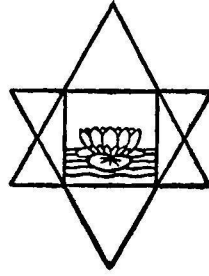


# MOTHER INDIA

MAY, 1955

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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

Vol. VII

No. 3

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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## *About Peace*

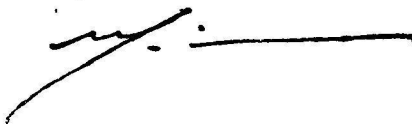
It is only by the growth and establishment of the consciousness of human unity, that a true and lasting peace can be achieved upon earth. All means leading towards this goal are welcome, although the external ones have a very limited effect; however, the most important, urgent and indispensable of all is a transformation of the human consciousness itself, an enlightenment of and conversion in its working.

Meanwhile some exterior steps may be taken usefully, and the acceptance of the principle of double nationality is one of them. The main objection to it has always been the awkward position in which those who have adopted a double nationality would be in case the two countries were at war.

But all those who sincerely want peace must understand that to think of war, to speak of war, to foresee war is to open the door to it.

On the contrary, the larger the number of people who have a vital interest in the abolition of war, the more effective the chances towards a stable peace, until the advent of a new consciousness in man makes of war an impossibility.

24-4-55

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a name, possibly starting with 'M' and ending with a long horizontal line.

The change must come by the pressure of the psychic on the outward going consciousness. About the interview and spoken guidance that is a mistaken idea. Mother has on the contrary diminished interviews because it was not the right way now and people were depending upon the outer and not the inner touch. Those who come hardly profit in that way—it is from within that the touch must come which makes a radical change.

*Ari Arvidson*

## WHICH ART IS THE GREATEST?

A Letter of Sri Aurobindo

NIROD: There has been often a discussion and hence a difference of opinion on the relative greatness of different branches of Art. Some of us are disposed to think of music as the highest; poetry, painting, architecture, sculpture, embroidery following thus in order of merit. Though one may not agree to such a classification, still because of the universality and most direct appeal of music cannot one give it preference? Poetry is rather limited in its scope and painting even more so. They have to be understood in order to be appreciated to their fullest measure whereas music, apart from the technical aspect which is not absolutely obligatory for an appeal, need not. You know of the stories of beasts and snakes being charmed not to speak of the hard-hearted Jamraj, by music! Take your *Love and Death* for instance as an example of poetic excellence. I am afraid people would throng round a piece of music sung by one of the renowned singers, more than round your recital of the poem. Yes, you may have the satisfaction of having an audience of intellectuals and then it will prove my contention that poetry has a limited appeal. Now about painting. I hear quite a number of people have lost their heads over Mona Lisa, even over a copy of it, but I have come away quite sound and strong without even being touched in the heart and I am sure many others have done so. This substantiates again my theory that painting is restricted in its scope. But will you turn the tables by this very fact of the restricted scope and difficult technique of painting and poetry and place Painting, Poetry, Music and so on. Is there really a hierarchy of planes in the Occult?

SRI AUROBINDO: I fear I must disappoint you. I am *not* going to pass the Gods through a competitive examination and assign a highest place to one and lower places to others. What an idea! Each has his or her own province on the summits and what is the necessity of putting them in rivalry with the others? It is a sort of Judgment of Paris you want to impose on me? Well, but what became of Paris and Troy? You want me to give the crown or apple to Music and enrage the Goddesses of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Embroidery, all the Nine Muses, so that they will kick at our publications and exhibitions and troop off to other places? We shall have to build in the future—what then shall we do if the Goddess of Architecture turns severely and says, “I am an

inferior Power, am I? Go and ask your Nirod to build your house with his beloved music!"

Your test of precedence—universal appeal—is all wrong. I don't know that it is true, in the first place. Some kind of sound called music appeals to everybody, but has really great music a universal appeal? And, speaking of arts, more people go to the theatre or read fiction than go to the opera or a concert. What becomes then of the superior universality of music, even in the cheapest sense of universality? Rudyard Kipling's *Barrack Room Ballads* exercise a more universal appeal than was ever reached by Milton or Keats—we will say nothing of writers like Blake or Francis Thompson; a band on the pier at a seaside resort will please more people than a great piece of music with the orchestration conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. In a world of gods it might be true that the highest makes the most universal appeal, but here in a world of beasts and men (you bring in the beasts—why not play to Bushy and try how she responds?) it is usually the inferior things that have the more general if not quite universal appeal. On the other hand the opposite system you suggest (the tables turned upside down—the least universal and most difficult appeal makes the greatest art) would also have its dangers. At that rate we should have to concede that the cubist and abstract painters had reached the highest art possible, only rivalled by the uptodate modernist poets of whom it has been said that their works are not at all either read or understood by the public, are read and understood only by the poet himself and are read without being understood by his personal friends and admirers.

When you speak of direct appeal, you are perhaps touching something true. Technique does not come in—for although to have a complete and expert judgment or appreciation you must know the technique not only in music and painting where it is more difficult, but in poetry and architecture also, it is something else and not that kind of judgment of which you are speaking. It is perhaps true that music goes direct to the intuition and feeling with the least necessity for the using of the thinking mind with its strongly limiting conceptions as a self-imposed middleman, while painting and sculpture do need it and poetry still more. At that rate music would come first, architecture next, then sculpture and painting, poetry last. I am aware that Housman posits nonsense as the essence of pure poetry and considers its appeal to be quite direct—not to the soul but to somewhere about the stomach. But then there is hardly any pure poetry in this world and the little there is is still *mélange* with at least a homeopathic dose of intellectual meaning. But again if I admit this thesis of excellence by directness, I shall be getting myself into dangerous waters. For modern painting has become either cubist or abstract and it claims to have got rid of mental representation and established in art the very method

## WHICH ART IS THE GREATEST?

of music; it paints not the object, but the truth behind the object—by the use of pure line and colour and geometrical form which is the basis of all forms or else by figures which are not representations but significances. For instance a modern painter wishing to make a portrait of you will paint at the top a clock surrounded by three triangles, below them a chaos of rhomboids and at the bottom two table castors to represent your feet and he will put in underneath this powerful design, “Portrait of Nirod.” Perhaps your soul will leap up in answer to its direct appeal and recognise at once the truth behind the object, behind your vanished physical self,—you will greet your psychic being or your Atman or at least your inner physical or vital being. Perhaps also you won’t. Poetry also seems to be striving towards the same end by the same means—the getting away from mind into the depths of life or, as the profane might put it, arriving at truth and beauty through ugliness and unintelligibility. From that you will perhaps deduce that the attempt of painting and poetry to do what music alone can do easily and directly without these acrobatics is futile because it is contrary to their nature—which proves your thesis that music is the highest art because most direct in its appeal to the soul and the feeling. May be—or may be not; as the Jains put it, *syād va na syād va*.

I have written so much, you will see, in order to say nothing—or at least to avoid your attempt at putting me in an embarrassing dilemma.

Q. E. F

6-I-1936

NIROD: I don’t understand at all, Sir, what to make of your reply!

SRI AUROBINDO: If you did know it would mean I had committed myself which was just what I did not want to do. Or shall we put it in this way “Each of the great arts has its own appeal and its own way of appeal and each in its own way is supreme above all others”? That ought to do.



## SRI AUROBINDO'S LETTERS

### MEDICAL

ALL these ideas are wrong suggestions to which you must refuse access. You have the Mother's grace and presence with you and it is only when you allow such suggestions of restlessness and despair that this kind of condition is created. Otherwise when you receive the Force it works. However serious an attack may be or however severe the illness, it can be got rid of by receptivity to the true working. If that is not enough, the Force aided by treatment can deal with them. The worst possible diseases have been cured recently by the Mother's force aided by treatment and this in people who know nothing of sadhana. In a sadhak the action can be still more effective. But the first thing is to get rid of these dark and disabling suggestions and open yourself once more to the Mother's working.

★

★

Usually there is some predisposition behind, hereditary, natal (due to some circumstances of birth) or founded in insufficient nervous balance. Often there is in the vital excessive ambition, lust or some other violent Ripu. But these though they might distort or break the sadhana by opening it to undesirable Forces could not bring madness (megalomania, erotic mania, or what is called religious mania)—only if there is some taint or want of nervous balance. Anxiety or excessive stress of meditation would not bring it either except by acting upon some such predisposing weakness. In some cases possession by beings of the vital worlds without any such predisposing cause may be possible, but that will be more easily curable. There are however cases of people who break down their nervous balance by wrong practices—there the madness has nothing really to do with the sadhana.

★

★

What the Mother said to X was of a quite general character, not personal to anybody. As he spoke of the illnesses in the Ashram (his own and others')

and asked why people outside even if they worked more and had more serious troubles, yet had not these extreme reactions in the physical mind and body, Mother replied that it was because they worked and acted from the vital and the ego and these were satisfied—thinking I am doing all this, my work, I am the worker—and supported them and gave them the necessary energy. Here that cannot be, for it is contrary to the spirit of the Yoga; it is the Divine, the Mother who works and all is to be for her and not for the ego and the vital. But even if the thinking mind and the psychic accept this, the lower vital and the physical of the sadhaks do not; so they often get neither the support and energy of the satisfied ego and vital, since these remain contradicted and dissatisfied, nor the strength of the Divine Force and Presence in these parts; the body feels inert and tired and unwilling unsupported by the life force. If there were to come the true attitude in these parts, all the illness and weakness would disappear and a greater strength and Force be there.

# ILION

SRI AUROBINDO

BOOK VIII (A Fragment)

NOR could the Trojan fighters break through the walls of their foemen,  
Nor could the mighty Pelides slay in his war-rage the Trojans.  
Ever he fought surrounded or drew back compelled to his legions;  
For to each spear of his strength full twenty hissed round his helmet,  
Cried<sup>1</sup> on his shield, attempted his cuirass or leaped at his coursers  
Or at Automedon ran like living things in their blood-thirst.  
Galled the deathless steeds high-neighing pawed in their anger;  
Wrathful Achilles wheeled and threatened seeking a victim.  
So might a fire on the high-piled altar of sacrifice blazing  
Seek for its tongues an offering fit for the gods, but 'tis answered  
Only by spitting rain that a dense cloud sends out of heaven.  
Sibilant hiss the drops on the glowing wood and the altar.  
Chill a darkness o'erhangs and its brief and envious spirits  
Rail at the glorious flame desiring an end of its brilliance.  
Meanwhile behind by the ranks of the fighters sheltered from Hades  
Paris loosed his lethal shafts at the head of the Hellene.  
Then upon Helenus wrath from the gods who are noble descended,  
Seized on the tongue of the prophet and spoke out<sup>2</sup> their thoughts in his accents,  
Thoughts by men rejected who follow the beast in their reason,  
Only advantage seek, and honour and pride are forgotten;  
"Paris, not thus shalt thou slay Achilles but only thy glory.  
Dost thou not heed that the women should mock in the streets of our city  
Thee and thy bow and thy numbers, hearing the shame of the Trojans?  
Dost thou not fear the gods and their harms? Not so do they combat  
Who have the awe of their deeds and follow the way of the mighty."  
Paris the Priamid answered his brother; "Helenus, wherefore  
Care should I have for fame, or the gods and their punishments, heeding

<sup>1</sup> Alternative: "Rang".

<sup>2</sup> Alternatives to "spoke out": "fashioned", "framed".

## ILION

Breath of men when they praise or condemn me? Victory I ask for,  
Joy for my living heart, not a dream and a breath for my ashes.  
Work I desire and the wish of my heart and the fruit of my labour.  
Nay, let my fame be crushed into mire for the ages to spit at,  
But let my country live and her foes be slain on her beaches.”  
So he spoke and fitted another shaft to the bow-string.

(Aimed and loosed the death at the greatness that heaven protected.)

Always they fought and were locked in a fierce unyielding combat.  
But on the Hellene right stood the brothers stark in their courage  
Waiting the Eoan horse-hooves that checked at the difficult crossing  
Late arrived through field and through pasture. Zethus exultant  
Watched their advent stern and encouraged the legions behind him.  
“Now is the hour of your highest fame, O ye sons of the Hellenes.  
These are the iron squadrons, these are the world-famed fighters.  
Here is a swifter than Memnon, here is a greater than Hector.  
Who would fight with the war-wearied Trojans, the Lycian remnants,  
When there are men in the world like these? O Pthians, we conquer  
Asia’s best today. And you, O my brothers, with courage  
Reap all the good I have won for our lives this morn from Achilles.  
Glad let our fame go before us to our mother Arithoa waiting  
Lonely in Pthia, desiring death or the eyes of her children.  
Soon will our sails pursue their herald Fame, with our glory  
Belying out and the winds. They shall bear o’er the murmurs of Ocean  
Heaped up Iliion’s wealth and the golden bricks of King Priam  
And for the halls of our fathers a famous and noble adornment  
Bear the beautiful head of the virgin Penthesilea.”  
So he cried and the Hellenes shouted, a savage rumour,  
Proud of their victories past and incredulous grown of disaster.

