proclaim. What is it that they proclaim? They proclaim in the first place, the divinity of man. The first sentence of the first mantra does it, when it says, “The seers see the light of the primeval Root-Cause”. Man, therefore, is not destined for ever to grovel in darkness but has a higher destiny which will take him to the region of light. Secondly, they assert what we may call the explosiveness of Truth, its characteristic of breaking all bounds and becoming all-pervasive. It cannot, therefore, be kept confined within a few breasts or a few select souls. Thirdly, they point to the unification of the entire universe with the help of the light of Truth. The first statement gives man the hope which alone can sustain him in his spiritual efforts. The second shows him the way in which his spiritual advancement is possible, and the third gives him a picture of the goal which it is possible for him to attain, the goal, namely, of becoming divine.

This is so far as knowledge is concerned. But it covers a wider field than that of knowledge. It applies to the whole of our personality. Whatever we are, we are by virtue of our connection with the rest of the universe, and ultimately, with the Supreme Soul. Our salvation, therefore, cannot be merely individual. It must embrace the whole of mankind, nay, the entire universe.

This is one aspect of the message of Sri Aurobindo. It has enormous significance in these days when the world is torn by racial conflicts, class struggles, mutual hatreds and jealousies of different *blocs*, in one word, when the crying need is the establishment of an atmosphere of goodwill and harmony.

THE TASK BEFORE OUR STUDY CENTRE

Indeed, if there is any time when the world needs a message like this, it is the present. The world is terribly in need of something that can stop the present alarming increase of race hatred and class conflict. And there is nothing which can do it better than the message of Sri Aurobindo which cuts at the root of these by showing that it is only through the emergence of a higher consciousness, namely, a consciousness of the complete solidarity of the human race, that the foundations of world peace can be laid.

From what I have said above of this aspect of Sri Aurobindo's message, it is clear that there is great need of a network of Study Centres, where the message of Sri Aurobindo is to be studied intensively in its historical background and also in its relation to world thought and also made accessible to the world outside by means of lectures, discussions and publications. The aim of our Study Centre is also to make such an intensive study of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and to make them known to as wide a public as possible. But for paucity of funds we have not been able to do anything more than hold lectures and discussions. We feel very keenly the want of a journal of our own. It is also necessary, if our Centre is to function properly, to publish pamphlets and books from time to time. Translations of Sri Aurobindo's works into the different regional languages are also essential; especially is it necessary to have a Hindi translation of Sri Aurobindo's chief work, *The Life Divine*. A good library is also needed if research work on the different aspects of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is to be carried on at our Centre. I appeal, therefore, to our generous patrons who are present here and also to the wider public outside to help us with men and money in the great task we have before us of rebuilding humanity in the light of Sri Aurobindo's teachings.

THE AGE OF THE SPIRIT

THE RITUAL OF SACRIFICE

IF the Veda is the creation of a symbolic mentality, and if its language is mainly that of symbols, then it ceases to be so authentic a source of history as it has so far been regarded. The modern approach to it, missing its inner significance, sees in it nothing but what its surface meaning offers to the pragmatic mind. The result is a somewhat halting account of the life and culture of the people of the period; halting because mere literary evidence—the only source for the history of the period—is not accepted as entirely valid by the so-called scientific historiographers. As, however, the symbols could not be mere airy, intangible creations of imagination, but must have, for the very purpose they were to serve, some realistic basis in fact and phenomenon, the Rigveda and the three other Vedas do contain evidences which might be taken to indicate the condition of life prevailing in the period. But the writer who believes in the esoteric meaning of the Veda must sift his materials carefully and use such of them as may be in accord with that which is the truly central meaning of this Revealed Scripture. He may make definite statements or draw suggestive conclusions but only when he stands on the solid ground of their authenticity. But the value of the symbols lies not so much in what they outwardly are as in what they suggest as acceptable evidence of fact. It may be remembered that the subject of study here is the creations of a former mentality, for different and away from the modern, and we may avoid putting into them our own mental conception.

In order to have an idea of the people of the Vedic age, our first study should be to perceive their inclination and scan the governing principle of their life. That they were spiritual is clearly proved by the high-aspiring inward adventures of the saints, sages and seers, the makers of the epoch, the earliest master-creators of India's culture. That they were religious too is testified by the main pre-occupations of the ordinary people with rites and ceremonies through which they invoked the benedictions of the gods representing the forces of Nature, to whom they prayed for their all-round well-being, secular and spiritual, which the Vedic hymns, as generally interpreted, mean. Nevertheless, that the people of the time were mainly absorbed in the thought of these religious ceremonies

is proof enough of the general spiritual atmosphere of the age,—a fact of great importance which must be in the mind of those who make the attempt to discover the inner, and therefore, the real significance of the various activities in this period and of the bearing they have on the history of India. It will be found that this spirituality was as all-embracing as it was integralising. It included all the various phases of life, all its movements and expressions, and sought to re-integrate them to what they are intended to be in the divine order of things. It is true that the far-voyaging visions of the inspired Mystics or the inward endeavours of their initiates cannot be equated with the simple religious rites of the ordinary people of the age; but the fact is there that the people as a whole followed the Aryan ideals and were occupied every moment of their life with preparations for and the performance of the most important of the religious ceremonies of the age—the Sacrifice, *yajna*, through which they chanted their prayers and aspirations to the gods. Broadly viewed, the incalculably vast qualitative difference apart, it is sacrifice all the same in both the cases—one, subjective, carried out in the plenitude of the Spirit; the other objective, matter mingling with spirit, seeking the aid of the gods or their contact for whatever purpose it might be. And no wonder the age is called the age of the Spirit.

