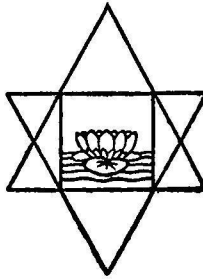


MOTHER INDIA

AUGUST 15, 1955 : SRI AUROBINDO'S BIRTHDAY

Price : Re. 1.



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. 7

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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SRI AUROBINDO AND HUMAN EVOLUTION

"I HAVE no intention of giving my sanction to a new edition of the old fiasco." These ringing challenging words come from the greatest spiritual figure of modern India: Sri Aurobindo. They were meant to refuse acceptance of what he called "a partial and transient spiritual opening within with no true and radical change in the law of the external nature." Although originally applied to a particular crisis in a disciple's career, the surmounting of the habitual outer personality with its petty and egoistic ways of thought, feeling, character and action, they can be taken in general to suggest Sri Aurobindo's keen sense of the need for a new principle and power of spiritual life to solve the many-sided problem of man's imperfect nature.

To grasp what Sri Aurobindo stands for, we must first seize the significance of the phrase "spiritual life". Historical India has had no uncertainty about it. "Spiritual" does not mean merely "cultural" or, as is mostly the case today, merely "moral". Of course, spirituality has in its essence a supreme refinement and liberality as also an extreme honesty, purity, unselfishness and benevolence. Yet its essence goes beyond the values of the intellectual, the aesthetic and the ethical being. Even religious values—concerned primarily as they are with a set of dogmas, pietistic practices, modes of external worship to support and satisfy one's faith in and fervour for the supernatural—cannot be quite equated with it. It does not deny all these values, but it goes to the concrete experience of a more-than-human Reality hidden from us, a Reality eternal and infinite whose partial and divided reflections are caught in all that we ordinarily consider the highest humanity. Spirituality is oneness with or at least effective participation in that secret existence: it is for evolutionary man the act or state of what India has called Yoga. The word "Yoga" has the same root as the English "yoke"—it connotes the being yoked or joined or united with the more-than-human, the divine, the perfect, through a disciplined process of inner development.

This process is sometimes precluded by the practice of certain extraordinary physical postures and breathing exercises. But they have never been considered necessary to the central object of Yoga. The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo starts straight with the consciousness and puts a double aim before it: transcendence and transformation. That double aim is in general all Yoga's, but much depends on the precise content read in it. In the past, the whole meaning of tran-

scendence lay in getting beyond the ordinary human self into some aloof Absolute or some Cosmic Consciousness or some Oversoul that is this self's Lord and Lover. Transformation meant sagehood and saintliness, a calmly compassionate, wisely energetic and helpful living from within outwards, which brings others not only happiness but also some touch of the transcendence achieved by the sage and the saint. The philosophy behind this spirituality has been either that the world is a huge illusion from which its victims have to be drawn away into an illimitable peace, or that here is a mysterious play of God with the soul around a theme of love's hide and seek, or else that a creative divine Force is sweeping the soul upwards through various phases of effective self-expression to an ultimate identity with the Supreme Spirit above Nature. Ascetic quietism, ecstatic devotionism, enlightened dynamism have been the three main strands of the Indian spiritual life. But the first has acquired prominence because of a tremendous trenchancy in it, its impatience with any kind of "make-do" with a world which, whatever the transformative influence brought to it, seems compounded of some stuff of radical and irremediable imperfection. After all, even the other ways of spirituality end up with a passing out of the world-scene, an attainment of a Beyond where alone is fulfilment found. A clean cut, therefore, between matter and Spirit has often struck the baffled aspiring mind of man as the most satisfying solution.