Now from the Xanthus dripping-wheeled came the Eoan war-cars  
Rolling thunder-voiced with the tramp of the runners behind them,  
Dust like a flag and dire with the battle-cry, full on the Hellenes.  
They to the mid-plain arrived where the might of the Hellene brothers  
Waited their onset.<sup>1</sup> Zethus first with his cry of the cascade  
Hurrying-footed headlong that leaps far down to the valley;  
“Curb, but curb thy advance, O Amazon Penthesilea!  
These are not Gnosus’ ranks and these are not levies from Sparta.  
Hellas’ spears await thee here and the Myrmidon fighters.”  
High like the northwind racing and whistling over the ice-fields,

<sup>1</sup> Alternative: “coming”.

Death at its side and snow for its breath in the pitiless winter:<sup>1</sup>  
 "Who art thou biddest to pause the horse-hooves of Penthesilea,  
 Hellene, thou in thy strength who standest forth from thy shielders?  
 Turn yet, save thy life; for I deem that thou art not Achilles."  
 "Zethus the Hellene I am and Cyenus and Pindus, my brothers,  
 Stand at my either side, and thou passest not farther, Bellona.  
 Lioness, turn thou back, for thou canst not here be a hunter."  
 "Zethus and Cyenus and Pindus, little you loved then your mother,  
 Who in this field that is wide must needs all three perish together  
 Piled on one altar of death by the spears-shafts of Penthesilea.  
 Empty for ever your halls shall be, childless the age of your father."  
 High she rose to the spear-cast, poised like a thunderbolt lifted,  
 Forward swung to the blow and loosed it hissing and ruthless  
 Straight at the Hellene shield, and it tore through the bronze and groaning  
 Butted and pushed through the cuirass and split the breast of the hero.  
 Round in his car he spun, then putting his hands out before him,  
 Even as a diver who leaps from the shed of the bath to the current,  
 Launched out so headlong, struggled, sideward collapsed, then was quiet,  
 Dead on Trojan earth. But dismay and grief on his brothers  
 Yet alive now seized, then rage came blinding the eyeballs.  
 Blindly they hurled, yet attained, for Athene guided the spear-shafts;  
 Death like a forest beast yet played with the might of the virgin.  
 One on her shield and one on her cuirass rang, but rejected  
 Fell back like reeds that are thrown at a boulder by boys on the sea-shore.  
 She unmoved replied; her shafts in their angry succession  
 Hardly endured delay between. Like trees the brothers,  
 Felled, to each side sank prone. So lifeless these strong ones of Hellas  
 Lay in their couch of the hostile soil reunited in slumber  
 As in their childhood they lay in Hellas watched by their mother,  
 Three of them side by side and she dreamed for her darlings their future.  
 But on the ranks of the Hellenes fear and amazement descended,—  
 Messengers they from Zeus to discourage the pride and the blood-lust.  
 Back many yards their foremost recoiled in a god-given terror,  
 As from a snake a traveller scorned for a bough by the wayside,  
 But it arises puffing its hood and hisses its hatred.  
 Forward the henchmen ran and plucked back the spears from the corpses;  
 Onward the Eoan thousands rolled o'er the ground that was conquered  
 Trampling the fallen men into earth with the wheels of their war-cars.

<sup>1</sup> Alternative to this line and the preceding:

"But like the northwind high and clear answered Penthesilea."

But in her speed like the sea or the storm-wind Penthesilea  
 Drove towards the ranks of the foe and her spear-shafts hastened before her,  
 Messengers whistling shrilly to death; she came like a wolf-hound  
 Called by his masters' voice and silently fell on the quarry.  
 Hyrtamus fell, Admetus was wounded, Charmidas slaughtered;  
 Cirrhes died, though he faced not the blow while he hastened to shelter.  
 Itylus, bright and beautiful, went down to night and to Hades.  
 Back, ever back the Hellenes recoiled from the shock of the virgin,  
 Slain by her prowess fierce, alarmed by the might of her helpers.  
 For at her right Surabdas threatened and iron Surenas,  
 And at her left hill-shouldered Pharatus slaughtered the Hellenes.  
 Then in the ranks of the Greeks a shouting arose and the leaders  
 Cried to their hosts and recalled their unstained fame and their valour  
 Never so lightly conquered before in the trial<sup>1</sup> of Ares  
 And of Achilles they spoke and King Peleus waiting in Pthia,  
 Listening for Troy overthrown not his hosts overcome by a woman.  
 And from the right and the left came heroes mighty to succour.  
 Chiefs of the Dolopes Ar and Aglauron came mid the foremost,  
 Hillus fair as a drifting moon but fierce as the winter;  
 Pryas came the Thessalian and Sebes whom Pharsalus honoured,  
 Victors in countless fights who had stood against Memnon and Hector.  
 But though their hands were mighty, though fierce their obdurate natures,  
 Mightier strengths they met and a sterner brood of the war-god.  
 Light from the hand of the Virgin the spear ran laughing at Sebes,  
 Crashed through his helmet and left him supine on the pastures of Troya;  
 Ar to Surabdas fell and the blood-spiriting head of Aglauron  
 Dropped like a fruit from a branch by its weight to the discus of Sambus;  
 Iron Surenas' mace-head shattered the beauty of Hillus;  
 Pryas by Pharatus slain lay still and had rest from the war-cry.  
 Back, ever back reeled the Hellene host with the Virgin pursuing.  
 Storm-shod the Amazon fought and she slew like a god unresisted.  
 None now dared to confront her burning eyes; the boldest  
 Shuddered back from her spear and the cry of her tore at the heart-strings.  
 Fear, the daughter of Zeus, had gripped at the hearts of the Hellenes.  
 So as the heroes yielded before her, Penthesilea  
 Lifted with victory cried to her henchman, Aurus of Ellae,  
 Who had the foot of the wind and its breath that scants not for running,  
 "Hasten, hasten, Aurus; race to the right where unwarring

<sup>1</sup> Alternative. "onsets".

## MOTHER INDIA

Valarus leads his host; bid him close with the strength of the Hellenes.  
Soon will they scatter like chaff on the threshing-floor blown to the beaches.  
But when he sees their flight by Sumalus shepherded seaward,  
Swift let him turn like the wind in its paths and follow me, pouring  
Down, a victorious flood,<sup>1</sup> on the Myrmidon left and Achilles.  
Then shall no Hellene again dare embark in ships for the Troad.  
Cursed shall its beaches be to their sons and their sons and forever.”  
So she spoke and Aurus ran by the chariot protected.  
Then had all Hellas perished indeed on the beaches of Troas,  
But from the Argive’s right where she battled Pallas Athene  
Saw and was wroth and she missioned her thought to Automedon speeding.  
Splendid it came and found him out mid the hiss of the spear-shafts  
Guiding, endangered, Achilles’ steeds in the thick of the battle.  
Shaped like a woman clad in armour and fleeing from battle,  
Helméd with the Hellene crest it knocked at the gate of his spirit,  
Shaking his hero’s heart with the vision that came to his eyeballs;  
Silent he stared aghast and turned his ear to the war-din.  
“Dost thou not hear to our right, Achilles, these voices of Ares?  
High is the sound of Eoan battle, a woman’s war-cry  
Rings in my ears, but faint and sparse come the shouts of our nation.  
Far behind is their call and nearer the ships and the beaches.”  
Great Pelides heard and groaned in the caves of his spirit;  
“It is the doom that I feared and the fatal madness of Zethus;  
Slain are the men of my nations or routed by Penthesilea.  
Drive, Automedon, drive, lest shame and defeat upon Hellas  
Fasten their seal and her heroes flee from the strength of a woman.”  
And to the steeds divine Automedon called and they hearkened,  
Rose as if seeking their old accustomed paths in the heavens,  
Then through the ranks that parted they galloped as gallops a dust-cloud  
When the cycloné is abroad and the high trees snap by the wayside,  
And from the press of the Hellenes into the plain of the Xanthus  
Thundering, neighing came with the war-car borne like a dead leaf  
Chased by the blast. Then Athene opened the eyes of Achilles,  
Eyes that in all of us sleep, yet can see the near and the distant,  
Eyes that the gods in their pity have sealed from the giant confusion,  
Sealed from the bale and the grief. He saw like one high on a summit  
Near him the Eoans holding the plain and out in the distance  
Breaking the Hellene strengths. Like a dream in the night he regarded

<sup>1</sup> Alternative to “Down, a victorious flood,”: “All in a victor flood”.

High-crested Sumalus<sup>1</sup> fight, Somaranes swift in the onset,  
 Bull-shouldered Tauron's blows and the hero Artavoruxes.  
 But in the centre fiercest the cry and the death and the fleeing.  
 There were his chieftains ever reforming vainly resistance,—  
 Even in defeat these were Hellenes and fit to be hosts of Achilles,—  
 But like a doom on them thundered the war-car of Penthesilea,  
 Pharatus smote and Surabdas and Sambus and iron Surenas,  
 Down the leaders fell and the armies reeled towards the Ocean.  
 Wroth he cried to his coursers and fiercely they heard and they hastened;  
 Swift like a wind o'er the grasses galloped the car of Achilles.  
 Echemus followed, Ascanus drove and drus and Thretaon:  
 Phoces alone in the dust of the Troad lay there and moved not.  
 Yet brought not all of them help to their brothers oppressed in the combat;  
 For from the fore-front forth on the knot of the swift-speeding war-cars  
 High an Eoan chariot came drawn fast by its coursers  
 Bearing a mighty chieftain, Valarus son of Supaures.  
 Fire-footed thundered past him the hooves of the heavenly coursers,  
 Nor to his challenging shout nor his spear the warlike Pelides  
 Answered at all, but made haste like a flood to the throng and the mellay.  
 But twixt the chariots behind and their leader the mighty Eoan  
 Drove his dark-maned steeds and stood like a cliff to their onset.  
 "Great is your haste, O ye Kings of the Greeks! Abide yet and converse  
 Scatheless your leader has fled from me borne by the hooves of his coursers.  
 Ye, abide! For we meet from far lands on this soil of the Trojans.  
 All of us meet from afar, but not all shall return to their hearth-sides.  
 Valarus stays you, O Greeks, and this is the point of his greeting."  
 So as he spoke he launched out his spear as a cloud hurls its storm-flash;  
 Nor from that fatal hand parted vainly the pitiless envoy,  
 But of its blood-thirst had right. Riven through and through with the death-  
stroke

Drus fell prone and tore with dying fingers the grasses.  
 Sobbing his soul fled out to the night and the chill and the silence.  
 They like leaves that are suddenly stayed by the fall of a wind-gust  
 Ceased from their headlong speed. And Echemus poisoning his spear-shaft  
 "Sharp are thy greetings, chieftain Eoan. Message for message  
 Echemus son of Aëtes, one of the mighty in Hellas,  
 Thus returns. Let Ares judge twixt the Greek and the Eastern."  
 Fast sped the spear but Valarus held forth his shield and rebutted,

<sup>1</sup> Alternative: "war."



Shouting, the deadly point that could pierce not his iron refusal.  
 "Echemus, shrill thy vaunt has reached me, but unfelt is thy spear-point.  
 Weak are men's arms, it seems, in Hellas; a boy there Ares  
 Aims with reeds not spears at pastoral cheeses not iron.  
 Judge now my strength." Two spears from him ran at the hearts of his foemen,  
 Crouching Threton heard the keen death over him whistle;  
 Ascanus hurt in the shoulder cried out and paused from his war-lust.  
 Echemus hurled now again and hurled with him stalwart Threton.  
 Strong Threton missed, but Echemus' point at the helmet  
 Bit and fastened as fastens a hound on the ear of the wild-boar  
 Wroth with the cry and the hunt that gores the pack and his hunters.  
 Valarus frowning tugged at the heavy steel; yet his right hand  
 Smote at Echemus. Him he missed but valiant Threton  
 Sat back dead in his seat and the chariot wild with its coursers  
 Snorting and galloping bore his corpse o'er the plains to the Hellenes.  
 But while yet Valarus strove with the shaft, obscured and encumbered,  
 Ascanus sprang down swift from his car and armed with his sword-point  
 Clove the Eoan's neck as the lightning springs at an oak-trunk  
 Seized in the stride of the storm and severs that might with its sharpness.  
 Slain the hero fell; his mighty limbs the spirit  
 Mightier released to the gods and it rose to the heavens of the noble.  
 Ascanus gathered the spear-shaft; loud was his shout as exulting  
 Back he leaped to the car triumphant o'er death and its menace.  
 "Lie there, Valarus, King of the East, with imperial Troya.  
 Six rich feet of her soil she gives thee for couch of the nuptials.  
 Rest then! talk not again on the way with the heroes of Hellas."  
 So delivered they hastened glad to the ranks of their brothers.  
 After them rolled the Eoan war-cars, Arithon leading  
 Loud with the clamour of hooves and the far-rolling gust of the war-cry;  
 Wroth at their chieftain's fall they moved to the help of their nation,  
 Now by the unearthly horses neared and the might of Achilles.  
 Then from the Hellenes who heard the noise and cry of their coming  
 Lifted eyes dismayed, but saw the familiar war-car,  
 Saw the heaven-born steeds and the helm unconquered in battle,  
 Cry was of other hopefulness. Loud as the outbursting thunder  
 Rises o'er lower sounds of the storm, o'er the din of the battle  
 Rose the Hellene shout and rose the name of Achilles.

*(The Manuscript breaks off here)*

# THE FIRE-KING AND THE MESSENGER

SRI AUROBINDO

## THE FIRE-KING

O SOUL who comst fire-mantled from the earth  
Into the silence of the seven skies,  
Art thou an heir of the spiritual birth?  
Art thou an ancient guest of Paradise?