But before going further let us make a digression to see where the Vedic people lived, that is to say, the regions which witnessed these great religious performances. It is not so much the land that is important as the rivers on the banks of which they flourished. There are mentioned about twenty-five rivers which covered the vast plain bounded on the west by the river Kubha (west of the Sindhu) and on the east by the river Sarayu in Ayodhya,—then the most fertile land in India. The hymns in the Rigveda describe the natural scenery of both these extremities of Vedic India. The mention of rivers, as the physiography of the country, shows the greatness of their importance. On their banks and in their valleys were enacted most of the scenes of the human soul expressing itself in subjective and objective activities. There, in secluded retreats or hermitages away from the activities of ordinary life, the Rishis were engaged in their contemplative pursuits. In the cities and villages the laity were occupied with their daily round of duties, all centring in the sacrifices, one or the other of which had to be performed every day.

A look into the esoteric meaning of the Sacrifice has already been attempted. The laity of the Vedic age regarded the meticulous performance of the Sacrifice in its exoteric forms as the be-all and end-all of their life. In fact, it was the very pivot of their existence. This great institution in its various forms and the uplifting ideas they symbolically suggested of the Truth, the Right, the

Vast, of which the gods were the guardians, trained the physical man to develop his ethical nature, to grow in his religious sense, to turn towards some initial development of his inner or psychic being, to receive a first touch of some great spiritual reality, to quicken into fire the divine spark in him.

This is the inherent aim in all early religious endeavours of man. He started with the physical in order ultimately to grasp the supraphysical. As his love and adoration of the wonders of nature increased, he began to perceive in them, however faintly, the power and presence of Something else which he learnt to call God or the Eternal Mother in things.

The anthropologist is not wholly correct when he ascribes these dawns of man's religious sense to fear and dread of the grim aspects of Nature, which, in his view, compelled the primitive man to propitiate the forces of Nature. Some crude beginning of this kind there might have been in primitive societies and even in them Nature's intention was to prepare man to grow to a higher stage in which he might find for himself some idea of the reality behind appearances—the hidden Motive Power in natural phenomena.

The life of the people of the Vedic age was directed to the one ritual, the Sacrifice. The Rishi voices the people's heart when he declares:

‘Let us gather fuel for it, let us prepare for it offerings, let us make ourselves conscious of the jointings of its times and seasons. It shall so perfect our thoughts that they shall extend our being and create for us a larger life.’

The hymn is full of an inner sense. But also its external meaning like that of a number of others shows how keen and careful the people were about the proper arrangement and preparation for the *yajna*. Yes, the fuel had to be gathered, the oblations procured, the altar made ready; so on and so forth. And what a stock of fuel for the perennial food of the fire! What a variety of offerings! What a geometrically-designed construction of the altar! all requiring constant, careful, devoted attention. In fact there was nothing that was done by them the whole day which did not have some direct or indirect connection with the particular ritual sacred to that day.

The Sacrifice, however, had many forms each of which began with invocations to Agni, the God of Fire, because it is he who would reach the offerings to the other gods. There were sacrifices held in particular seasons, and those at particular religious ceremonies associated with birth, initiation, marriage etc.

And not a day would pass that did not witness the celebration of a ritual. Some would take a day for its performance, some a fortnight, some a month, and some the whole of a year. There was for every important phase of life a *yajna*, specially meant for its full flowering and fulfilment. And these phases were those through which the human sacrificer was inwardly led forward and helped to grow into the wholeness of his being. The performance of the various rites connected with a sacrifice had bearing on the growth of man's being; and when properly done it did exalt the being to finer spiritual perceptions. Constant remembrance of the gods and the care to see that every form of offering was as perfect and pure as possible had certainly their elevating effect on the heart and soul of the sacrificer. And these were not confined to the religious and moral spheres of man's activity. There were rites which promoted the growth of a larger social sense. Then there was the chanting of the *mantras*—the inspired hymns—for which necessary training was given, and which when properly done was sure to exert an uplifting effect on the chanter. All these influences would silently work their way into the being of the sacrificer even when he would be making material offerings at the altar. The very idea that one should give his best to the gods and that as often as one can is by itself a force which can never fail to sublimate the being. The sacrificer may not always be conscious of this inner growth but it is for this that his soul would impel him to make the sacrifice a perfect one. Of this urge of his soul he may not be aware, yet the secret psychology of it would be working in him, because it is the Will of the Godhead that man should be raised to higher levels of his being through whatever he could easily do. The deeper meaning is that it is the sacrifice of the Supreme in his creation by which He seeks to lift up his creation into his own Glory. That is why the whole life is called a sacrifice. But whose sacrifice is this? of God or of man? Of God to the mystic, of man to the householder; but the vision of the mystic is the true truth which never fails, and the householder profits by it without knowing its inner implication. 'In Vedic times meditation, worship and sacrifice were the means by which some connection or contact with the Unseen was sought to be established and maintained. The sacrifice was symbolic in its ritual and the symbols were supposed to have an occult power to create a relation between the unseen powers worshipped and the worshipper; by it they were called in to preside over and help all the action and life of the human being.'