Sri Aurobindo holds that by such a clean cut nothing is really solved: the problem is shirked and shelved and, though the Nirvana of Buddha and the Absolute Brahman of Shankara are grand experiences that no aspirant to all-round spirituality can afford to ignore or miss, the original Indian drive towards a many-sided harmony, towards an accord of the Here and the Beyond, is left uncompleted. At the same time he recognises that the means adopted so far for changing the earth from a *mêlée* of good and evil, knowledge and ignorance, beauty and ugliness, strength and weakness, into a mould for the Divine's manifestation have been inadequate. The Yoga of God's enrapturing love and the Yoga of God's uplifting power have indeed a splendour which cannot be depreciated, they have unsealed great springs of idea and action; and yet they have failed to break the ultimate rock, so to speak, from which the full fountain of the Life Divine may leap. Philosophically, though they did not deny like the Illusionists the world's value, they overlooked three basic points.

First, the world is a field of evolution in which through a succession of births the growing inmost soul in us prepares three instruments—the physical, the vital, the mental—and, unless these instruments find a perfection of their own, there can be no fulfilment of the evolutionary scheme. Merely for a sojourning soul to develop itself and utilise them exaltedly for a while and then, discarding

them as incapable of entire divinisation, pass on beyond is surely to bypass the purpose of evolution. Together with the inmost being's growth into the divine we must have the instrumental nature's completion if we are to appease the urge that has always found voice in human history—the mind's search for flawless knowledge of the world's dynamics, the life-force's cry for happiness and co-operative abundance and triumphant activity, the body's passion for health, stability, continuance. Transformation must signify the perfecting of our nature-parts to the full, a total conquest of the difficulties by which evolution is beset, the establishment of a divinised mind, a divinised life-force, a divinised body—a spiritual victory in the very field that is the concern of science. The Yogi must prove to be the super-scientist. Then alone can spirituality have integral and utterly incontrovertible justification for earth-beings. That is the first point to be emphasised.

The second point is the rationale of the spirituality which is super-science. Is the required divinisation possible by the way things are constituted? "Yes", answers Sri Aurobindo. Evolution starts with a seeming opposite of all that we can imagine of Godhead: a vast welter of blind brute energy—insensitive, unconscious, amoral matter. Out of this arises the *élan* of life and out of life arises the activity of mind. Sri Aurobindo says that evolution occurs because the emergent powers are already in a state of involution within the physical cosmos. And the involution is the last stage in a series of grades downward from the supreme Spirit, a series in which planes of mind and life occultly exist between Spirit and matter. Forces of these planes press upon matter and enter into it to assist the push within it to evolve life and mind in material terms. The supreme Spirit also has an involved figure of itself in matter and that is why there can be no ultimate satisfaction in earth-existence without a straining towards the spiritual. Once the mental level has emerged, the inmost soul is able to function with some of its light in the forefront and, through the pursuit of ideals and values, through the ache for the infinite, the eternal, the deific, it helps its instruments, our nature-parts, in that onward and upward straining. But since the Spirit is not only beyond but even here—and here not only as a Cosmic Consciousness containing and enveloping all but also as an entity hidden in the very atoms of the physical universe and progressively active in the stuff of life and mind—its outflowering in our nature-parts must be possible and the liberating touch and penetration from the Spirit's uninvolved status above can be no alien intrusion but God's coming into His own through an evolutionary process. Divinisation of mind and life and body can be accomplished only if there is fundamental identity of substance between the higher and the lower: that is, if the lower is a particular phenomenal organisation put forth for working out some potentiality of the masterful infinite that is the higher,

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Having seen what the spiritual goal of the evolutionary process is and how its attainment is grounded in the nature of things, we must get into conceptual focus the exact principle and power of the Spirit which provides the ground and goal. In Sri Aurobindo's view, the Spirit is the Truth of existence not in the sense of the Real as opposed to the unreal that is the universe of mind and life and matter, or in the sense of the Perfect that can never be found in the world's formations. Sri Aurobindo avers that if all things have come from the Spirit, there must be in the Spirit a supporting original of them. No doubt, the Spirit is an ineffable freedom from all that is here, it is not limited by anything, it exceeds all that we can conceive; but, while exceeding all, it does not negate all: of its reality they are phases and in it must be the archetypes, the perfect patterns, of which all the formations of the world are evolving terms. Divine counterparts of mind and life and matter must reside in it, fully manifested in a flawless harmony in the Beyond and concealed in their fullness within the laboriously evolving terms here, the twofold presence of them constituting by descent and ascent a manifestation upon earth. Such presence alone, with its descending and ascending movement, can provide the exact goal and ground of evolutionary fulfilment, it alone can be the genuine significant Truth of the cosmos and of the individual centres through which the involved cosmic possibilities blossom forth. Sri Aurobindo calls it Supermind, Gnosis, Creative Truth-Consciousness.