## THE MESSENGER

I am the Messenger of the human race,  
I am the Pioneer, from death and night.  
I am the nympholept of Beauty's face,  
I am the hunter of the immortal Light.

## THE FIRE-KING

What wearest thou that wraps thee with its power  
Protecting from the Guardians of the Way?  
What wanderer born from the eternal Hour?  
What fragment of the inconceivable Ray?

## THE MESSENGER

It is the fire of an awakened soul  
Aspiring from death to reach<sup>1</sup> Eternity,  
The wings of sacrifice flaming to their goal,  
The burning godhead of<sup>2</sup> humanity.

<sup>1</sup> Alternative to "to reach": "towards".

<sup>2</sup> Alternative to "of": "in".

MOTHER INDIA

THE FIRE-KING

What seekst thou here, child of the transient ways?  
Wouldst thou be free and still in deathless peace  
Or gaze for ever on the Eternal's face  
Hushed in an incommunicable release?

THE MESSENGER

I claim for men the peace<sup>3</sup> that shall not fail,  
I claim for earth the unsorrowing timeless bliss,  
I seek God-strength for souls that suffer in hell,  
God-light to fill<sup>4</sup> the ignorant Abyss.

THE FIRE-KING

Ascend no more with thy presumptuous prayer,  
But safe return to the forsaken globe,  
Wake not heaven's Lightning from its slumber's lair  
To clothe thee with the anguish<sup>5</sup> of its robe.

*(Incomplete)*

<sup>3</sup> Alternative to "for men the peace": "the unwounded peace".

<sup>4</sup> Alternative to "God-light to fill": "I seek God-light for".

<sup>5</sup> Alternative to "anguish": "blazing".

Older Variants:

Stanza 3, lines 1, 2, 3. What fire is this that wraps thee with its power  
And turns the spears of the Guardians of the Way?  
What mighty one of the eternal Hour?

Stanza 4, lines 2, 3. Aspires from death to reach Eternity,  
{ The flaming wings of sacrifice to life's goal,  
{ Whose flaming wings of sacrifice seek their goal,

line 4. { It is the godhead of humanity.  
{ The yearning

Stanza 6, lines 1, 2. I seek for man the peace that shall not fail,  
I seek for earth the { stainless timeless bliss,  
{ griefless

line 4. And light to fill the { ignorant Abyss  
{ bottomless  
{ darkness of the Abyss.

Stanza 7, lines 2, 3. Return unhurt to the forsaken globe,  
{ Wake not red Lightning from its slumber's lair  
{ Awake not

# THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ASHWINS — INDRA — THE VISHVADEVAS

THE third hymn of Madhuchchandas is again a hymn of the Soma sacrifice. It is composed like, the second before it, in movements of three stanzas, the first addressed to the Ashwins, the second to Indra, the third to the Vishwadevas, the fourth to the goddess Saraswati. In this hymn also we have in the closing movement, in the invocation to Saraswati, a passage of clear psychological significance, of a far greater clarity indeed than those that have already helped us to understand the secret thought of the Veda.

But this whole hymn is full of psychological suggestions and we find in it the close connection and even identity which the Vedic Rishis sought to establish and perfect between the three main interests of the human soul, Thought and its final victorious illuminations, Action and its last supreme all-achieving puisances, enjoyment and its highest spiritual ecstasies. The Soma wine symbolises the replacing of our ordinary sense-enjoyment by the divine Ananda. That substitution is brought about by divinising our thought-action, and as it progresses it helps in its turn the consummation of the movement which has brought it about. The Cow, the Horse, the Soma-Wine are the figures of this triple sacrifice. The offering of *ghrita*, the clarified butter which is the yield of the cow, the offering of the horse, *aśwamedha*, the offering of the wine of Soma are its three principal forms or elements. We have also, less prominent, the offering of the cake which is possibly symbolic of the body, of Matter.

We commence with an invocation of the two Ashwins, the two Riders on the Horse, Castor and Polydeuces of the old Mediterranean mythology. They are supposed by the comparative mythologists to represent twin stars in the heavens which for some reason had a better fortune than the rest of the celestial host and attracted the special adoration of the Aryans. Let us, however, see how they are described in the hymn we are studying. They are first described as "Ashwins, swift-footed lords of bliss, much-enjoying,—*dravatpānī śubhaspatī purubhujā*". The word *śubh*, like the words *ratna* and *chandra*, is capable of signifying either light or enjoyment; but in this passage it occurs in connection with the adjective *purubhujā*, "much-enjoying", and the verb *chanasyatam*, "take delight," and must therefore be taken in the sense of weal or bliss.

Next, these twin gods are described as “Ashwins, divine souls many-actioned, thought-holding” who accept and rejoice in the words of the Mantra “with an energetic thought”,—“*purudansasā narā śavīyā dhīyā dhishn’yā*”. Nr’i in the Veda is applicable both to gods and men and does not mean simply a man; it meant originally, I think, strong or active and then a male and is applied to the male gods, active divine souls or powers, *purushas* opposed to the female deities, *ganāh*, who are their energies. It still preserved in the minds of the Rishis much of its original sense, as we see from the word *nr’imm’a*, strength, and the phrase *nr’itama nr’inām*, strongest of the divine powers. *Cavas* and its adjective *cavīrā* give the idea of energy, but always with an association of the farther idea of flame or light; *çavira* is therefore a very appropriate epithet for *dhi*, thought full of a shining or flashing energy. *Dhishn’yā* is connected with *dhishan’a*, intellect or understanding, and is rendered by Sayana “intellectual”, *buddhi-mantau*.

Again the Ashwins are described as “effectual in action, powers of the movement, fierce-moving in their paths, “*dasrā nāsatyā rudravartanī*. The Vedic epithets *dasra* and *dasma* are rendered by Sayana indifferently “destroying” or “beautiful” or “bountiful” according to his caprice or convenience. I connect it with the root *das* not in the sense of cutting, dividing, from which it gets the two significances of destroying and giving, not in the sense of “discerning, seeing” from which it gets Sayana’s significance “beautiful”, *darshanīya*, but in the sense of doing, acting, shaping, accomplishing, as in *purudansasā* in the second Rik. *Nāsatyā* is supposed by some to be a patronymic; the old grammarians ingeniously fabricated for it the sense of “true, not false”; but I take it from “*nas*” to move. We must remember that the Aswins are riders on the horse, that they are described often by epithets of motion, “swift-footed”, “fierce-moving in their paths;” that Castor and Pollux in Graeco-Latin mythology protect sailors in their voyages and save them in storm and shipwreck and that in the Rigveda also they are represented as powers that carry over the Rishis as in a ship or save them from drowning in the ocean. *Nāsatyā* may therefore very well mean lords of the voyage, journey, or powers of the movement. *Rudravartanī* is rendered by modern scholars “red-pathed”, an epithet supposed to be well-suited to stars and they instance the parallel phrase, *hiran’yavartanī*, having a golden or shining path. Certainly, *rudra* must have meant at one time, “shining, deep-coloured, red” like the roots *rush* and *ruç rudhira*, “blood”, “red”, the Latin *ruber*, *rutilus*, *rufus*, all meaning red. *Rodasi*, the dual Vedic word for heaven and earth, meant probably, like *rajas* and *rochana*, other Vedic words for the heavenly and earthly words, “the shining.” On the other hand the sense of injury and violence is equally inherent in this family of words and is almost universal in the various roots which form it. “Fierce”, or “violent” is therefore likely to be as good a

sense for *rudra* as "red". The Ashwins are both *hiranyavartanī* and *rudravartanī*, because they are both powers of Light and of nervous force; in the former aspect they have a bright gold movement, in the latter they are violent in their movement. In one hymn (V 3) we have the combination *rudra hiranyavartanī*, violent and moving in the paths of light; we can hardly with any respect for coherence of sense understand it to mean that the stars are red but their movement or their path is golden.

Here then, in these three verses, are an extraordinary series of psychological functions to apply to two stars of a heavenly constellation! It is evident that if this was the physical origin of the Ashwins, they have as in Greek mythology long lost their purely stellar nature; they have acquired like Athene, goddess of dawn, a psychological character and functions. They are riders on the horse, the Ashwa, symbolic of force and especially of life-energy and nervous force, the Prana. Their common character is that they are gods of enjoyment, seekers of honey; they are physicians, they bring back youth to the old, health to the sick, wholeness to the maimed. Another characteristic is movement, swift, violent, irresistible; their rapid and indomitable chariot is a constant object of celebration and they are described here as swift-footed and violent in their paths. They are like birds in their swiftness, like the mind, like the wind (V 3, and 78-1). They bring in their chariot ripe or perfected satisfactions to man, they are creators of bliss, Mayas. These indications are perfectly clear. They show that the Ashwins are twin divine powers whose special function is to perfect the nervous or vital being in man in the sense of action and enjoyment. But they are also powers of Truth, of intelligent action, of right enjoyment. They are powers that appear with the Dawn, effective powers of action born out of the ocean of being who, because they are divine, are able to mentalise securely the felicities of the higher existence by a thought-faculty which finds or comes to know that true substance and true wealth:—

*Yā dasrā sindhumātarā, manotarā rayīnām;*  
*Dhiyā devā vasuvidā.* 1.46.2.

They give that impelling energy for the great work which, having for its nature and substance the light of the Truth, carries man beyond the darkness:—

*Yā nah pīparad aświnā, jyotiṣmatī tamas tīrah;*  
*Tam asme rāsāthām īsam.* 1.46.6.

They carry man in their ship to the other shore beyond the thoughts and states of the human mind, that is to say, to the supramental consciousness,—*nāvā matīnām pārāya* (V.46. 7) *Suryā*, daughter of the Sun, Lord of the Truth, mounts their car as their bride.

In the present hymn the Ashwins are invoked, as swift-moving lords of bliss who carry with them many enjoyments, to take delight in the impelling energies of the sacrifice,—*yajwarīr īso...canasyatam*. These impelling forces are born evidently of the drinking of the Soma wine that is to say, of the inflow of the divine Ananda. For the expressive words, *girah*, that are to make new formations in the consciousness are already rising, the seat of the sacrifice has been piled, the vigorous juices of the Soma-wine are pressed out.<sup>1</sup> The Ashwins, are to come as effective powers of action, *purudansasā narā*, to take delight in the Words and to accept them into the intellect where they shall be retained for the action by a thought full of luminous energy.<sup>2</sup> They are to come to the offering of the Soma wine, in order to effect the action of the sacrifice, *dasrā*, as fulfillers of action, by giving to the delight of the action that violent movement of theirs, *rudravartamī*, which carries them irresistibly on their path and overcomes all opposition. They come as powers of the Aryan journey, lords of the great human movement, *Nasatyā*. We see throughout that it is energy which these Riders on the Horse are to give; they are to take delight in the sacrificial energies, to take up the word into an energetic thought, to bring to the sacrifice their own violent movement on the path. And it is effectiveness of action and swiftness in the great journey that is the object of this demand for energy. I would call the attention of the reader continually to the consistency of conception and coherence of structure, the easy clearness and precision of outline which the thought of the Rishis assumes by a psychological interpretation, so different from the tangled confusion and incoherent abruptness of the interpretations which ignore the supreme tradition of the Veda as a book of wisdom and deepest knowledge.

We have then this rendering for the first three verses:

“O Riders of the Steed, swift-footed, much-enjoying lords of bliss, take delight in the energies of the sacrifice.

“O Riders of the Steed, male souls effecting a manifold action, take joy of the words, o holders in the intellect, by a luminously energetic thought.

“I have piled the seat of sacrifice, I have pressed out the vigorous Soma juices; fulfillers of action, powers of the movement, come to them with your fierce speed on the path.”

As in the second hymn, so in the third the Rishi begins by invoking deities who act in the nervous or vital forces. But there he called Vayu who supplies the vital forces, brings his steeds of life; here he calls the Ashwins who use the vital forces, ride on the steed. As in the second hymn he proceeds from the vital or nervous action to the mental, he invokes in his second movement the might

<sup>1</sup> *Yvākavah sutā vr'iktabarhshah.*

<sup>2</sup> *Çavirayā dhryā dhshn'yā vanatum girah.*

of Indra. The out-pressings of the wine of delight desire him, *sutā ime twāyavaḥ* they desire the luminous mind to take possession of them for its activities; they are purified, *anvībhus tanā*, “by the fingers and the body” as Sayana explains it, by the subtle thought-powers of the pure mind and by extension in the physical consciousness as it seems to me to mean. For these “ten fingers”, if they are fingers at all, are the ten fingers of *Surya*, daughter of the sun, bride of the Ashwins. In the first hymn of the ninth Mandala this same Rishi Madhuchchhandas expands the idea which here he passes over so succinctly. He says, addressing the deity Soma “The daughter of the Sun purifies thy Soma as it flows abroad in her straining-vessel by a continuous extension”, *vāren’a śāśawatanā*. And immediately he adds, “The subtle ones seize it in their labour (or, in the great work, struggle, aspiration, *samarye*), the ten Brides, sisters in the heaven that has to be crossed”, a phrase that recalls at once the ship of the Ashwins that carries us over beyond the thoughts; for Heaven is the symbol of the pure mental consciousness in the Veda as is Earth of the physical consciousness. These sisters who dwell in the pure mind, the subtle ones, *an’vīh*, the ten brides, *daśa yoshan’ah*, are elsewhere called the ten Casters, *daśa kṣipah*, because they seize the Soma and speed it on its way. They are probably identical with the ten Rays, *daśa gāvah*, sometimes spoken of in the Veda. They seem to be described as the grandchildren or descendants of the Sun, *naptibhir vivasvatah* (VII. 14.5). They are aided in the task of purification by the seven forms of Thought-consciousness, *sapta dhītayah*. Again we are told that “Soma advances, heroic with his swift chariots, by the force of the subtle thought, *dhiyā an’vyā*, to the perfected activity (or perfected field) of Indra and takes many forms of thought to arrive at that vast extension (or, formation) of the godhead where the Immortals are” (IX. 15.1.2.)