Agni is one of the greatest of the gods both in the inner and the ritualistic sense. A cosmic Force, Agni is the Cause of Light, Heat, Cloud and Rain, of Rain the cause of food, of Food which sustains life. He pervades everywhere and is most visibly expressed as the Sun. He is verily the root of life. The

householder must therefore worship him as the great deity of the household and worship him everyday by offering his best oblations. Thus arose the most important of Vedic sacrifices—the Agnihotra. What is remarkable about it is that the oblation here need not necessarily be any material object. Only reverence—*sraddha*—would do. “I offer as sacrifice my reverence”—is the burden of the mantra for this particular ritual,—a fact which shows its inner nature even when performed without particular reference to its esoteric meaning. The fire of this sacrifice would never be extinguished; it was a sacred emblem and would remain burning with the family fire, fed by the daily offering at the sacrifice, its inner sense being that the seeker must never cease to aspire, and it is by his ceaseless aspiring and self-giving to the Flame-god that he is sustained and fostered.

After completing his education the student in the Vedic age would return home, marry and become a householder whose first duty on entering upon that life would be to light the sacrificial fire and go through the necessary rites to be the worshipper of Agni—an *ahitagni*. To keep this fire ever-burning is an obligation of his domestic life. One of the vows an *ahitagni* had to take was that he would never in his life tell an untruth. Every home was thus a temple in which would burn the sacred fire and round which would centre all the activities of the household.

The other equally important sacrifice was the Soma-yajna in which Soma is addressed as *Madhu*, the drink of immortality, which gives strength to the gods, and greatness to earth. A hymn declares that the Soma is not something to be drunk. Another says: “He cannot be drunk by a materialist.” A third one, “Some can drink Him but cannot decrease him by such drink.” For it is a drink of supreme knowledge, a draught of immortality. Thus this Rigvedic sacrifice was something more than mere worship of any godhead of material Nature.

There were then the five great *yajnas* of the post-Rigvedic times. Through the first—the *Devā-yajna*—the householder would make sacrifices to the Gods to whom he owes his life and everything else; through the second—the *Pitri-yajna*—he would pray to the early Fathers of the race; the third—the *Brahma-yajna*—was performed by the study and teaching of the Veda and meditation on the *mantras*; through the fourth—the *Bhuta-yajna*—the householder would make offerings to all created beings with which he feels or realises his oneness; the last—the *Nri-yajna*—is one by which he would show his veneration for all his fellowmen ‘in a spirit of universal brotherhood,’ which he would practi-

cally demonstrate by keeping his door ever open to all and sundry as part of his daily religious duty. The all-embracing character of these fivefold sacrifices which among others formed their scheme of life, evolved in the age and followed in subsequent ones, was evidence enough of how the people were taught to fulfil the larger obligations of life with a view to growing and expanding into a capacity for the realisation of yet higher ideals. As for the householders, so also for the kings, there were specific sacrifices celebrated in a royal manner. It may be remembered that these sacrifices along with a number of others had been governing the religious life of ancient India for more than two thousand years before the coming of the Buddha, though in later days they tended to be more and more external in their aim as in their performance. But the *mantras* never ceased to exert their influence, helping more than anything else to keep alive the inherent spiritual tendency of the Indian people. The institution of sacrifice continued in the post-Buddha times and even today there can be no religious ceremony of the Hindus, specially of the brahmanas and kshatriyas, in which a particular form of *yajna* appropriate to the occasion is not to be performed.

The institution of sacrifice however is too vast a question to be discussed here in all its details. Just those aspects of it have been touched upon that concerned the daily life of the people of the times. While its religious value was immense, it was not without its social and cultural importance for the age which witnessed its elaboration into a most effective means of developing into their fullness both the inner and outer fields of life's activities. Most of these sacrifices could not be performed without the aid and presence of the kinsmen of the performer. In the last one, the famous *Nri-yajna* sacrifice, the householder was required to be the host to all his fellowmen whom he must worship—for that is the spirit in which the guest in India is always treated. '*Atithi sarvodevamayah*'—the guest contains all the gods. The cultural value of these sacred ceremonies lay in the disciplines which the householders, the priests and all those who were to officiate at the ceremonial were required to follow in order to prepare themselves for the right observance of the rules that govern the performance of the sacrifices.

CULTURE IN THE VEDAS

But what was the nature of this training and how was it imparted so as to equip the student with whatever as a householder he needed for the fulfilment of the obligations of life, which could be done in no better way than through the sacrifices so wisely planned by the early founders of the Indian civilisation?

Education in Vedic times was indissolubly bound up with the study, correct chanting and recitation of the Rigveda, contemplation on its sacred *mantras* (numbering 1028) which comprise more than ten thousand verses. From the Vedic times in ancient India and down the ages, the teachers were always the saints, sages and seers who were the sole custodians of the highest spiritual knowledge. In the Rigvedic time the Rishis—the inspired Seers—were the educators, which in itself is proof of the spiritual character of the training imparted to the youth of the race. And nothing but spiritual could be the culture that was evolved by this education. The contact that the learners—the seekers—had with their Illumined Teachers could never fail to have something at least of the spirit-touch, at any rate an exalting influence and effect on them, and infuse that influence into the very atmosphere of the age.