The Aurobindonian Supermind is not an entirely new discovery. As early as the Vedas, there was the vision of it as *Satyam Ritam Brihat*—the True, the Right, the Vast—and it was symbolised as the Sun of Knowledge in the highest heaven. But either it was experienced in deep trance from which its whole import could not be transmitted or what was seized was its reflection in the several grades between it and the mental level—grades distinguished by Sri Aurobindo from that level upwards as Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, Overmind. On each of these levels the Spirit has an organised existence in which it is self-revealed, each carries something of which our universe seems a half-lit image-echo; but the Spirit's self-revelation differs in intensity from grade to grade. In the Overmind it is so intense that most yogis and mystics have hardly looked further; they have believed the ultimate omniscience and omnipotence to be here, and yet this greatness has not the secret of the total transformation. No more than grand hints and glimmerings of the Supermind have been caught up to now. If there had been a clear and concrete seizure of it, its precise potentialities in reference to the evolutionary process would have been gauged. The realisation of the Supermind's significance and intention, by a wide-awake union with its Truth-Consciousness, is Sri Aurobindo's contribution to spiritual experience. The systematic detailed exposition of them is his contribution to philosophy. And the direct application of them to the problems

of individual and collective living in his Ashram at Pondicherry is his contribution to practical world-work.

These three contributions render Sri Aurobindo the most important influence for humanity's future, the spiritual India of history reaching its climax and giving modern times a stimulus of the profoundest creativity. Behind the stimulus was a versatile personality who could claim to be representative of both East and West and who seemed to hold in himself, like a greater Leonardo da Vinci, the seeds of a new age. A Bengali by birth, he was yet educated from his seventh to his twenty-first year in England, first at a school in Manchester and then at King's College, Cambridge. Over and above using the English language as if it were his mother-tongue, he was a brilliant classical scholar who made his mark not only at Cambridge but also in the open competition for the I.C.S. by his record scoring in Greek and Latin. Fluent knowledge of French, Italian and German was another of his accomplishments. Together with his linguistic proficiency, close study of European history and institutions gave him insight into the whole heart of Western culture. On return to India, after deliberately absenting himself from the riding tests in the I.C.S. examination and thus disqualifying for official co-operation with the British Government, the years that he spent in state service with the then Gaekwad of Baroda were used by him for literary self-development, mastery of Sanskrit as well as several modern Indian languages, and intense absorption of the culture of the Orient. A period of educationist activity followed. Soon he launched into politics and became an all-India figure as the leader of Bengal in the struggle against foreign rule. In eight years he changed the face of the Indian political scene: working with Tilak he fixed the idea of complete independence in his country's mind. Here it is interesting to note that India's Day of Independence, August 15, is not symbolically connected with any event in the life of Gandhi or Nehru but happens to be the birthday of Sri Aurobindo. Three times in those momentous eight years was he accused of sedition, yet never convicted: on the most famous occasion of the three, when he went through a year's undertrial detention in jail and C. R. Das, the future leader of Bengal, appeared as his counsel and, by a curious stroke of fate, the judge at his trial was one Mr. Beachcroft whom he had beaten to second place in Greek and Latin in the I.C.S. competition, Rabindranath Tagore addressed to him a long stirring poem opening, "Aurobindo, Rabindranath bows to you." During his political career he began the practice of Yoga and rapidly went through the traditional spiritual experiences which had been considered the crown of mystic realisation. He pressed on farther in order to cure the defect which had rendered spirituality in the past, for all its gigantic achievements, incapable of altering radically the life of the race. In response to an inner call he left the field of politics and withdrew in

1910 to Pondicherry in French India for concentrated attainment and manifestation of the Supermind. There he was joined after a few years by one who in far Europe had been fired by the same integral aspiration and had proceeded on similar lines of spiritual experience. She settled in Pondicherry and became, at his express wish, the head and guide of his Ashram and the chief radiating centre of the new Light which he sought to establish in earth-terms.