*Esha purū dhiyāyate, bṛihate devatātaye,  
Yatrāmṛ’itāsa āsate.*

I have dwelt on this point in order to show how entirely symbolical is the Soma-wine of the Vedic Rishis and how richly surrounded with psychological conceptions,—as anyone will find who cares to go through the ninth Mandala with its almost overcharged splendour of symbolic imagery and overflowing psychological suggestions.

However that may be, the important point here is not the Soma and its purification but the psychological function of Indra. He is addressed as Indra of the richly-various lustres, *indra chītrabhāno*. The Soma-juices desire him. He comes impelled by the thought, driven forward by the illumined thinker within, *dhiyeshhto viprajñtah*, to the soul-thoughts of the Rishi who has pressed out the wine of delight and seeks to manifest them in speech, in the inspired



mantras; *sutāvata upa brahmān'i vāghatah*. He comes with the speed and force of the illumined mind-power, in possession of his brilliant horses to those thoughts, *tutujāna upa brahmān'i harivah*, and the Rishi prays to him to confirm or hold the delight in the Soma offering, *sute dadhishva nac chanah*. The Ashwins have brought and energised the pleasure of the vital system in the action of the Ananda. Indra is necessary to hold that pleasure firmly in the illumined mind so that it may not fall away from the consciousness.

“Come, O Indra, with thy rich lustres, these Soma-juices desire thee; they are purified by the subtle powers and by extension in body.

“Come, O Indra, impelled by the mind, driven forward by the illumined thinker, to my soul-thoughts, I who have poured out the Soma-juice and seek to express them in speech.

“Come, O Indra, with forceful speed to my soul-thoughts, O lord of the bright horses; hold firm the delight in the Soma-juice.”

The Rishi next passes to the Visvadevas, all the gods or the all-gods. It has been disputed whether these Visvadevas form a class by themselves or are simply the gods in their generality. I take it that the phrase means the universal collectivity of the divine powers; for this sense seems to me best to correspond to the actual expressions of the hymns in which they are invoked. In this hymn they are called for a general action which supports and completes the functions of the Aswins and Indra. They are to come to the sacrifice in their collectivity and divide among themselves, each evidently for the divine and joyous working of his proper activity, the Soma which the giver of the sacrifice distributes to them; *viśve devāsa āgata, dāśvānsō dāśusho sutam*. In the next Rik the call is repeated with greater insistence; they are to arrive swiftly, *tūrṇ'ayah*, to the Soma offering or, it may mean, making their way through all the planes of consciousness, “waters”, which divide the physical nature of man from their godhead and are full of obstacles to communication between earth and heaven; *apturah sutam ā ganta tūrṇ'ayah*, They are to come like cattle hastening to the stalls of their rest at evening-tide, *usrā iva swasarāni*. Thus gladly arriving, they are gladly to accept and cleave to the sacrifice and support it, bearing it up in its journey to its goal, in its ascent to the gods or to the home of the gods, the Truth, the Vast; *medham jushanta vahmayah*.

And the epithets of the Visvadevas, qualifying their character and the functions for which they are invited to the Soma-offering, have the same generality; they are common to all the gods and applied indifferently to any or all of them throughout the Veda. They are fosterers or increasers of man and upholders of his labour and effort in the work, the sacrifice,—*omāsaś charshan'idhrito*. Sayana renders these words protectors and sustainers of men. I need

not enter here into a full justification of the significances which I prefer to give them; for I have already indicated the philological method which I follow. Sayana himself finds it impossible to attribute always the sense of protection to the words derived from the root *ava*, *avas*, *ūti*, *uma*, etc. which are so common in the hymns, and is obliged to give to the same word in different passages the most diverse and unconnected significances. Similarly, while it is easy to attribute the sense of "man" to the two kindred words *charshan'i* and *kr'ishti* when they stand by themselves, this meaning seems unaccountably to disappear in compound forms like *vicharshan'i*, *viśvacharshani*, *viśvakr'ishti*. Sayana himself is obliged to render *viscvacharsha'ni* "all seeing" and not "all man" or "all-human". I do not admit the possibility of such abysmal variations in fixed Vedic terms. *Av* can mean to be, have, keep; contain, protect; become, create; foster, increase, thrive, prosper; gladden, be glad; but it is the sense of increasing or fostering which seems to me to prevail in the Veda. *Charsh* and *krish* were originally derivate roots from *char* and *kri* both meaning to do, and the sense of laborious action or movement still remains in *krish*, to drag, to plough. *Charshan'i* and *kri'shti*, means therefore effort, laborious action or work or else the doers of such action. They are two among the many words (*karma*, *apas*, *kāra*, *kīri*, *duvas* etc.) which are used to indicate the Vedic work, the sacrifice, the toil of aspiring humanity, the *arati* of the Aryan.

The fostering or increasing of man in all his substance and possessions, his continual enlargement towards the fullness and richness of the vast Truth-consciousness, the upholding of him in his great struggle and labour, this is the common preoccupation of the Vedic gods. Then, they are *apturah*, they who cross the waters, or, as Sayana takes it, they who give the waters. This he understands in the sense of "rain-givers" and it is perfectly true that all the Vedic gods are givers of the rain, the abundance (for *vrishiti*, rain, has both senses) of heaven, sometimes described as the solar waters, *swarvatir apah*, or waters which carry in them the light of the luminous heaven, *Swar*. But the ocean and the waters in the Veda, as this phrase itself indicates, are the symbol of conscient being in its mass and in its movements. The gods pour the fullness of these waters, especially the upper waters, the waters of heaven, the streams of the Truth, *r'itasya dhārah*, across all obstacles into the human consciousness. In this sense they are all *apturah*. But man is also described as crossing the waters over to his home in the Truth-consciousness and the gods as carrying him over; it is doubtful whether this may not be the true sense here, especially as we have the two words *apturah...tūrnayah* close to each other in a connection that may well be significant.

Again the gods are all free from effective assailants, free from the harm

of the hurtful or opposing powers and therefore the creative formations of their conscious knowledge, their Maya, move freely, pervasively, attain their right goal,—*asridha ehimāyāso adruhah*. If we take into account the numerous passages of the Veda which indicate the general object of the sacrifice, of the work, of the journey, of the increase of the light and the abundance of the waters to be the attainment of the Truth-consciousness, Rītam, with the resultant Bliss, Mayas, and that these epithets commonly apply to powers of the infinite, integral Truth-consciousness we can see that it is this attainment of the Truth which is indicated in these three verses. The all-gods increase man, they uphold him in the great work, they bring him the abundance of the waters of Swar, the streams of the Truth, they communicate the unassailably integral and pervading action of the Truth-consciousness with its wide formations of knowledge, *māyāh*.

I have translated the phrase, *usrā iva swasārami*, in the most external sense possible; but in the Veda even poetical similes are seldom or never employed for mere decoration; they too are utilised to deepen the psychological sense and with a figure of symbolic or double meaning. The word *usrā* is always used in the Veda, like *go*, with the double sense of the concrete figure or symbol, the Bull or Cow, and at the same time the psychological indication of the bright or luminous ones, the illumined powers of the Truth in man. It is as such illumined powers that the all-gods have to come and they come to the Soma-juice, *swassarāmi*, as if to seats or forms of peace or of bliss; for the root *swas*, like *sas* and many others, means both to rest and to enjoy. They are the powers of Truth entering into the outpourings of the Ananda in man as soon as that movement has been prepared by the vital and mental activity of the Ashwins and the pure mental activity of Indra.

“O fosterers who uphold the doer in his work, O all-gods, come and divide the Soma-wine that I distribute.

“O all-gods who bring over to us the Waters, come passing through to my Soma-offerings as illumined powers to your places of bliss.

“O all-gods, you who are not assailed nor come to hurt, free-moving in your forms of knowledge, cleave to my sacrifice as its upbearers.”

And, finally, in the last movement of the hymn we have the clear and unmistakable indication of the Truth-consciousness as the goal of the sacrifice, the object of the Soma-offering, the culmination of the work of the Aswins, Indra and the All-gods in the vitality and in the mind. For these are the three Riks devoted to Saraswati, the divine Word, who represents the stream of inspiration that descends from the Truth-consciousness, and thus limpidly runs their sense:

“May purifying Saraswati with all the plenitude of her forms of plenty, rich in substance by the thought, desire our sacrifice.

“She, the impeller to happy truths, the awakener in consciousness to right mentalisings, Saraswati, upholds the sacrifice.

“Saraswati by the perception awakens in consciousness the great flood (the vast movement of the Ritam) and illumines entirely all the thoughts.”

This clear and luminous finale throws back its light on all that has preceded it. It shows the intimate connection between the Vedic sacrifice and a certain state of mind and soul, the interdependence between the offering of the clarified butter and the Soma juice and luminous thought, richness of psychological content, right states of the mind and its awaking and impulsion to truth and light. It reveals the figure of Saraswati as the goddess of the inspiration, of shruti. And it establishes the connection between the Vedic rivers and psychological states of mind. The passage is one of those luminous hints which the Rishis have left scattered amidst the deliberate ambiguities of their symbolic style to guide us towards their secret.

## BUDDHA'S PALM

THIS lifted palm of princely tenderness,  
Rose-petalled softness gliding forth in streams,  
To stem the tide of woes that thickly press;  
Thy unperturbèd calm how moveless seems ;  
Yet ever moved to see life's night-mare dreams  
Ensnaring fools of time. Love's granite Might!  
Thou hurlest back dark waves that come to dash  
Against our human shores. An endless fight  
Behind this calm I hear, a plangent crash  
Of two opposing seas. One towering high  
In furious storm to overwhelm the earth,  
And pall with hate and lust the azure sky;  
The other a frozen peace of the Arctic zone  
For ever beating back the hordes of death—  
Eternal, tranquil, puissant, mute and lone.

R. N. KHANNA

## EINSTEIN'S FOUR-DIMENSIONAL CONTINUUM

On April 18 passed away the most original scientific thinker the world has seen. A host of exceptionally revolutionary ideas were let loose by him from the beginning of his scientific career in the early years of this century up to the very end of his life: it is not more than a couple of years since he propounded his last version of what he called the Unified Field Theory, the fullest expansion of the relativity theory with which his name burst on us in 1904. Perhaps the most notable contribution by his work to the world of thought is the concept of a four-dimensional continuum of space-time to replace Newton's of a three-dimensional space and a one-dimensional time. But the exact significance of it is seldom realised. It is worth while glancing at it from several sides.

There are thinkers who tell us: "The new concept has so revolutionised the view of reality in physics that science would do well to look in a direction beyond materialism." Others say: "It is indeed revolutionary, but its revolutionariness is confined to physics and has no bearing on a philosophical view of reality. By itself it has neither a materialistic nor a non-materialistic implication." A third group declares: "The question of any implication is idle, for the concept stands for no reality at all, not even a physical one. It is simply a geometrico-mathematical picture, an abstract symbolic representation of the connection between phenomena of space and time as they figure revolutionarily in Einstein's physics. It is a mere convenience or device for calculation." A fourth school brings another sort of damper: "It is a revolution, yet not quite a radical one. Physics always recognised four-dimensionality when it took four co-ordinates—three of space and one of time—to specify an event. Relativity theory has added some important details of far-reaching usefulness, but the general framework is still the same."

To strike on the true significance of the new concept we should follow briefly the development of relativity theory by which a revolution was effected in Newton's physics. Newton had held that though every known material mass is in motion and therefore no motion of matter can be measured against any material mass at rest, we are not confined to merely relative measurements among moving masses: there is a motion absolute and not relative, for there is a universal space which is at absolute and not relative rest and which can serve as a frame of reference for measuring absolute motion. Further, if absolute motion is a valid concept, we can know what moment can be regarded as being

the same moment at different points of space. For, it is by signals from point to point that time at different points can be expressed and even the fastest signal—light—takes a finite time to travel and, with the possibility of measuring the absolute speed of light against static space, we can allow in an absolute manner for the time-lag between the sending of a light signal from one point and the receiving of it at another. Calculating the various time-lags we can calculate what moment anywhere is simultaneous with a moment here: simultaneity throughout the universe is a valid concept. That is to say, time can be thought of as uniform everywhere. Absolute time follows from absolute motion and absolute space.