The learners would pass the long term of their studentship as members of their teachers' home, and their relations with their teachers were always those of love and veneration. These teachers were men who possessed the highest wisdom for the attainment of which the young seekers would come to them. Knowledge supreme, growth of consciousness and development of personality were the cardinal aims of Vedic education; study and intellectual pursuits were as auxiliaries, and were not given so much importance at the initial stage of the student's training. The Rigveda contains accounts of students who started their career by rendering material service through physical work to their *gurus*—Masters—with all devotion and sincerity. This might be a form of austerity—*brahmacharya*—which has always been regarded in India as the first necessary means for the acquisition of spiritual knowledge. It was also practised as an aid to the growth of self-discipline and humility and a spirit of dedication. The *gurus'* ways with the disciples would always be silent and subtle, therefore all the more effectively communicative, because they were prompted by love, sympathy, understanding, and above all, by their incomparable spiritual illumination and power. The personal influence of these teachers on their disciples and their personal care of the latter—always a small number—are other outstanding features of ancient Indian education. The mention in the Rigveda of the word *brahmacharin*—the old Indian Sanskrit term for the student—shows that the age had already assimilated the great ideal of studentship.

Nor in this age was neglected the education of the women. The fact that among the Seers were women, called *Rishikas*, who composed hymns shows how culturally advanced were the women of the age. A hymn 'refers to young maidens completing their education as *brahmacharins* and then gaining husbands

in whom they are merged like rivers in oceans.' Another expresses the hope on behalf of every bride at the time of her marriage that she would in due course be able to command the attention of the Assembly by her powers of speech and persuasion. These presuppose a previous training the maidens had in order to acquire competence for the kind of work they would have to do in the future.

But the culture of the age had an even earlier phase in yet remoter times when the seekers had first started on their quest and followed it up through courses of discipline till they were vouchsafed the knowledge of the eternal truths that they chanted in the hymns embodied in the Rigveda. These hymns contain, as already shown, some of the highest spiritual knowledge ever revealed to man. In order that they might not be lost, methods were evolved by which the hymns could be acquired, conserved and transmitted to posterity. These methods included forms of inner discipline, too, the practice of which was as necessary for the understanding of the Veda as for its recitation. Indeed it was the combination of these two—the latter based mainly on a thorough knowledge of the rules of correct enunciation and pronunciation of the texts and rules of grammar, phonetics, metrics etc. A complete mastery of these rules often produced inspired singers of the sacred texts. These rules again were largely responsible for the fact that the Rigvedic Sanskrit is perfected in grammatical mechanism and has a greater variety of forms than even classical Sanskrit which took its finished form at least three thousand years later,—another instance of the varied cultural activities of the age.

The study of the Rigveda for its literary value as poetry was no less a part of the education of the age. And what a poetry it is! The mantras, as the hymns are called, are the inspired utterances of souls having direct visions of secret Truths. They are a sacred, sublime and powerful poetic creation of the master-singers of that glorious age of the Spirit. These seer-poets were masters as well of a consummate technique by which 'they carved their rhythms like the chariots of the gods, borne on divine and ample wings of sound, great in movement and subtle in modulation!' Lyric in intensity, epic by elevation, their speech is utterance of power, pure in quality and bold and grandiose in outline. It is speech direct and brief in impact, profound and far-reaching in effect, packed and full to overflowing in sense and suggestion, bodying forth the deepest psychic and spiritual experiences of the human soul surcharged with the Spirit. The hymns cited before are a few of these marvels of poetic creation, unexampled revelations of inmost truths. The utterances of the greatest Seers, Vishvamitra, Vamadeva, Dirghatamas and many others, touch

extraordinary heights and amplitudes of a sublime and mystic poetry and there are poems like 'the Hymn of Creation that move in a powerful clarity on the summits of thought on which the Upanishads lived constantly with a more sustained breathing.' Here is the beginning of the Hymn of Creation:

'Then existence was not nor non-existence, the mid-world was not nor the Ether nor what is beyond. What covered all? Where was it? in whose refuge? what was that ocean dense and deep? Death was not nor immortality nor the knowledge of day and night. That One lived without breath by his self-law, there was nothing else nor aught beyond it. In the beginning Darkness was hidden by darkness, all this was an ocean of inconscience. When universal being was concealed by fragmentation, then by the greatness of its energy That One was born. That moved at first as desire within, which was the primal seed of mind. The seers of Truth discovered the building of being in non-being by will in the heart and by the thought; their ray was extended horizontally; but what was there below, what was there above? There were Casters of the seed, there were Greatnesses; there was self-law below, there was will above.'

A typical example of Vedic poetry! It gives in finest poetical form the Vedic theory of cosmogony, the basis of all such theories in later Indian thought. The study and appreciation of a poetry of this kind can never fail to uplift and inspire the mind, heart and soul of man. And nothing reflects the spirit of the age so well as these poetical utterances of the Vedic Master-singers inspired by their vision of the boundless splendours of the Infinite.

The education of the R̥gvedic times did not neglect training for the material pursuits of life. In fact, as said before, there was no such compartmentalism in the scheme of ancient Indian culture. If the Sacrifice and its concomitant ceremonies were to be properly performed, then the various things required for and associated with them must be done as perfectly as possible. These as also the daily necessities of life could not be produced by lay or unskilled men. Mention of artisans and craftsmen, physicians and other professionals is proof of the training that they must have had under an organised system. The figures on the sacrificial altar required a knowledge of geometry, and the fixing of dates and times for the sacrifices, of astronomy. Both of these must have been cultivated and have their origin in the R̥gvedic period. The hymns of the R̥gveda point to the mastery the R̥shis had of the laws and forces of physical phenomena. And what is more, they made the far greater discovery—unique from any point of view—that 'the same laws and powers hold in spiritual, psychical and physical being of man. They also discovered

the omnipresence of life, affirmed the evolution of soul in Nature from the vegetable and the animal to the human form, stated on the basis of philosophic intuition and spiritual and psychological experience many of the truths which modern knowledge is reaffirming from the other side as it passes from the study of physical nature to the study of life and mind'. Thus from the very beginning of her civilized life India was familiar with most of the fundamental principles of Science.