In 1950 Sri Aurobindo, at 78, departed from his body which was laid in a specially prepared vault in the Ashram courtyard after lying in state for five days during which it was testified by French as well as Indian doctors to be showing in spite of the tropical climate no sign of decomposition or even discolouration.¹ Sri Aurobindo's *samādhi* (resting-place) has grown a venue of pilgrimage. The Ashram instead of suffering a setback by his departure has on the contrary developed a new intensity of spiritual life, as if the passing of the Master whom innumerable people had known by experience to possess super-normal power over even physical circumstances were a sort of strategic sacrifice in the interests of his own work. His co-worker whom the disciples call the Mother is determined to carry on until the goal set by him is reached: the beginning of a divine humanity, a new step in evolution as definite as the one from animal to man and not just an enrichment or enlargement on the same level.

The Ashram today is an organisation in which more than eight hundred souls—men, women and children from several countries—are being shaped to be the nucleus of the new humanity. It is a scene of varied enterprise, with engineers, doctors, craftsman, physical culturists, sportsmen and manual workers no less than artists, poets, musicians and thinkers, trying to be the instruments of a novel inspiration. Sri Aurobindo's call is not to the wilderness: modern times in all their subtlety and complexity are accepted by him, for the spiritual life can be most fruitful only when it is organic to the age, takes stock of whatever is current, keeps in touch with contemporary problems and needs. Typical of the modernity of the Aurobindonian Yoga is the insistence that the production of a few extraordinary individuals is not the object. A collective, a social transformation is wanted. And that is why the spiritual work, though unimplicated in politics, is never indifferent to the crises brought about in any part of the world by tyrannies that seek to arrest into a single-typed thought-fettered uniformity the many-sided evolutionary nature of man which can be fulfilled only by a diversity in unity, a freedom within co-operation. But Sri Aurobindo has always reminded the world that its dreams of liberty and democracy and international harmony cannot really come true unless there is a progressive inward dedication to the service of the divine Supermind which is the whole sense of his Yoga.

¹ The author was himself one of the thousands of eye-witnesses to this phenomenon.

Here a few words would be in place about Sri Aurobindo's attitude to the scientific temper of modern times. We have already said that the Aurobindonian Yoga does not dissociate itself from the current and the contemporary. This should imply that there is nothing obscurantist about it. In fact it welcomes many of the mental qualities science has helped to cultivate. Sri Aurobindo's stay in England coincided with the heyday of scientific materialism. And, though he prophesied quite early that its negation of the extra-sensory and the supra-physical would break down by the very force of its own narrowness, he always appreciated the austere discipline, fostered by science, of emotion-free intellect which insists on putting everything to rigorous test, and he set an immense value on science's demand for tangible results of all endeavour and for building by evolution upon *terra firma* whatever heaven the idealist visions among the clouds. By what he criticised and what he approved he went to the core of the scientific adventure, cleansing it of all adventitious dogmatism and making its essential integrity and clarity and progressive this-worldliness one with his insatiable hunger for not only the surfaces but also the depths of Reality. It is this rare union of the scientific and the spiritual, each intensifying and completing the other, that finds expression in a letter he wrote apropos inveterately sceptical intellectuality like Bertrand Russell's as contrasted with the temperament which easily and eagerly believes or rests happy with lofty speculations. The letter begins:

"I must remind you that I have been an intellectual myself and no stranger to doubt—both the Mother and myself have had one side of the mind as positive and as insistent on practical results and more so than any Russell can be. We could never have been content with the shining ideas and phrases which a Rolland or another takes for the gold coin of Truth. We know well what is the difference between a subjective experience and a dynamic outward-going and realising Force. So although we have Faith (and who ever did anything great in the world without having faith in his mission or the Truth at work behind him?), we do not found ourselves on faith alone, but on a great ground of knowledge which we have been developing and testing all our lives. I think I can say that I have been testing day and night for years more scrupulously than any scientist his theory or his method on the physical plane. That is why I am not alarmed by the aspect of the world around me or disconcerted by the often successful fury of the adverse Forces who increase in their rage as the Light comes nearer and nearer to the field of earth and Matter."