Soon after Newton's life a substance called the ether filling all space was considered inevitable for the explanation of the wavelike movement of light. Because of certain astronomical observations it was also considered as fixed in space. For all practical purposes the ether and absolute space became synonyms. So an opportunity was provided in a concrete form to measure motion against a frame absolutely at rest. A most delicate experiment, repeatedly performed, to measure earth's motion through the ether in the direction of its own orbit showed that somehow the absolute measurement always evaded us. This null result of the Michelson-Morley experiment Lorentz and Fitzgerald sought to explain by calculating that physical changes always take place in our measuring instrument in such a way that they constitute a minus quantity compensating for and cancelling the plus quantity necessary for the absolute measurement. Thus the static ether and through it absolute space were saved for physics.

Einstein launched a double attack on this interpretation. He said that if no absolute measurement can ever be obtained, then whatever be the reason for the failure the Newtonian concept of motion and space is quite gratuitous and serves no useful purpose in physics. Further, if absolute motion cannot be measured, the same moment at different points of space can never be absolutely ascertained. Universal simultaneity is an "unobservable". The concept of absolute time is metaphysics and has no useful place in physics. In addition to the practical inutility, Einstein proved the logical inutility of the three absolutes. He said that the situation of a minus quantity exactly compensating for and cancelling the required plus quantity would arise even if we made measurements against a body moving relatively to another body but acceptable for convenience's sake as at rest relatively to our own motion. So if any compensation or cancellation is taking place, it will not uniquely distinguish an absolutely static frame from a relatively static one. To suppose that the compensation or cancellation conceals an absolute ether or space is logically unwarranted. Again, since in all relativities of motion between two bodies the mathematical terms are not altered by our taking the first body to be at rest and the second to be moving

or *vice versa*, the compensation or cancellation can be thought of as happening on either body and does not indicate which of the two bodies is having its motion measured in reference to a static space or ether. This ambiguity leaves us no logical ground for talking of a space-absolute in reference to which the positive quantity of a body's absolute motion is somehow precisely compensated for or cancelled by a negative quantity. And, of course, once absolute motion and absolute space are logically superfluous, absolute time also logically fades out of the picture.

Measurements of space and time were proved by Einstein to differ with the rates of relative motion. No more can we speak of motion occurring within an unaffected space and time: no more are space and time universal uniform receptacles in which matter in motion exists. There are as many spaces and times as there are relative rates of matter's motion. The sole bond between them is a transformation-rule formulated by Lorentz when he tried to co-ordinate the compensating or cancelling factors proposed by him before Einstein's appearance. The new relativistic interpretation which did not deny those factors but dispensed with their implications of an absolute Newtonian background took over Lorentz's rule as a means of passing correctly from one relative reading to another. It also, by the way, threw light on a somewhat obscure term in Lorentz's rule. The rule allowed for a change in the instrument of measuring space, the shortening of a rod's length in the direction of its motion, but could not explain a corresponding change which appeared to apply to the instrument of measuring time, the slowing down of the rhythm of a clock during its motion. Einstein legitimised the changing time-term since he clearly brought out the relativity of time no less than of space.

The first or restricted theory of relativity stopped here. It did not offer any new absolute or absolutes in place of the Newtonian ones. And those who regard as a mere mathematical device or convenience the four-dimensional continuum of space-time which was later suggested to be the appropriate Einsteinian absolute are evidently of the belief that only relativities really exist. The sole real revolution effected by Einstein is for them the joint difference which space-measurements and the time-measurement undergo according to the difference in motion-rate. Inasmuch as space and time together undergo this difference, unlike as in Newton's system, these quantities figure revolutionarily in the system of Einstein, but space is space and time is time and no amount of hyphenating them can be anything save a purely formal affair: there can be no actual fusion of them. The so-called fusing is a useful picture or symbol of the Lorentz transformations which tell us how the space-numbers and the time-number vary with different co-ordinate systems and how the variations are mutually related.



The implication of this "formalist" view of the four-dimensional continuum is that though the Newtonian absolutes of space and time are abolished the relative space and time of Einstein are in fundamental nature the same as Newton's: Newton too was aware that at different standpoints different quantities are obtained for space and time and if he believed that the differences could be adjusted and a uniformity calculated in terms of absolute space and time it was because he did not know of the greater variations introduced by varied standpoints, but this cannot stop space and time from fundamentally differing from each other or involve their fusion.

The exponents of the "formalist" view, in further elaborating their thesis, exploit for their own ends the argument which is properly of the fourth school of interpretation. They inform us: "In a certain sense space and time have always constituted a four-dimensional continuum. Our experience in common life is that nothing happens at any place except at a particular time and nothing happens at any time except at a particular place: space and time are co-existent and inseparable. Similarly, science uses four numbers to describe events in nature. Positions are characterised by three numbers and the instant of an event is the fourth number. Four definite numbers correspond to every event: *ergo*, the world of events forms a four-dimensional continuum. Even the old physics never denied this. In the new physics the numbers undergo some interesting changes and we have to deal with them more jointly than before, but there is no four-dimensional continuum in a fundamentally different sense than before—a different sense which blurs our common experience that space is space and time is time. Relativity theory, studying them more penetratively and dealing with them more jointly than before, does not involve the equivalence of the space-co-ordinates with the time-co-ordinate. The former co-ordinates are defined physically wholly differently from the latter: a rod is used in the one case and a clock in the other."

Well, it is indeed true that the physical operations by which the numbers for space and time are obtained are entirely distinct and never fuse, but the rest of the "formal" view has little substance and when we understand its hollowness we shall learn to see this distinction in a proper light. To start with: it is illogical to say that Einstein's space and time are in fundamental nature the same as Newton's. Newton could pass to his absolutes because whatever relativities he acknowledged were of a certain sort: if for Einstein his own relativities did not differ from Newton's in a fundamental way he could have no ground for rejecting those absolutes: some mathematical adjustment would be possible. He could not pass to those absolutes because his relativities were different in fundamental nature. If they were thus different his space and time must also be so. The formalists recognise as much when they emphasise,

though mistakenly, that in Einstein's physics as at first propounded there is no real absolute and that, unlike as in Newton's physics, only relativities really exist here. But they deny a real Einsteinian absolute on account of missing the important point which emerged when Einstein stated his relativities and stopped short of any absolute.

Einstein stopped short not because any absolute was bound to be really inexistent: he did so because his own immediate aim was limited and he never looked in the direction of an absolute. However, one point emerged suggestively. If the relativities were not ultimate and if anything absolute could be found, it would not be in terms of motion, space and time as commonly understood. Another mode of putting this is: the absolute, if any, would not just raise, as those of Newton did, commonly understood motion, space and time to a universal plane of conception. And it would not for a simple reason: the relativities themselves do not involve motion, space and time as commonly understood. They are more radical than Newton thought and the three terms in each relativity are knit together in a way utterly beyond Newton's thinking. To say that there are as many spaces and times as there are relative rates of motion does not merely abolish Newton's idea of space and time as universal uniform receptacles in which matter in motion exists. Over and above finding measurements of space and time to be variables of motion, it implies that the space and time of each frame of reference differ with motion in a close co-operation between themselves: when the space-numbers change, the time-number changes too and *vice versa*, as if space and time were quantities perfectly analogous though not of the same kind, instead of being as in Newton's physics non-analogous though never dissociated. Of course, for practical purposes the old division of space-co-ordinates from the time-co-ordinate is valid: we can assign *à la* Newton relative space-co-ordinates but an absolute time-co-ordinate to any event within common experience. Only when the velocity of objects ceases to be small and comes close to that of light the time-co-ordinate no less than the space-co-ordinates is found relative and we have the observation of both space and time changing instead of the former alone doing so. But the joint change, though mostly unobserved, is always there as of two perfectly analogous quantities. In other words the two quantities depend on motion as if they were differentiations of one and the same quantity: the rod measuring space and the clock measuring time seem two distinguishable modes of measuring a single system of dimensions. Briefly, space and time appear to be somehow the same in spite of being dissimilar: they give the impression of being an identity-in-difference.

The revolution in physical concepts here is surely profounder than what the formalists make out. Although no absolute is yet on the scene, the relativities already suggest some kind of fusion in the nature of space and time. The

suggestion, however, loomed a little remote until Minkowski put his mind to the relativities. And it loomed a little remote because no direct mathematical demonstration of the actual identity was present and because the fusion suggested in each set of space-numbers and time-number was not yet shown to be of any immediate utility in either mathematical practice or mathematical theory. Minkowski was the first to remedy these lacks by seeking in the suggested fusion an invariant behind the Lorentz-transformations connecting the variants that are the relativities—an invariant concealed like a thread on which the transformation-rule hung them like beads and taught us how to pass from one bead to another. He showed that the different observations of space and time about an event from frames of reference moving at different rates could yield a common invariant quantity, an absolute measurement of a non-Newtonian sort corresponding to the non-Newtonian relative measurements, if the time-measurement obtained within each frame of reference were subtracted from the space-measurement. Mathematically, this not only gave the invariant but also illuminated the nature of space and time. For, it is a platitude in mathematics that we cannot add one quantity to or subtract it from another without the two quantities being of the same kind. We can multiply one kind of quantity by another, as mass by velocity to give momentum. We can divide one kind of quantity by another, as energy by time to give horse-power. But we cannot add mass to velocity or subtract energy from time to give any physical quantity unless they are somehow identical. Similarly we cannot add inches to seconds or subtract seconds from inches unless we mean to imply that somehow the same entity is measured partly by a rod and partly by a clock.

The suggestion emerging from relativity theory that in a certain sense a single system of dimensions rather than two associated systems was being measured came to a clear focus in Minkowski's description of this system as a four-dimensional continuum in which space and time ceased to be separate and fused into one fundamental absolute: space-time. The single entity, space-time, could be split into two systems of dimensions by taking cross-sections, as it were, of it and the various ways in which we make the cross-section give the Einsteinian relativities. If we imagine a geometrical graph of the four-dimensional continuum, then the influence of the different rates of motion on the measurements of space and time will be shown in that the three axes or co-ordinates  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $z$  of space and the one axis or co-ordinate of time will be differently orientated. And the relations between these different sets of axes will be those contained in the Lorentz equations.

Minkowski's space-time is the inevitable background of the Einsteinian relativities. Einstein himself acknowledged it and later developed the concept of it geometrically far beyond Minkowski. We are not concerned at the moment

with the development. Suffice it to say here that space-time is inherently implied by the relativities and is just as real or unreal as they. Even, in the sense that the invariant, the quantity on which there is agreement from all standpoints, is more real than the variants or the quantities about which there is disagreement from all standpoints, the universal quantity that is space-time has a greater reality than the space and time that figure in the relative readings.

Having demonstrated that the hyphenating of space and time is no purely formal affair we should exhibit in a proper light the undeniable distinction between them as proved by the wholly different manner in which the numbers for space and for time are obtained. The fact is that the hyphenating does not slur over the distinction. It is a mistake to turn the hyphenating to mean that a fourth dimension of *space* is welded on to the three known to us. Only if such a welding is signified the distinction may be said to suffer a slurring over. Unfortunately this significance is liable to be caught from the final form in which Minkowski stated his description of the four-dimensional continuum. There by a couple of mathematical operations he altered to a plus sign the minus sign between the space-numbers and the time-number and substituted the number of miles light travels in one second—a constant 186,000 in all frames of reference—for the one second itself, thus making the time-dimension equivalent to a space-dimension. The justification of these operations is that thus alone the four-dimensional continuum becomes the absolute of Einstein's relativities in the simplest form possible and best explains the facts of scientific observation and experiment. The operations are a brilliant act of analytic insight into the truth of physical nature and, together with the original formula of subtracting the time-measurement from the space-measurement, constitute one of the peak performances of mathematical genius in our day. But they do not really add a fourth space-dimension to the other three. The very need of those mathematical operations which brought about an "isotropy" (or similarity in all directions) is proof enough of a certain difference between the three components and one component in spite of their fusion. A true fourth dimension of space would require no such strange treatment. The treatment is administered just because space-time is an irregular and not a regular four-dimensional continuum or, rather, because it is a four-dimensional continuum irregularly regular. To employ a phrase already used by us, it is by all tokens an identity-in-difference. The criticism that Minkowski overlooked the distinction between a rod and a clock would hold only if the fourth dimension were a regular one—that is to say, spatial.

But, we must add, the irregular element makes no odds to the revolutionary character of this four-dimensionality. It is erroneous to protest as the fourth school of interpreters do, that after all science always recognised four-

## MOTHER INDIA

dimensionality when it took four co-ordinates—three of space and one of time—to specify an event and that we have nothing quite radically revolutionary now. No doubt, the actual basic four-dimensionality of nature is the same in the day of Einstein and Minkowski as in that of Newton; but science's recognition of it in the past never took it for a *fusion* of space and time. Now alone we know what exactly should be meant by our regarding the world we live in as basically a four-dimensional continuum that figures in our immediate measurements as spatial and temporal quantities changing in a joint inter-dependent manner; for now alone can we speak of this continuum as being not of space and time but of space-time. The general framework is not at all still the same.

The fourth school of interpreters, no less than the third or "formalist" group, is off the mark. Space-time is not only real: it is also a radically revolutionary reality.

*(To be continued)*

K. D. SETHNA

# *Students' Section*

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## THE MOTHER'S TALKS

(To the Children of the Ashram)

### THE DIVINE GRACE

Q: How shall we learn to accept the Divine Grace with gratitude? And what should we do to make it act more and more in our lives?

A: Ah, first you should feel the need of the Grace. That is the most important point. You have to feel a certain inner humility which makes you aware how weak you are without the Grace, how incomplete and incapable.