The Rigvedic period is also noted for several institutions, associated with sacrificial celebrations, that deserve mention as evidence of its cultural activity. The *Brahmana-samgha* was an assembly in which learned scholars discussed by the conference method the contributions made by them towards the advancement of knowledge. The *Vidatha* was also an assembly of the learned. The *Satra*, however, was a more popular institution, somewhat like the Greek Olympian games minus the athletics. It was, as it were, a national festival attended by all classes of people including thinkers, philosophers and Rishis, who gave discourses on cultural and spiritual subjects. These were also poets who recited from their works, singers who sang the Vedic hymns. It was a kind of religious and philosophical congress and the householder who would convene it would extend his hospitality to all not only during the period of its session but throughout the year till the next *Satra* was held. All these institutions indicate how highly developed the Rigvedic culture was; what keen interest the people had in the higher values of life.

While the Rigveda is the oldest of the scriptures containing the whole system of mystic doctrines, the three other Vedas—Sama, Yajur and Atharva—arranged presumably in the chronological order of their composition, follow in the main the Rigvedic tradition,—most of their verses being a repetition of the hymns of the Rigveda. Each of the Vedas, however, was intended to serve a particular purpose and has its place in the evolution of Indian culture. The Samaveda, most of whose hymns are taken from the Rigveda, was meant to teach the melodies of Vedic hymns, which were not to be sung to any tune, but a particular melody was sung upon a particular hymn to which the melody owes its origin, the idea being that the Rishis heard the mantras as much as they saw them, and this hearing gave them the particular rhythm and music appropriate to the hymns. They had, therefore, to be chanted in the melody indicated by the rhythm and music heard by the Rishis. This also is the origin of the basic principle of Indian music. There are authorities on Indian music who believe that the three *svaras* of the Samaveda are the source of the seven *svaras* by which the gamut is measured in modern Indian music. The students of the

Veda had to go through this training for the correct chanting of the Veda. The Yajurveda is mainly a book of prayers to be uttered in connection with sacrificial rites which also are described in it. The *Krishna* (black) part of it, the other part being *Sukla* (white), gives the rules of the sacrifices in prose. And this is the earliest prose literature of India out of which evolved 'the literary masterpieces of the Upanishads'. The Yajurveda furnishes a more elaborate form of the scheme of life prevailing in Vedic times, which includes the various social and religious obligations. It gives detailed descriptions of the royal sacrifices.

Culturally, the Yajurveda is even more important. Subjects like phonetics, metrics, grammar etc., which, in the Rigvedic times, arose out of a need for correct pronunciation and recitation of the hymns and the proper performance of the sacrifices, were elaborated into a system called the *Vedangas*, the limbs of the Veda. A study of the Vedangas was considered indispensable for an understanding of the Vedas. The Yajurveda refers to several secular sciences and practical arts which originated in the sacrificial rites of the Rigvedic times and are detailed here in more objective terms. The ground for the *yajna* had to be measured; the altar and the platform to be built; the seasons and moments to be ascertained. The capacity to do all these in the right way had to be acquired through a systematic training, adequate opportunities for which were there in Vedic India humming with the religious activities of a unique order. The Yajurveda makes the sweeping declaration that Vedic knowledge was open to all classes of people.

The Atharvaveda has an importance all its own for the student of India's cultural evolution. While it contains many things which are not in the Rigveda, it gives in broader outlines clues to the system of education and to other aspects of culture that were prevalent in the Vedic age. Even more remarkable is the trend of its thought which affirms the essential idea of Vedic philosophy that life is nothing if its divine possibilities do not come into flower on the stem of immortality. Whatever attention the Atharvaveda gives to the ordinary life, to its ills and trials, is meant to help man find contentment in his day-to-day existence that he may grow in the quiet strength of his soul and strive for the attainment of what is for him his supreme good. In his material pursuits man must have the satisfaction of reaching those summits from where he may be led forward to his growth and fulfilment in a greater life of the Spirit. Here are two prayers of 'a son of Earth' in the Atharvan:

'Lavish on me her (Earth's) manifold treasure, her secret riches....'

'(Earth), who has her heart of immortality covered up by the Truth in the supreme ether, may she establish for us light and power in that most high kingdom...'

It can be seen at once that in the first prayer the son of Earth aims at earthly treasures, though these also may be symbols of inner truths, his second prayer mounts up to the ethereal heights of Light and Truth and Immortality. In other words, he wants to be in Heaven on earth,—an idea which is almost Rigvedic in more direct and less symbolic terms. The Atharvan shows a marked change from the symbolism of the Rigveda to terms of the mind in touch with its intuitive plane, of which the Upanishads are a splendid creation.