"The field of earth and Matter"—that is the final objective of the scientist of the Spirit that is Sri Aurobindo. And to prepare in this field the requisite inner receptivity to the Supermind's Light in a comprehensively cultured and efficient consciousness, he had conceived an International University Centre

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in Pondicherry, with residential quarters for students and teachers from all over the globe: the Mother has now started to materialise the gigantic scheme. Free studies will be afforded here in every accepted branch of learning. A unique feature is that the different nationals will be taught in their own languages. But this University Centre will not be just one more educational institution added to the hundreds of others in India and elsewhere. It will have the Aurobindonian world-vision as its background. And this vision will be conveyed not only by study, in the higher classes, of the Master's own books like *The Life Divine* (the metaphysical structure of that vision) *The Synthesis of Yoga* (the exposé of an integral technique of spiritual progression); *The Human Cycle* (studies in the psychology of social development and the search for values), *The Ideal of Human Unity* (an analysis of man's political aspirations and of present-day social, political and economic history), *The Future Poetry* (essays on poetry in general and English poetry in particular, on the various grades and powers of consciousness finding poetic expression and on a new direction of poetic development under the stress of spiritual experience), *Savitri* (a blank-verse epic of nearly twenty-four thousand lines turning a legend of the past into a symbol of the supramental transformation and variously exemplifying "the future poetry"). Over and above Sri Aurobindo's books which are part of India's most living and significant literature, as well as the illuminating publications of the Mother, what will convey his vision will be the constant presence of its very source—the new spiritual consciousness made dynamic for earth-use by him and the Mother and in process of establishment in their disciples. Thus the University Centre in its full development will be at the same time a great meeting-ground of the East and the West and a rich soil for the first shoots of a harmonised world in which the spiritual will not be cut off from the material, the outermost will be illumined with the innermost and there will not be in any form "a new edition of the old fiasco".¹

K. D. SETHNA

¹ Part of this article originally appeared in the Delhi Weekly, *Thought*.

THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE*

SRI AUROBINDO

THE Spirit who lies concealed behind the material world, has given us, through the inspiration of great seers, the Scripture as helpers and guides to unapparent truth, lamps of great power that send their rays into the darkness of the unknown beyond which He dwells, *tamasah parastāt*. They are guides to knowledge, brief indications to enlighten us on our path, not substitutes for thought and experience. They are *śabdām Brahma*, the Word, the oral expression of God, not the thing to be known itself nor the knowledge of Him. *Sabdām* has three elements, the word, the meaning and the spirit. The word is a symbol, *vāk or nāma*; we have to find the *artha*, the meaning or form of thought which the symbol indicates. But the meaning itself is only the indication of something deeper which the thought seeks to convey to the intellectual conception. For not only words, but ideas also are eventually no more than symbols of a knowledge which is beyond ideas and words. Therefore it comes that no idea by itself is wholly true. There is indeed *rūpa*, some concrete or abstract form of knowledge answering to every name, and it is that which the meaning must present to the intellect. We say a form of knowledge, because according to our philosophy, all things are forms of an essentially unknowable existence which reveals them as forms of knowledge to the essential awareness in its Self, its Atman or Spirit, the Chit in the Sat. But beyond *nāma* and *rūpa* is *swarūpa*, the essential figure of Truth, which we cannot know with the intellect but only with a higher faculty. And every *swarūpa* is itself only a symbol of the one essential existence which can only be known by its symbols because in its ultimate reality it defies logic and exceeds perception,—God.