The experience of helplessness comes to most people at one time or another. Even men who know nothing of the spiritual life have it. They are caught in difficult circumstances, faced with a problem to solve or an impulse to be overcome, thrown into some grave disorder. Then they perceive that they are lost and do not know what to do—their heads, their wills, their senses, everything turns helpless. At that moment a kind of call comes out from within, a call to something which can do what one cannot. This appeal is the first condition for the advent of the Grace. And, secondly, if you can understand that it is only the Grace that can pull you out of your trouble, give you the solution and the power to conquer, then automatically an intense aspiration awakes in you and brings with it an opening. If you call, if you aspire and if you feel the hope of an answer, you open yourself quite naturally to the Grace.

Afterwards you have to pay great attention to one matter. No doubt, the Grace will answer you, help you out of your straits, give you the key to your riddle and put you again on firm ground. But once you are clear of the obstacles, do not forget that only the Grace has got you free. Do not believe even for an instant that you have been your own saviour.

The majority of people, as soon as their difficulties are gone, start saying: "After all, I have pulled myself pretty smartly out of the trouble!" Well, when there is such an attitude, the Grace will be gone together with the difficulties:

you will have shut the door and bolted it against the Grace: you will not receive it any more. You will need again some acute distress, some terrible encumbrance to make this inner stupidity give way and bring you the understanding that you can do nothing by yourself.

For, it is only when you realise your powerlessness that you begin to be open and just a little plastic. So long as you think that what you do depends on your own skill, you close not merely one door but many and lock them all on the Divine's face and shut yourself up in a fortress where nothing can enter. The great defect is that one forgets very soon. And with the forgetting there comes the satisfaction in one's own capacity. It is most difficult to be sincere. And that is why knocks multiply themselves, and sometimes they become terrible because nothing else will break your stupidity. The justification of misfortune is precisely this. Unless you find yourself in a genuine fix and are deeply affected by the acuteness of a situation the stupidity refuses to melt even a tiny bit. And even when there is something that melts, there is also something else remaining dense inside; and it is for this reason that the difficulty persists so long.

What a lot of knocks are necessary to enable a man to know to the very profundities of his being that he is nothing, that he can do nothing, that he hardly exists and is nothing, that there is no human entity without the support of the Divine Consciousness and the Divine Grace!

From the moment you feel this truth, all the difficulties start vanishing. And when you feel it integrally, then there remains nothing that resists. But till that moment—and it can take long to arrive—things cannot run quite smoothly.

Of course, a quick cure can be effected if one full total knock comes along. But if the knock is strong enough to cure you it will simply crush you, turn you into pulp. Only by proceeding little by little, by a gradual advance, you can continue to exist. And how constantly and how much you progress depends on the inner force, the inner sincerity, the ability to profit by experience and the capacity of not forgetting the work of the Grace.

If one can keep remembering, one advances much more quickly—yes, one can move forward with considerable rapidity. And, if at the same time, one has the inner moral force which, when the red-hot iron is there, does not try to pour water on it to cool it down but uses it to burn right into the core of the abscess, then there is still more speed. But how many are strong enough for this kind of treatment? On the contrary, most go on covering up their faults, attempting always to hide themselves from themselves. Oh so many beautiful little explanations you are ready to give to your own self! Excuse on excuse you pile up for all the foolishnesses you commit.

No more than a handful are willing to receive the grand knock of Mahakali. It is a knock that renders one really happy. It warms the heart, it gives one a deep contentment. To have it is a mighty good fortune—and you have to aspire for it sincerely and desire progress intensely. You should say: “No matter what happens, I want to progress.” When you have this attitude, it comes. And it comes with a power of plenitude which contains an extreme joy. When you have taken a decision, made up your mind to settle some problem within yourself and not to go on repeating the old stupidities, resolved to attempt what seems hard or even impossible, put your whole sincerity of will behind the attempt, well, then if the formidable knock of Mahakali arrives to force you to finish what you have thought of doing, it is a knock that makes you feel glorified, completely satisfied and fills the heart with something magnificent, something divinely large and rich.

There is a world of difference between the sorrows that fall on you precisely because you are in a purely outward, mechanical and physical consciousness and are prone in your state of ignorance to commit all possible foolishnesses and have to bear all the depressing inevitable consequences—there is a world of difference between such sorrows and the state altogether superior into which you rise when you have determined that you will surpass yourself, that you will not live except in the consciousness of the Truth, come what may, and that you will progress, be the cost however heavy—a state in which every event is packed with significance, every incident reveals the truth that shines like a light-house guiding you on your way—a state in which no blow is a block of stone breaking your back but a power at once dazzling and delighting!

It is because of this that I say: “Only the first step is hard, the first emergence from the ordinary level, the first movement of ascension. After that, all changes.” But the true first step implies a complete coming out of the ordinary level, no hanging back in it of any part, no endeavour to have one leg here and one leg elsewhere. These half-and-half tactics never work!

15-9-1954



# MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

## THE HIGHER AND THE LOWER WORLDS

SELF: What is meant by the Divine Consciousness?

SRI AUROBINDO: By the Divine Consciousness we mean the spiritual consciousness to which the Divine alone exists, because all is the Divine and by which one passes beyond the ignorance and the lower nature into unity with the Divine and the Divine Nature.

Here in the ignorance we are not aware of the Divine and we obey the lower Nature. (16-6-1933)

SELF: What are the forces at work in the cosmos?

SRI AUROBINDO: There are the higher forces of the Divine Nature—the forces of Light, Truth, divine Power, Peace, Ananda—there are the forces of the lower nature which belong either to a lower truth or to ignorance and error—there are also the hostile forces whose whole aim is to maintain the reign of Darkness, Falsehood, Death and Suffering as the law of life. (29-7-1933)

SELF: Are there hostile forces in every plane of our being?

SRI AUROBINDO: The main strength of the hostile forces is in the vital—but there are some in the lower ranges of mind and smaller beings and forces in the subtle physical also. (29-7-1933)

SELF: Why are certain forces called hostile and why have they worked against the Divine?

SRI AUROBINDO: Because they wanted their own way which is the way of the Ignorance. (22-7-1933)

SELF: What is their final aim?

SRI AUROBINDO: To follow their nature, possess the world and prevent the Light from possessing it. (22-7-1933)

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

SELF: Has not the Supreme Himself created them through the Transcendent?

SRI AUROBINDO: The Supreme cannot create through the Transcendent because the Transcendent is the Supreme. It is through the Cosmic Shakti that the Divine creates. (22-7-1933)

SELF: Has the Cosmic Shakti anything to do with the hostile forces?

SRI AUROBINDO: She has to do with everything in this world, good, bad or indifferent. (3-8-1933)

SELF: Is it not the Cosmic Shakti's work to reach the Divine through all her evolutionary forms?

SRI AUROBINDO: The Cosmic Shakti maintains the cosmos. To reach the Divine is the ultimate, not the immediate object. (5-8-1933)

SELF: If the Cosmic Shakti has come from the Divine, why is the world such as to allow the hostile forces to reign in it?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the nature of this world because it is an evolutionary world moving out of the Inconscient into the full consciousness of the Divine. (24-8-1933)

SELF: It is said that everything is already arranged by the Divine, even one's future. Can't one change anything if one wants?

SRI AUROBINDO: If it is arranged by the Divine how can one's wanting change it? If it is merely a result of the play of forces which seems inevitable, then one can change it by the will, if the will is supported by the Divine. (24-8-1933)

SELF: Is it Nature itself that makes all plans here?

SRI AUROBINDO: What plans? You are speaking of Karma or what? (24-8-1933)

SELF: I meant—is every movement, even the future, planned by Nature?

SRI AUROBINDO: In Nature it is by the play of forces that the result is determined. (24-8-1933)

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: In the ultimate vision of things, can it not be said that the Divine ranges and plans all future occurrences of one's life and their exact time also?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is not mentally arranged by the Divine. The word plan is a mere metaphor. But the Divine sees what comes out of the movement of being and there is a Foresight and a Sanction above. (24-8-1933)

SELF: Does the Divine Power work in us at all times, even though we may be unconscious of it?

SRI AUROBINDO: It does not work directly at all times; very often it allows the Nature to work. (3-9-1933)

SELF: What is the cause of impurity in our understanding?

SRI AUROBINDO: Ignorance and ego. (1-10-1933)

SELF: I am very eager to get out of the movements of the Ignorance and put the consciousness into touch with the Mother. How shall I achieve what I want?

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no way except to open to the higher consciousness so that it may descend and open to the Mother.

SELF: What exactly do you mean by the higher consciousness?

SRI AUROBINDO: I am speaking of the higher planes of mind which are always more luminous than the ordinary mental. (20-9-1933)

SELF: It is said that in the higher ranges of mind there are Gods whom one can see and with whom one can communicate. Is this true?

SRI AUROBINDO: There are Gods everywhere in all the planes.

SELF: How is it that the vital beings allow Gods to remain on their plane?

SRI AUROBINDO: The vital plane is not one world but many. (11-11-1933)

SELF: In which of the worlds do the divine vital beings stay?

SRI AUROBINDO: There are worlds of the vital Gods, they stay there. (12-11-1933)

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

SELF: How has the vital world which can have even its own Gods got distorted in us?

SRI AUROBINDO: Everything in the exterior being is distorted by the Ignorance—if it were not distorted it would not be the Ignorance. (14-11-1933)

SELF: If there are Divine Forces in all the planes, why do we not feel them acting in us during the hostile attacks?

SRI AUROBINDO: If you are sufficiently awakened to them and call them in, they will act. (24-4-1933)

SELF: What effect has fear *vis-à-vis* the hostile forces?

SRI AUROBINDO: If you are afraid of the hostile forces when they try to come, you expose yourself to their power. (20-11-1933)

SELF: How do the hostile forces manage to time their attacks on us accurately and put into our minds formations which attract us?

SRI AUROBINDO: They find elements of the construction in your mind—and they are always on the watch and can take action immediately. (23-7-1933)

SELF: How is it that they know so much more than we do? Is their knowledge very vast?

SRI AUROBINDO: No. They are not physical beings, so they can be aware of things directly to a great extent—that is all. (23-7-1933)

SELF: Can the planes above the mind, but below the Supermind, be influenced by the hostile forces?

SRI AUROBINDO: No—but the hostile forces can use the forces sent down from them if they get mixed with the mind or the vital. (21-11-1933)

SELF: When one lives in the higher consciousness, will the lower nature still act in us, doing the same things in the same way as now?

SRI AUROBINDO: No, it will be the higher Nature, provided the body also lives in the higher consciousness.

SELF: What brings about death? Is it the hostile forces?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the decay of the body or illness or violence or accident. The last three are special attacks of the hostile forces. The other is the pressure of the lower nature. (30-7-1933)

SELF: What is the function of the *kāraṇa śarīra*, the causal body?

SRI AUROBINDO: It originates from behind the veil. (17-9-1933)

SELF: Will the *kāraṇa śarīra* ever come forward, tearing the veil?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, if the consciousness develops so much that the super-conscious overmind and supermind cease to be superconscious. (19-9-1933)

SELF: You once said: "In the true consciousness things appear differently from what they do now." Were you referring to the supramental consciousness?

SRI AUROBINDO: In any true consciousness, intuition or spiritual or overmental or supramental.

SELF: Something in me, when I have made a mistake, goes on shouting, "Why have you done this? Why have you done this?" Is it the lower Nature?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes,—it is the lower mind that does like that. The higher mind would simply recognise the mistake and correct it. (29-11-1933)

SELF: Is the higher mind a part of the intellect—the higher part?

SRI AUROBINDO: The higher mind is a thing in itself above the intellect.—It is only when something of its power comes down and is modified in the lower mind substance that it acts as part of the intellect. (2-10-1933)

SELF: Are the inner mind and higher mind and Overmind separative like our individual minds? How are we to get into the Overmind?

SRI AUROBINDO: No, they are more universal. You cannot reach the overmind so long as you are bound to the separative consciousness. (29-9-1933)

SELF: When one lives in a separative consciousness, what is one's relation with the universal consciousness?

SRI AUROBINDO: One receives from it and returns things to it without being conscious of the process or of the source of what one receives. (17-9-1933)

SELF: Is the Brahman and the Universal Consciousness one and the same?

SRI AUROBINDO: The universal consciousness is the universal Brahman—in it you see everything as one. (1-10-33)

SELF: Is not the Overmind a centre of all dynamic movements?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is not a centre at all—it is a plane far above the mind—above and originating the terrestrial existence but from a distance above it. (28-10-1933)

SELF: If the Overmind is not a centre but a plane, there must be beings in it. Do these beings work directly upon terrestrial beings or only indirectly, as you seem to suggest by the words “from a distance”?

SRI AUROBINDO: The Beings native to the Overmind are Gods. They work through the mind and life and body, but if they do it directly then they do it from the lower planes, not from the Overmind—until at least the human being becomes conscious of the Overmind. (29-10-1933)

SELF: Does the Overmind’s working directly from the lower planes mean that the Overmind Beings come down upon earth as human incarnations?

SRI AUROBINDO: No—they put out powers from themselves in the lower planes and so act. (31-10-1933)

SELF: Can the Beings native to the Overmind be said to rule the cosmos?