It is unfortunate that the sublime truths of the Atharvaveda have been missed by Western scholarship which regards it only as 'a book of magical spells' 'concerned with primitive ideas of witchcraft'. It does contain something of the kind, but for what purpose can only be guessed at. Maybe a particular class of people needed them. But these spells included a number of prayers for the all-round welfare of the householder and also quite a number whose aims are noble, high and uplifting. Who would miss a note of utter sincerity, a passionate intensity of soul in the inspiring hymns in which the householder prays for reconciliation of enemies, harmony in social life, unity everywhere? The Atharvan has in it a good number of hymns which are highly spiritual in their intention. Here is one such:

*'Himself desireless, steadfast, immortal, self-existent, happy in the happy sap of things, lessened nowhere in status, he knows the Self that is steadfast, undecaying, eternally young, and fears not Death.'*¹

This is the Ideal Man envisaged in the Atharvaveda which calls upon man to remain ever poised and settled in the consciousness of the Divine and to make that alone his base and support.

The Atharvaveda aims at awakening man to a vision of his birthright, to his godlike strength by which he could attain that birthright and divinise his actions and achievements. This great Veda seeks to bring down from heaven into the earth-life the vibrations of the Life Immortal. That is why it repeats with equal emphasis the Rigvedic trinity of *satyam, ritam, brihat*, the True, the Right, the Vast, pointing thereby to the highest Light, the most luminous Truth, as the supreme goal of man.

There are, besides, other facts that add to the cultural importance of the Atharvaveda. It prescribes numerous medicines for various ailments, and mentions those that require surgical treatment. This is regarded as the earliest

¹ Translated by Nolini Kanta Gupta.

system of Indian medicine and surgery. The Atharvan also anticipates the later Griha Sutras, the rules of domestic rites to be observed at birth, marriage or death. What, however, is even more striking is the elaboration of the rules that governed the education of the period, the rules that constituted the most significant institution of *Brahmacharya*, the bedrock of Hindu life and culture, that continued almost in the same form and in the same spirit through the long ages of India's past, serving as the dynamic source of all her strength and manhood from which flowered those marvellous creations that are the golden glories of her history. The Atharvan gives a comprehensive list of rites and ceremonies that the neophyte—the beginner—has to go through before he becomes a student—a *brahmachari*—in the right sense of the term. The initiation into this stage of life starts with the ceremony of *Upanayana* performed by the chosen teacher. The student is now called *dvija* or twice-born, this being his second spiritual birth into a new life of quest for the higher values through the practice of self-restraint and penance and by consecration to a life of discipline during his term of studentship as a member of his teacher's home. The Atharvan mentions the practice of *brahmacharya* by girls also. It contains one of the earliest expressions of patriotic sentiments in which the motherland is adored for her bounteous gifts to her children and for her outstanding achievements.

The Atharvaveda refers to the expansion of the Aryas and of Aryan culture further east from the Sindhu regions towards the regions of the Ganga and the Yamuna, though the mention of these rivers in the Rigveda shows that Aryan influence must have spread to those regions in the earlier age.

As already said, the three Vedas are more or less echoes of the Rigveda which admits of both mystic and ritualistic interpretations. The Sama and Yajur arose out of the practical needs of worship which called for the growth of priesthood and its necessary texts. In them could be discerned a tendency to regard rituals and sacrifices as more important than anything else. And this tendency became more defined in the later works called the Brahmanas which deal with what is characterised as the 'science of sacrifice', even as the Yajurveda is called the 'Book of Prayer'. Thus each Veda has its Brahmanas embodying practical directions for the performance of sacrifices, and philosophical expositions of the real nature of things. They also contain elaborations of Vedic legends, allegories, theories of cosmogony, the legend of the Flood which may be traced to earlier traditions and need not be of the Semitic origin as some European writers try to show. Each of these Brahmanas has in it also an Aranyaka portion which, as the word implies was studied and contemplated upon by sages in their forest-retreats. The Aranyakas are, some of them, parts of the

Brahmanas and some, of the older Upanishads, in which as also in the later ones can be observed a marked tendency towards mysticism and thought. As they signalise a turning-point in the cultural and spiritual evolution of India, they will be taken up later in the present study. The Brahmanas and in a way the Aranyakas contain materials of historical value. References are found in them to institutions of the nature of 'assemblies, academies, literary or religious guilds serving as Schools of Vedic learning' whose work was to collect, conserve and comment upon the Vedic lores and transmit them to successive generations through competent teachers and pupils. The general system of learning was a continuation of the Vedic one of the previous times, though the emphasis was more on the externalia of sacrifice and therefore on the ritualistic interpretation of the Vedic literature. These assemblies which were held at the houses of eminent teachers were attended also by kings and nobles—the kshatriyas—who were then not only well-versed in the Veda but were many of them masters of the highest spiritual knowledge.

While describing the celebration of various sacrifices including royal ones, the Brahmanas narrate the dynastic geneologies of kings along with other relevant information about them. The R̥gvedic tribes are shown here in their new formations evolved under the acknowledged leadership of the Kuru-Panchalas who are given great prominence in the texts which regard them as the best representatives of the then Vedic culture. The Kuru-Panchalas belonging generally to the Ganga-Yamuna doab—the famous Brahmavarta—founded a confederate kingdom notable for its cultural progress and material prosperity.