Since the knowledge the Scripture conveys is so deep, difficult and subtle, —if it were easy what would be the need of the Scripture?—the interpreter cannot be too careful or too perfectly trained. He must not be one who will rest content in the thought-symbol or in the logical implication of the idea; he must hunger and thirst for what is beyond. The interpreter who stops short with the letter, is the slave of a symbol and convicted of error. The interpreter who cannot go beyond the external meaning, is the prisoner of

* From unpublished old writings.

his thought and rests in a partial and incomplete knowledge. One must transgress limits and penetrate to the knowledge behind, which must be experienced before it can be known; for the ear hears it, the intellect observes it, but the spirit alone can possess it. Realisation in the self of things is the only knowledge; all else is mere idea or opinion.

The interpretation of the Veda is hampered by many human irrelevancies. Men set up an authority and put it between themselves and knowledge. The orthodox are indignant that a mere modern should presume to differ from Shankara in interpreting the Vedanta or from Sayana in interpreting the Veda. They forget that Shankara and Sayana are themselves moderns, separated from ourselves by some hundreds of years only, but the Vedas are many thousands of years old. The commentator ought to be studied, but instead we put him in place of the text. Good commentaries are always helpful even when they are wrong, but the best cannot be allowed to fetter inquiry. Sayana's commentary on the Veda helps me by showing what a man of great erudition some hundreds of years ago thought to be the sense of the Scripture. But I cannot forget that even at the time of the Brahmanas the meaning of the Veda had become dark to the men of that prehistoric age. Shankara's commentary on the Upanishads helps me by showing what a man of immense metaphysical genius and rare logical force after arriving at some fundamental realisations thought to be the sense of the Vedanta. But it is evident that he is often at a loss and always prepossessed by the necessity of justifying his philosophy. I find that Shankara had grasped much of Vedantic truth, but that much was dark to him. I am bound to admit what he realised; I am not bound to exclude what he failed to realise. *Apta-vākyaṃ*, authority, is one kind of proof; it is not the only kind: *pratyakṣa* is more important.

The heterodox on the other hand swear by Max Muller and the Europeans. It is enough for them that Max Muller should have found henotheism in the Vedas for the Vedas to be henotheistic. The Europeans have seen in our Veda only the rude chants of an antique and primitive pastoral race sung in honour of the forces of Nature, and for many their opinion is conclusive of the significance of the *mantras*. All other interpretation is to them superstitious. But to me the ingenious guesses of foreign grammarians are of no more authority than the ingenious guesses of Sayana. It is irrelevant to me what Max Muller thinks of the Veda or what Sayana thinks of the Veda. I should prefer to know what the Veda has to say for itself and, if there is any light there on the unknown or on the infinite, to follow the ray till I come face to face with that which it illumines.

There are those who follow neither Sayana nor the Europeans, but interpret Veda and Vedanta for themselves, yet permit themselves to be the slaves

of another kind of irrelevancy. They come to the Veda with a preconceived and established opinion and seek in it a support for some trifling polemic; they degrade it to the position of a backer in an intellectual prizefight. Opinions are not knowledge, they are only sidelights on knowledge. Most often they are illegitimate extensions of an imperfect knowledge. A man has perhaps travelled to England and seen Cumberland and the lakes; he comes back and imagines England ever after as a country full of verdant mountains, faery woodlands, peaceful and enchanted waters. Another has been to the manufacturing centres; he imagines England as a great roaring workshop, crammed with furnaces and the hum of machinery and the smell of metal. Another has sojourned in the quiet country-side and to him England is all hedges and lanes and the daisy-sprinkled meadow and the well-tilled field. All have realised a little, but none have realised England. Then there is the man who has only read about the country or heard descriptions from others and thinks he knows it better than the men who have been there. They may all admit that what they have seen need not be the whole, but each has his little ineffaceable picture which, because it is all he has realised, persists in standing for the whole. There is no harm in that, no harm whatever in limitation if you understand and admit the limitation. But if all the four begin quarrelling, what an aimless confusion will arise! That is what has happened in India because of the excessive logicity and too robust opinionativeness of southern metaphysicians. We should come back to a more flexible and rational spirit of inquiry.