SRI AUROBINDO: The natives of the Overmind are Gods. Naturally the Gods rule the cosmos. (9-11-1933)

SELF: Did the formateurs of the Overmind have any hand in the making of things evil out of the Power that went forth from the Divine?

SRI AUROBINDO: The formateurs of the Overmind have shaped nothing evil—it is the lower forces that receive from the Overmind and distort its forms. (29-11-1933)

MOTHER INDIA

SELF: Is not the human being in his true reality superior to even the Supermind?

SRI AUROBINDO: What is the true reality of a human being—and how is it different from the true reality of any other being? The true reality of all is the Divine. (9-11-1933)

SELF: Is not the Supermind one instrument of man for realising the Divine upon earth?

SRI AUROBINDO: Realising means what? You mean manifesting, I suppose.—Any one can realise the Divine in the sense of being conscious of the Divine. Man is a mental being in a body—how can he have command of the Supermind which is above the mind? even Overmind is far above him. (9-11-1933)

SELF: When one becomes one with the Divine, what exactly is the function of the Supermind?

SRI AUROBINDO: One can become one with the Divine on the mental plane. The Supermind is necessary for manifesting the Divine on earth. (13-11-1933)

NAGIN DOSHI

## THE DARSHAN DAY

APRIL 24, 1952

*(From the Diary of a University Student)*

### THE BALCONY DARSHAN

Immediately after the Mother left the Balcony there was a descent which was felt right down into the body. The descent was the result of something She had done during the Balcony Darshan.

### SAMADHI MARCH-PAST

We offered our salute to the Lord. After that, together with my whole group, I stood before the Samadhi as other groups were still coming in. Accidentally, my eyes fell on the Mother. She was a little away from the window, and was standing there like some Field Marshal offering Her troops one by one to the Lord. She was concentrating on Her battalions and on the Samadhi at the same time with tremendous power.

### SAMADHI CONCENTRATION

The March-past over, She came down for the Samadhi concentration. As She stepped out from the staircase room She seemed suddenly changed; She was now like a great Queen. Her figure looked supremely regal and august. Did She not come now with the supramental Power right down to Her material body! I had seen Her previously with the higher power in Her body, but today's Power was far greater, as yet unseen and unheard of by mortals.—“Is the battle with the Inconscient over?” I wondered. Even Her physical grandeur seemed to say, “Yes, I have conquered it.” Through every part of Her body the Victory was radiating itself out.

While looking at the Mother I was neither in the psychic nor in the higher plane, nor was this a mere vision seen in some subtle or spiritual world, but a concrete reality seen and felt by my physical consciousness; the psychic joined in only afterwards. My eyes were wide open. I usually meditate with my eyes closed, but I saw at that time so much greatness, power, and light in Her physical body that I did not like to lose the sight of Her outer Self by closing the eyes, even when She Herself did so during the meditation with us.



## MOTHER INDIA

After some time,—this meditation was still going on,—the higher consciousness tried to pull me up totally. As that would make me miss Her physical sight I refused, for, after all, I was not going to have a better vision on any other plane.

### AFTER THE DARSHAN

As we had to wait rather long in the group file, I was feeling very tired; so I decided to go home immediately after having the Darshan and lie down for a while. Who can rest when he is caught up by the Divine! When I came down to the Meditation Hall I felt like sitting there for a minute—“just a minute” I was told from within.

Sitting there for a few moments, I saw the Lord standing before me. “You followed me right from your room! And it was You who made me sit down in the Hall!” I inwardly told Sri Aurobindo. Till I left, (I did that only when the Darshan was over), He remained with me.

### AFTERNOON OF THE DARSHAN DAY

When I got up from the noon nap the result of the Darshan Week became quite apparent to me as if in a nutshell: one solid stride had been taken over the entire nature—from the mind to the inconscient. If not a preliminary liberation, at least a great release was felt by each and every part of the being.

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### *A Friend's Comments on the Experience during Samadhi Concentration:*

“I may make one remark apropos seeing Mother's greatness with the physical eye. Years ago, when about a dozen of us used to gather about her every evening in *Prosperity* room before Soup, she once conducted a meditation. Every one shut his eyes, but I suddenly opened mine and saw Mother deeply absorbed and looking so tremendously divine—as if Maheshwari and Mahakali had fused into each other and become physical—that I decided not to shut them on this occasion. No amount of inner meditation would have equalled this direct vision of the Divine incarnate.”

## WRITING IN FRENCH

In French you must express yourself straightforwardly and clearly so that your meaning is at once apparent to the reader.

SRI AUROBINDO

Le français gagne à être écrit avec simplicité et clarté; une accumulation d'images compliquées rend toujours le style prétentieux.

(French gains by being written with simplicity and clarity; an accumulation of complicated images always renders the style pretentious.)

THE MOTHER

## THE YOGI AND THE CHILD

ONCE there lived a great Yogi at the foot of the Himalayas. He had many experiences, and it was said that he was a highly realised man. People from the village used to bring fruits and sweets to him. One day a child came there, and thus addressed the Yogi: "O great one, teach me how to become a realised man. I have faith and aspiration."

"But you are just a little child," replied the Yogi, "you must grow up before you can become a big spiritual man."

"I know I am just a child, but I can become a little spiritual man."

"All right, so be it. —You must renounce all you have; learn to conquer desire for the things of this world."

The child replied, "I am a small creature, and I do not possess much. I have some sweets and a little whistle. I am putting all I have before the Divine Mother, and I offer myself with all my weaknesses and ignorance, for I have no talents or attainments."

"That is very good," said the great Yogi.

"Have you seen the Divine Mother?" asked the child quietly.

"O yes, I had a vision once."

"Then next time you have the vision, offer Her not only your worldly possessions but your spiritual realisation also, and become a child of the Divine. It is easy to renounce the world, it is not so easy to give up the fruit of tapasya, your realisation, and lay it at the feet of the Mother. Till you do so, you are not completely offered."

So saying, the child laughed and left the flabbergasted Yogi; only the notes of an enchanted flute came floating from a distance.

A.

## A DREAM

I ROAMED amid a tulip-mead in bloom,  
An irised ecstasy  
Had spread its surging liquor on the earth,  
That dashing against me

Had rolled on, rolled on, rolled on till my heart  
Became a wave all red  
With the sweeping rapture's mazy wilderness:  
I felt above my head

A stream of tulips crimson, orange, blue  
Had flown towards a sea  
That ever beams in truth-delight of sun,  
A vast of purity.

The earth became an aureate tulip-bud.  
Her opening petals stood  
Aflame and sent to sky a candid song  
Inviting Heaven's mood

To break upon her bosom and to turn  
Her being of desire  
Into a shoreless cup of radiant peace,  
A torch of inward fire!

PRITHWINDRA

## REVIEW

**The Anatomy of Prose** by *Marjorie Boulton*. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d).

This is a companion volume to the author's first book, *The Anatomy of Poetry*. Literary criticism has advanced far towards subtlety and profundity, and a student of literature has not merely to enjoy a poem or a work of prose but also to study analytically the various devices employed by the writer which makes a particular work outstanding. Now that the demarcation between poetry and prose is becoming more and more tenuous, and both run into each other often enough, a close study of either is necessary. Just as modern science is coming to the position where mind is less mental, and matter less material, so modern literature also has reached the stage where poetry is less poetic and prose less prosaic.

Miss Boulton, the reader can be assured, does not 'murder to dissect' but shows by an X-ray examination the various organs and how they function in a living organism. The book is throughout written in a way that arouses interest in poetry and prose, and not only enhances our interest in literature but intensifies it. Everywhere the light of a warm sympathy and catholic taste plays through the writing. She says about Indian writers in English: "English people, who will not take the trouble to write their own language well, ought to be shamed by reading the English of such Indian writers as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, his sister Krishna Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, D.F. Karaka, Professor Radhakrishnan, and a number of obscure Indians to be met in British universities".

Criticism of poetry does not offer so much difficulty to the student as criticism of prose. He knows what he needs to look for in poetry. Miss Boulton has laid down the steps for a clear understanding of prose, and the student has no longer to grope his way. The first thing he should note carefully is the words used by an author. That will show him whether the style is pompous, turgid and stilted, or on the other hand simple, idiomatic and racy. Miss Boulton brings out this point very clearly by taking a passage in one style and then rendering the same subject-matter in the other. She does not condemn or uphold any particular style, but shows the right place of each. She cites many instances where the *mot juste* shines out and others where a word ill-fits the nature of the theme.

In the chapter on 'the sentence' she indicates the pitfalls of idiom to which

a foreigner is exposed. Examples of writers who use clichés and utterly lack freshness are also given. She also gives many extracts to bring out the differences between written and spoken prose.

The chapter on prose rhythm is most valuable, because even in prose it is rhythm which invests a writing with an intense power to which we unconsciously thrill responsively. She scans the prose according to classical feet because the prose rhythm cannot be cut up on disyllables or trisyllables, since the rhythm here overflows these shorter feet. We need, not only feet of four syllables, but even those of five. This view agrees well with Sri Aurobindo's scanning of English prose.

The book is full of extremely useful guidance for the beginner and is a stepping-stone to the study of advanced books on the subject, such as Herbert Read's *English Prose Style*.

In conclusion we cannot refrain from pointing out that the book has been carelessly printed; unfortunately it is honey-combed with serious printing mistakes which disfigure it like scars.

R. N. KHANNA

## SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY

(An Answer Paper of a First Year Philosophy Student of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre in one of the Quarterly Examinations, 1954.)

Q. Elucidate the salient features of Sankhya Philosophy.

A. Sri Aurobindo writes in his *Essays on the Gita*: “The Sankhya Philosophy drew its name from its analytical process. Sankhya is the analysis, the enumeration, the separative and discriminative setting forth of the principles of our being of which the ordinary mind sees only the combinations and results of combinations.”

Unlike the Monism of the Vedantins Sankhya explains existence by two original and eternal principles, Purusha and Prakriti, which by their conjunction and interplay have evolved the universe in all its aspects and gradations.

Purusha is the self-conscious, self-luminous, eternally free but immobile and immutable principle; Prakriti is the inconscient, blind but dynamic and creative principle that has elaborated out of itself twenty-three other principles (Mahat or Buddhi, Ahankara, Manas, five Tanmatras, five Jnanendryas, five Karmendryas and five Mahabhutas) and, by mixing and combining them, has created the cosmos for the enjoyment of Purusha.

Prakriti is the Energy and its process. Purusha does nothing but reflect the actions of the Energy and its process. Prakriti is mechanical but by being reflected in Purusha assumes the appearance of consciousness and thereby result those phenomena of creation, conservation, dissolution, life, disease and death, consciousness and unconsciousness, action and inaction, sense-knowledge and intellectual knowledge and ignorance, happiness and suffering which Purusha by the influence of Prakriti attributes to itself, although they do not at all belong to it.

We must remember that this doctrine of the double principle of Purusha and Prakriti is not a mere metaphysical concept derived by abstract speculation. It is based on a deep spiritual and psychological experience. Indeed when one has the spiritual experience and vision one can clearly see that all things, whether animate or inanimate, are born from the combination of Purusha and Prakriti—a consciousness that sees and a force that executes. If we carefully study and analyse our psychological processes we shall find that there are two parts in our

being: one, still and passive, that sees, witnesses and supports, the soul, Purusha or Sakshi—another that is creative and executive and is supported, Nature or Prakriti.

But if we go further in our psychological research and analysis we shall find another aspect of Purusha and Prakriti which the Sankhya system missed. We shall find that this seeing of Purusha is actually a command. What Purusha pleases to see Prakriti tends to create, and what Purusha pleases not to see Prakriti tends to abolish. "Purusha and Prakriti are therefore not only the Witness and the Activity witnessed but the Lord and his executive energy; Purusha is Ishwara, Prakriti is his Shakti. Their play with each other is both the motive and executive force of all existence in the universe."

According to Sankhya, however, Purusha is conceived as something different from the body-mind complex—the witness, without any attachment, uninfluenced and unaffected by the creation. It is Nirguna (without any attributes), Nishkriya (immobile) and Asanga (without any relation with others). Purusha is eternal, pure, luminous consciousness—it is Nitya, Suddha, Buddha and Mukta. It is all-pervading, Bibhu. It is the eternal subject of knowledge and is itself knowledge but not an object of knowledge. This perception of Sankhya reveals Purusha, the Self, as only a silent witness, Sakshi, and as one who gives or withdraws his consent to Prakriti—Anumanta.

But Sankhya is incomplete as it fails to discover that the Self is also "the Lord and Knower, master of knowledge and will", *jñātā īśvaraḥ*, the Lord of the world-play, Karta, and the enjoyer of the actions of Prakriti, Bhokta.

According to Sankhya, Moksha or Liberation—liberation from the triple bondage of birth, disease and death (janma, jara, mrityu), liberation from the chain of Karma—consists in detaching, dissociating Purusha, the Self, from the trammels and workings of Prakriti, the not-Self.

The Sankhya liberation consists in two things:

Firstly, it consists in the negative process of dissociating and abolishing all causes of suffering—which are of three kinds: Adhyatmika, Adibhautika and Adidaivika—without any possibility of their return. Then is the true "Purusartha" attained.

Secondly, it consists in attaining the pure consciousness, freedom and immortality.