One of the oldest Brahmanas describes a sacrificial ceremony called *Vratyastoma* through which a class of people called Vratyas were admitted to the community of the brahmanas. The Vratyas are believed to be Aryas who would not perform certain Vedic rites including the Upanayana, the other view about them being that they were a powerful civilised community of eastern India who came under the Vedic influence during this period. The royal sacrifice, Asvamedha, is regarded by some scholars as a Vratya ceremony performed by un-Aryan kings for admission to the Aryan fold. That there was a ceremony for aryanising unAryan peoples indicates a notable aspect of the process by which Vedic ideas were being disseminated over different parts of the country. The process might be the practical carrying-out of the call of *charaveti* (march on) so beautifully depicted in the Aitereya Brahman, the call that must have inspired the victorious campaigns the Aryan leaders undertook in order to bring the whole country under the exalting influence of Vedic ideals.

(To be continued)

SISIRKUMAR MITRA

Students' Section

GUIDANCE FOR THE YOUNG ASPIRANT

(COMPILED FROM SRI AUROBINDO'S UNPUBLISHED LETTERS)

Compiler's Note

More and more people are daily drawn towards the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo. Attracted by the ideal of the divine life which is being given a concrete shape there by the Mother as regards both individual perfection and collective living, men and women come and settle down at Pondicherry with their families.

The International University Centre that is being created round the parent body has given an added impetus to these people to keep their children under the Mother's care to get educated into a new way of life. This has led to the formation of quite a large group of boys and girls.

As those in the higher grade have already begun to study the smaller books of Sri Aurobindo, and aspire to participate in the new Creation, a special Series of questions and answers has been prepared from the unpublished letters of Sri Aurobindo with a view to give them help in understanding his teachings. As most of the letters published here were originally addressed to a young boy, they were written in a manner which would enable him to understand things easily. Nevertheless, their value for the elders is equally great, for they succeed in elucidating matters on Yoga which are sometimes a little difficult to understand from the letters addressed to the more advanced sadhaks.

“Synergist”

THE LOWER NATURE AND THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

Q: What do Nature forces mean?

A. The forces of Prakriti. Ex. thought-force in the mind, love in the heart, desire, anger, passion in the vital, health and illness in the physical.

17-6-1933

STUDENTS' SECTION

Q: What is meant by "living in the physical consciousness"?

A. It means to see things only as they seem to the outer mind and senses, to be aware of oneself only as living in the body without being aware of the inner being or of anything above, etc. That is when one lives in the physical consciousness alone.

5-12-1933

Q: What must I do in order to become free from attacks and live in the higher consciousness?

A. Aspire for a larger consciousness—reject the suggestions of the lower Nature,—open more entirely to the Mother's Force.

6-12-1933

Q: When is it possible for a Sadhak to make his own will and force one with the higher Power and merge them in the Divine Will and Force?

A. Not without the call and sanction of the Divine Will and Force?

Q: How can we become absolutely free from things that bring in the influence of darkness, and prevent them from imposing their will on us?

A. That can be entirely done only when all is surrendered to the Mother—then nothing but her will can rule the mind, vital or body.

16-7-1933

Q: How are we to open our souls to the Mother?

A. You just turn to her and open yourself. It is simply an inner movement.

27-7-1933

TWO DREAMS

Q: Last night I saw in a dream a big garden. I was walking with other sadhaks and looking around, when I saw a young 'rose tree'. On it were clusters of beautiful roses (those signifying surrender).

A. It is the garden in your consciousness where the tree of self-giving grows.

10-12-1933

Q: I would like to know the significance of the following dream. I was working in a garden when some boys entered and began to pluck the pretty flowers. I said nothing to them. When they were all leaving, one boy remained behind, just outside the garden. He wanted to enter, but I shut the gate. Suddenly some sadhaks came along, and I opened the gate. The boy entered, but I whirled an umbrella at him and he fell down on the ground; I jumped upon him. What is your purpose in wanting to come in?" I asked him. "To beat you" he answered. However, he was ultimately converted and became my friend.

A. The garden is your own inner consciousness which you are preparing for the Divine; the boys are parts of your nature which came in to enjoy the results—the last boy was some part that is not sufficiently changed to have the right to enter and therefore he wanted to come in to create a disturbance. He got in with the sadhaks, that is to say, these unregenerate influences of your nature invade your inner consciousness by the contact with others who have similar movements in themselves—so the contact with them opens the door. But as you were firm and strong to deal with it, this part made submission and got converted.

3-4-1933

ALONE...

Alone on the verge of night I stood, alone.
The chasm of death before me parted deep,—
A terror of icy waters dark, unknown,
Battered against the rocky walls of sleep.

Dark-spumy waves flooded the world and me,
Black stars of fear floated before my eyes,
Standing on the border of this roaring sea
I filled the gloomy air with painful cries.

STUDENTS' SECTION

A ray from distant horizons peered through the veil,
On its golden wings a message of joy it bore;
A boat spreading its white and fiery sail
Silently came towards my lonely shore.

My heart was thrilled with the joy of a flaming sight
And I was drunk with Light, the golden Light.

RANAJIT

THOU . . .

WHEN the day is done and light there's none
I wander seeking, seeking Thee;
And in the gloom as the star-buds bloom
Thy formless form I feel, I see.
Pervading the water, earth and sky
It mounts up, mounts up, mounts up high,—
Until in Thine own bourneless vast
I lose Thee at last.

In every heart I know Thou art,
I seek Thee in Thy myriad abodes,
In flowery meads of dreams and deeds
That lift man higher than the gods,—
And in every noble human shrine
I see Thee blazing, O Divine!
And now I stand at its luminous door
To lose Thee no more.

ANIRUDDHA

VIRGIN EYES

Mother, Thine eyes so luminous shine:
Like gracious stars from heaven incline.