What then are the standards of truth in the interpretation of the Scripture? The standards are three, the knower, knowledge and the known.

The known is the text itself that we seek to interpret. We must be sure we have the right word, not an emendation to suit the exigency of some individual or sectarian opinion; the right etymology and shade of meaning, not one that is traditional or forced to serve the ends of a commentator; the right spirit in the sense, not an imported or too narrow or too elastic spirit.

The knower is the original *draṣṭā* or seer of the *mantra*, with whom we ought to be in spiritual contact. If knowledge is indeed a perishable thing in a perishable instrument, such contact is impossible; but in that case the Scripture itself must be false and not worth considering. If there is any truth in what the Scripture says, knowledge is eternal and inherent in all of us and what another saw I can see, what another realised I can realise. The *draṣṭā* was a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit, I also am a soul in relation with the infinite Spirit. We have a meeting-place, a possibility of communion.

Knowledge is the eternal truth, part of which the *draṣṭā* expresses to us. Through the part he shows us, we must travel to the whole, otherwise we shall be subject to the errors incidental to an imperfect knowledge. If even

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the part is to be rightly understood, it must be viewed in the terms of the whole, not the whole in the terms of the part. I am not limited by the Scriptures; on the contrary I must exceed them in order to be master of their knowledge. It is true that we are usually the slaves of our individual and limited outlook, but our capacity is unlimited, and, if we can get rid of *ahañkāra*, if we can put ourselves at the service of the Infinite without any reservation of predilection or opinion, there is no reason why our realisation should be limited. *Tasmin vijñāte sarvam vijñātam*. He being known, all can be known. To understand Scripture, it is not enough to be a scholar, one must be a soul. To know what the *draṣṭā* saw one must oneself have *drṣṭi*, sight, and be a student if not a master of the knowledge. *Atha parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate*. Grammar, etymology, prosody, astronomy, metaphysics, logic, all that is good; but afterwards there is still needed the higher knowledge by which the Immutable is known.

THE ACTION OF EQUALITY*

SRI AUROBINDO

THE distinctions that have already been made, will have shown in sufficiency what is meant by the status of equality. It is not mere quiescence and indifference, not a withdrawal from experience, but a superiority to the present reactions of the mind and life. It is the spiritual way of replying to life or rather of embracing it and compelling it to become a perfect form of action of the self and spirit. It is the first secret of the soul's mastery of existence. When we have it in perfection, we are admitted to the very ground of the divine spiritual nature. The mental being in the body tries to compel and conquer life, but is at every turn compelled by it, because it submits to the desire reactions of the vital self. To be equal, not to be overborne by any stress of desire, is the first condition of real mastery, self-empire is its basis. But a mere mental equality, however great it may be, is hampered by the tendency of quiescence. It has to preserve itself from desire by self-limitation in the will and action. It is only the spirit which is capable of sublime undisturbed rapidities of will as well as an illimitable patience, equally just in a slow and deliberate or a swift and violent, equally secure in a safely lined and limited or a vast and enormous action. It can accept the smallest work in the narrowest circle of cosmos, but it can work too upon the whirl of chaos with an understanding and creative force; and these things it can do because by its detached and yet intimate acceptance it carries into both an infinite calm, knowledge, will and power. It has that detachment because it is above all the happenings, forms, ideas and movements it embraces in its scope; and it has that intimate acceptance because it is yet one with all things. If we have not this free unity, *ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*, we have not the full equality of the spirit.

The first business of the sadhaka is to see whether he has the perfect equality, how far he has gone in this direction or else where is the flaw, and to exercise steadily his will on his nature or invite the will of the Purusha to get rid of the defect and its causes. There are four things that he must have; first, equality in the most concrete practical sense of the word, *samatā*, freedom from mental, vital, physical preferences, an even acceptance of all God's work-

* From *The Synthesis of Yoga: Part III. The Yoga of Self-Perfection*, Chapter LXI. in the *Arya* Chapter LX. was published last month.