The method of attaining this liberation is the method of Knowledge. The Yoga of the intelligent will is indicated by Sankhya as the royal road to Moksha. According to Sankhya, ignorance is the cause of man's sufferings and miseries. And the capital ignorance of man is the lack of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self. The Self by itself is pure, eternal and self-conscious. It is Ahankar, the Ego-principle, in us that induces the Self to identify itself with



the workings of Prakriti. Therefore if we can attain the right knowledge we can dissociate Purusha from Prakriti and thus attain salvation. This knowledge of spiritual discrimination is, however, not an empirical knowledge. It is developed by spiritual experience, intuition or inner illumination.

According to Sankhya, there are two kinds of liberation: 1) Jivanmukti and 2) Videhamukti.

A man is said to be Jivanmukta when he realises the eternal, immobile, immutable Self in this life. He is said to have attained Videhamukti when he realises freedom in a disembodied condition. According to some Sankhya schools Jivanmukti is not possible since we have a physical body.

Lastly we may here point out that the Sankhya system lays exclusive emphasis on the knowledge of the spiritual Self as contradistinguished from the not-Self and advocates the pursuit of the path of knowledge as the only way to salvation. But this is a partial truth, for we know in the integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo that one has to accept a more comprehensive view of salvation including high spiritual gains through work and devotion—i.e. by following the triple path indicated in the Gita and further illumined by the spiritual philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

MANOJ

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Purusha and Prakriti, Conscious Soul and executive Force of Nature, are in the supramental harmony a two-aspected single truth, being and dynamis of the Reality; there can be no disequilibrium or predominance of one over the other. In Overmind we have the origin of the cleavage, the trenchant distinction made by the philosophy of the Sankhyas in which they appear as two independent entities....At the same time in Overmind this separateness is still founded on the basis of an implicit underlying unity....

In our separative consciousness, imperfectly visited by glimpses of catholicity and universality, these things exist as opposites.

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As we cannot separate Fire and the power of Fire, it has been said, so we cannot separate the Divine Reality and its Consciousness-Force, Chit-Shakti.

SRI AUROBINDO

## HUMAN PERSONALITY

*(Continued from the issue of March)*

So far we have seen that there are in man three sheaths of consciousness, namely, physical, vital and mental. Now let us proceed with Mind and see what it is and what are its faculties and functions. Sri Aurobindo says, "Mind as we know it, is a reflective mirror which receives presentations or images or a pre-existent Truth or Fact, either external to or at least vaster than itself." Mind is a faculty for the seeking of knowledge. Even when it finds the knowledge it does not possess it; it only keeps an impress of it. For mind is that which does not know, which tries to know and which Sri Aurobindo says, "never knows except as in a glass darkly." Mind is the power which interprets truth in its own manner for practical uses. It holds before itself the phenomenon that has been and also the phenomenon that may be; but has no capacity or faculty to construct for itself a phenomenon that assuredly will be. The Nature of our mind is ignorance, a limited and conditioned knowledge of being. It has a very little memory of its own past because of Ignorance; it has no certain conception of its future; it has only an awareness of its present changing from moment to moment, yet even this is too vast for its control.

Mind cannot grasp totality as a whole. But when the real is put before it in divisions it will at once say, "This now I know." Truly, however, it does not know the essence of things; its knowledge is represented knowledge; it makes a figure of the reality and understands it. It knows only its own analysis of the object and the idea it has formed of it by a synthesis of the separate parts and properties that it has seen. Sri Aurobindo says, "Mind is only a preparatory form of our consciousness. Mind is an instrument of analysis and synthesis, but not of essential knowledge. Its function is to cut something vaguely from the unknown Thing-in-itself and call this measurement or delimitation of it the whole, and again to analyse the whole into parts which it regards as separate mental objects. It is only the parts and accidents that the Mind can see definitely and, after its own fashion, know."—"it is this essential characteristic of Mind which conditions the workings of all its operative powers, whether conception, perception, sensation or the dealings of creative thought. Mind may divide, multiply, add, subtract, but it cannot get beyond the limits of this mathematics. This essential faculty and the essential limitation that accompanies it are the

truth of Mind and fix its real nature and action, *svābhava* and *svadharmā*.”

We have seen that man is a mentalised animal, preoccupied like the animal with his bodily existence; he employs his mind for the uses, interests, desires of life and the body, as their servant and minister, not yet as their sovereign and master. The normal thought-actions of the mind are divided into three parts. First and lowest and most necessary to the mental being in the body is the habitual mind that founds its ideas upon the data given by the senses and by the surface experiences of the nervous and emotional being. This habitual mind has two movements, one is mechanical which is more active in the average human being and one is intellectual. The second grade of the thinking activity is dynamic which draws material from life and builds out of it creative ideas that become dynamic for farther life-development. The third grade of thinking is purely ideative which lives disinterestedly in truth of the ideas and knowledge in their own right.

“Ordinarily, on our surface, man’s chief instrument of thought and action is the reason, the observing, understanding and arranging intellect.” But our mind has a faculty of imagination, a most important and indispensable instrument; it can create and take as true and real its own mental structures. Sri Aurobindo says, “Our mental imagination is an instrument of Ignorance, it is the resort or device or refuge of a limited capacity of knowledge, a limited capacity of effective action. Mind supplements these deficiencies by its power of imagination: it uses it to extract from things obvious and visible the things that are not obvious and visible; it undertakes to create its own figures of the possible and impossible; it erects illusory actuals or draws figures of a conjectured or constructed truth of things that are not true to outer experience....But it is to be noted that through the imagination it does receive a figure of truth, does summon possibilities which are afterwards realised, does often by its imagination exercise an effective pressure on the world’s actualities.” Thus he further says, “Imagination is a necessity for a partial being with an ignorant consciousness; for it has to supplement its ignorance by imaginations and conjectures.”

Now let us see what human intelligence is. For an ordinary human being intelligence is the highest principle of which he is aware and that which seems to him to govern and explain all his action and creation. Sri Aurobindo says, “the normal character of human intelligence is an inquiring reason or reflective thought which observes, supposes, infers, concludes, arrives by labour at a constructed truth, a constructed scheme of knowledge, a deliberately arranged action of its own making. Or rather this is what it strives to be and partly is; for its knowledge and will are constantly invaded, darkened or frustrated by forces of the being which are half-blind instruments of the mechanism of Nature.

“But the action of the intelligence is not only turned downward and outward upon our subjective and external life to understand it and determine the law and order of its present movement and its future potentialities. It has also an upward and inward eye and a more luminous functioning by which it accepts divinations from the hidden eternities. It is opened in this power of vision to a Truth above it from which it derives, however imperfectly and as from behind a veil, an indirect knowledge of the universal principles of our existence and its possibilities; it receives and turns what it can seize of them into intellectual forms and these provide us with large governing ideas by which our efforts can be shaped and around which they can be concentrated or massed; it defines the ideals we seek to accomplish. It provides us with the great ideas that are forces (*idées forces*), ideas which in their own strength impose themselves upon our life and compel it into their moulds. Only the forms we give these ideas are intellectual; they themselves descend from a plane of truth of being where knowledge and force are one, the idea and the power of self-fulfilment in the idea are inseparable.”

Our human intelligence “is not composed entirely and exclusively of the rational intellect and the rational will; there enters into it a deeper, more intuitive power, more splendid and powerful, but much less clear, much less developed and as yet hardly at all self-possessing light and force for which we have not even a name. But at any rate its character is to arrive at a kind of illumination, —not the dry light of the reason, nor the moist and suffused light of the heart, but a lightning and a solar splendour. It may indeed subordinate itself and merely help the reason and heart with its flashes; but there is another urge in it, its natural urge, which exceeds the reason. It tries to illuminate the intellectual being, to illuminate the ethical and aesthetic, to illuminate the emotional and the active, to illuminate even the senses and the sensations. It offers in words of revelation, it unveils as if by lightning flashes, it shows in a sort of mystic or psychic glamour or brings out into a settled but for a mental man almost a supernatural light, a Truth greater and truer than the knowledge given by Reason and Science, a Right larger and more divine than the moralist’s scheme of virtues, a Beauty more profound, universal and entrancing than the sensuous or imaginative beauty worshipped by the artist, a joy and divine sensibility which leaves the ordinary emotions poor and pallid, a Sense beyond the senses and sensations...”

Next to the mental being or lower than this is the vital being. There are four parts of the vital being, namely, the mental vital, the emotional vital, the central vital and last, the lower vital. The mental vital gives a mental form to the desires, feelings, passions, sensations, ambitions, possessive and other movements of the vital being. The emotional vital is the seat of various feelings such

as love, joy, sorrow, hatred, and the rest. The central vital is the seat of the stronger vital longings and reactions, e.g. ambitions, pride, fear, love of fame, attractions and repulsions, desires and passions of various kinds and the field of many vital energies. The lower vital which is occupied with small desires and feelings, such as make the greater part of daily life, e.g. food desire, sexual desire, small likings, dislikes, vanity, quarrels, love of praise, anger at blame, little wishes of all kinds and various other things.

Next and lower to the vital being comes the physical being. In this physical being there is the physical mind, the vital physical and the gross physical. "The physical mind takes its stand on Matter and the material world, on the body and bodily life, on sense-experience and on a normal practical mentality and its experience. All that is not of this order, it regards as unreal or unrealised, only to be accepted as entirely real when it has succeeded in becoming actual, becoming a physical fact." The vital physical is the vehicle of the nervous responses of our physical nature; it is the field and instrument of the smaller sensations, desires, reactions of all kinds to the impacts of the outer physical and gross material life. The vital physical part is therefore the agent of most of the lesser movements of our external life. The gross physical part has a consciousness of its own, the obscure consciousness proper to the limbs, cells, tissues, glands, organs.

We have seen at the beginning that behind our superficial waking self there is a vast subliminal kingdom of inner consciousness. It is deeper, greater, vaster than our surface egoistic personality. "There is in it an inner mind, an inner vital of ourselves, an inner or subtle-physical being larger than our outer being and nature. There is here a consciousness which has a power of direct contact with the universal unlike the mostly indirect contacts which our surface being maintains with the universe through the sense-mind and the senses. There are here inner senses, a subliminal sight, touch, hearing; but these subtle senses are rather channels of the inner being's direct consciousness of things than its informants: the subliminal is not dependent on its senses for its knowledge, they only give a form to its direct experience of objects; they do not, so much as in waking mind, convey forms of objects for the mind's documentations or as the starting-point or basis for an indirect constructive experience....Our waking state is unaware of its connection with the subliminal being, although it receives from it—but without any knowledge of the place of origin—the inspirations, intuitions, ideas, will-suggestions, sense-suggestions, urges to action that rise from below or from behind our limited surface existence. Sleep like trance opens the gate of the subliminal to us; for in sleep, as in trance, we retire behind the veil of the limited waking personality and it is behind this veil that the subliminal has its existence."

“We might say then that there are three elements in the totality of our being: there is the submental and the subconscious which appears to us as if it were inconscient comprising the material basis and a good part of our life and body; there is the subliminal, which comprises the inner being, taken in its entirety of inner mind, inner life, inner physical with the soul or psychic entity supporting them; there is this waking consciousness which the subliminal and the subconscious throw up on the surface, a wave of their secret surge. But even this is not an adequate account of what we are; for there is not only something deep within behind our normal self-awareness, but something also high above it: that too is ourselves, other than our surface mental personality, but not outside our true self; that too is a country of our spirit. For the subliminal proper is no more than the inner being on the level of the Knowledge-Ignorance luminous, powerful and extended indeed beyond the poor conception of our waking mind but still not the supreme or the whole sense of our being, not its ultimate mystery. We become aware, in a certain experience, of a range of being superconscient to all these three, aware too of something, a supreme highest Reality sustaining and exceeding them all, which humanity speaks of vaguely as Spirit, God, the Oversoul: from these superconscient ranges we have visitations and in our highest being we tend towards them and to that supreme Spirit. There is then in our total range of existence a superconscience as well as a subconscious and inconscience, overarching and perhaps enveloping our subliminal and our waking selves, but unknown to us, seemingly unattainable and incommunicable.

“But with the extension of our knowledge we discover what this spirit or oversoul is: it is ultimately our own highest deepest vastest Self, it is apparent on its summits or by reflection in ourselves as Sachchidananda creating us and the world by the power of His divine Knowledge-Will, spiritual, supramental, truth-conscious, infinite. That is the real Being, Lord and Creator, who, as the Cosmic Self veiled in Mind and Life and Matter, has descended into that which we call the Inconscient and constitutes and directs its subconscious existence by His supramental will and knowledge, has ascended out of the Inconscient and dwells in the inner being constituting and directing its subliminal existence by the same will and knowledge, has cast up out of the subliminal our surface existence and dwells secretly in it overseeing with the same supreme light and mastery its stumbling and groping movements. If the subliminal and subconscious may be compared to a sea which throws up the wave of our surface mental existence, the superconscience may be compared to an ether which constitutes, contains, overroofs, inhabits and determines the movements of the sea and its waves. It is there in this higher ether that we are inherently and intrinsically conscious of our self and spirit, not as here below by a reflection in silent mind or by acquisition of the knowledge of a hidden Being in us; it is

MOTHER INDIA

through it, through that ether of superconscience, that we can pass to a supreme status, knowledge, experience." Through it we can arrive at the highest status of our real, our supreme Self where knowledge is by Inspiration and Spontaneous Discrimination and Revelation.

*Concluded*

VISHU

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