Mute is my pen to paint Thine eyes,
For I know not where Thy mystery lies.

Calm of moon, and rapture of kiss—
Eyes of Power, eyes of Bliss!

Bluer than the sky, profounder than the sea,
How can I fathom their Purity?

PRITHWINDRA

A SCHOOL-BOY VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS
OF THE ASHRAM

(A Letter)

24-3-1953

My dear brother,

I simply must write to you about the Ashram. As I have stayed here for quite a long time, I know a great deal of its life. I think whoever comes and stays here for more than a month will not like the outside world. Boys are very nice and they can be friendly within no time. In every respect they are far better than we. Each boy has got something or other which makes one interested in him, and you will be surprised to read that I have got so many friends that I hardly get any time to think of my own matters.

Please do not mind my handwriting. I am in a great hurry. It is 10-30 in the night and I feel sleepy. To-morrow I have to get up early at about 5 o'clock and go for running and javeline-throw and discus-throw. Oh! it is a very interesting thing. Every day I do exercises and play games.

I think I am passing the happiest days of my life. God bless me so that I may be able to pass my whole life in such happiness.

Do you know that I am reading Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* and find it a most fascinating book? It helps me a lot, and once I open it I do not like to leave it. The language is so good that one can get easily absorbed in it. Oh! yes, one thing I would like to tell you is that, do not think that all the boys and girls over here who are studying at the University are doing Yoga like the traditional ascetics; but all the same they are beginning to live the spiritual life in the most natural way. Some of them are not even aware of this. All the young people have great love and respect for the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. Do not miss this University. It is and will be a unique University in the whole world.

Now perhaps you may say or think: What is the difference between an outside University and this one? Oh! a very great difference is there. For example one day I was sitting in a class where the subject which was discussed, was about the cell. You know that in our schools this subject is finished within one or at the most two days whereas here the same subject is being taught for the last two months. According to us they do a little less throughout the year but

STUDENTS' SECTION

whatever they do they do in great detail. Boys write 12 pages on the cell with quotations here and there from *Savitri* or from some other work of the Master. It is so interesting to read their writings, especially such essays. Another shocking news I would like to tell you is that boys and girls studying in V or VI standard can beautifully criticize Shakespeare's plays and poems. I think our college students will never be able to criticize in that way. And some of the boys and girls write such good poems that if one were not told that these were written by boys and girls one would think that some great poet had written them. Here the standard of English is very high. Another thing I was surprised to see was that a girl and a boy who did not know how to answer a question in their weekly examination sat quietly for five minutes and meditated. Then suddenly they started writing. Oh! what a miracle, and the writing too was done nicely and methodically. Behind all this there is the Mother's Grace working. There is no compulsory word in the whole Ashram or University. You are free to learn or not learn. And, as you know, if full liberty is given boys and girls take more and more interest in learning and studying. Each boy goes to school so happily and with so much joy that I can hardly give you an idea of it.

Children are very bold. They are not at all afraid of anything in this world. Not even of their parents. But they are afraid of doing evil, and none of them do anything bad. If they happen to do it they will go to the Mother and confess it. And she, as you know, is the Divine Mother, forgives them and blesses them so that the same mistake may not be repeated. They have the Mother's protection and are very very brave. One thing I liked the most is this that if a person does not know a thing whether in games or in studies he is not put to shame but on the contrary all join hands and try to improve and teach him. And with all this effort there is always progress and never a failure. Boys sometimes quarrel, but after two minutes they become friends. Boys do not tell lies and are very faithful and true. I think, brother, this is a heaven for all of us. You will not find such happiness anywhere on the surface of the earth. There is no such thing as sorrow over here. Each face is always smiling and I am sure one day the world will pour in here, to see and to learn. May God help us to progress towards the Supreme One who is our goal.

GAUTAM

SELECTIONS FROM WORLD LITERATURE

(A) PROSE

EMERSON

THE philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained in the last analysis a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Always our being is descending into us from we know not whence. The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not balk the very next moment. I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

★

A little consideration of what takes place around us every day would show us that a higher law than that of our will regulates events; that our painful labours are very unnecessary, and altogether fruitless; that only in our easy, simple, spontaneous action are we strong, and by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine. Belief and love,—a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the centre of nature, and over the will of every man, so that none of us can wrong the universe. It has so infused its strong enchantment into nature, that we prosper when we accept its advice; and when we struggle to wound its creatures, our hands are glued to our sides, or they beat our own breasts. The whole course of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word.

★

One must have the mordant in his own personality or he will not take the colour of his subject.

★

STUDENTS' SECTION

No man can learn what he has not preparation for learning, however near to his eyes is the object.

*

The good which he sees, compared to the evil which he sees, is as his own good to his own evil. —He may read what he writes. What can we see or acquire, but what we are.

*

Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous.

*

We gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

*

Good as is discourse, silence is better and shames it.

*

There is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning—under every deep a lower deep opens.

*

Every ultimate fact is only the first of a new series.

*

Moons are no more bounds to spiritual power than bat-balls.

*

Men walk as prophecies of the next age.

MOTHER INDIA

(B) POETRY

SHAKESPEARE

Th s above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

★

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

★

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

★

O! beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster that doth mock
The meat it feeds on:

★

CARDINAL WOLSEY:

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by 't?
Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues: be just and fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's;.....
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 'tis the king's: my robe
And my integrity to heaven is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell!
Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

(Compiled by "Synergist")