ings within and around him; secondly, a firm peace and absence of all disturbance and trouble, *sānti*; thirdly, a positive inner spiritual happiness and spiritual ease of the natural being which nothing can lessen, *sukham*; fourthly, a clear joy and laughter of the soul embracing life and existence. To be equal is to be infinite and universal, not to limit oneself, not to bind oneself down to this or that form of the mind and life and its partial preferences and desires. But since man in his present normal nature lives by his mental and vital formations, not in the freedom of his spirit, attachment to them and the desires and preferences they involve is also his normal condition. To accept them is at first inevitable, to get beyond them exceedingly difficult and not, perhaps, altogether possible so long as we are compelled to use the mind as the chief instrument of our action. The first necessity therefore is to take at least the sting out of them, to deprive them, even when they persist, of their greater insistence, their present egoism, their more violent claim on our nature.

The test that we have done this is the presence of an undisturbed calm in the mind and spirit. The sadhaka must be on the watch as the witnessing and willing Purusha behind or, better, as soon as he can manage it, above the mind, and repel even the least indices or incidence of trouble, anxiety, grief, revolt, disturbance in his mind. If these things come, he must at once detect their source, the defect which they indicate, the fault of egoistic claim, vital desire, emotion or idea from which they start and this he must discourage by his will, his spiritualised intelligence, his soul unity with the Master of his being. On no account must he admit any excuse for them, however natural, righteous in seeming or plausible, or any inner or outer justification. If it is the prana which is troubled and clamorous, he must separate himself from the troubled Prana, keep seated his higher nature in the buddhi and by the buddhi school and reject the claim of the desire soul in him; and so too if it is the heart of emotion that makes the clamour and the disturbance. If on the other hand it is the will and intelligence itself that is at fault, then the trouble is more difficult to command, because then his chief aid and instrument becomes an accomplice of the revolt against the divine Will and the old sins of the lower members take advantage of this sanction to raise their diminished heads. Therefore there must be a constant insistence on one main idea, the self-surrender to the Master of our being, God within us and in the world, the supreme Self, the universal Spirit. The buddhi dwelling always in this master idea must discourage all its own lesser insistences and preferences and teach the whole being that the ego whether it puts forth its claim through the reason, the personal will, the heart or the desire-soul in the prana, has no just claim of any kind and all grief, revolt, impatience, trouble is a violence against the Master of the being.

This complete self-surrender must be the chief mainstay of the sadhaka

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because it is the only way, apart from complete quiescence and indifference to all action,—and that has to be avoided,—by which the absolute calm and peace can come. The persistence of trouble, *asānti*, the length of time taken for this purification and perfection, itself must not be allowed to become a reason for discouragement and impatience. It comes because there is still something in the nature which responds to it, and the recurrence of trouble serves to bring out the presence of the defect, put the sadhaka upon his guard and bring about a more enlightened and consistent action of the will to get rid of it. When the trouble is too strong to be kept out, it must be allowed to pass and its return discouraged by a greater vigilance and insistence of the spiritualised buddhi. Thus persisting, it will be found that these things lose their force more and more, become more and more external and brief in their recurrence, until finally calm becomes the law of the being. This rule persists so long as the mental buddhi is the chief instrument; but when the supramental light takes possession of mind and heart, then there can be no trouble, grief or disturbance; for that brings with it a spiritual nature of illumined strength in which these things can have no place. There the only vibrations and emotions are those which belong to the *ānandamaya* nature of divine unity.

The calm established in the whole being must remain the same whatever happens, in health and disease, in pleasure and in pain, even in the strongest physical pain, in good fortune and misfortune, our own or that of those we love, in success and failure, honour and insult, praise and blame, justice done to us or injustice, everything that ordinarily affects the mind. If we see unity everywhere, if we recognise that all comes by the divine will, see God in all, in our enemies or rather our opponents in the game of life as well as our friends, in the powers that oppose and resist us as well as the powers that favour and assist, in all energies and forces and happenings, and if besides we can feel that all is undivided from our self, all the world one with us within our universal being, then this attitude becomes much easier to the heart and mind. But even before we can attain or are firmly seated in that universal vision, we have by all the means in our power to insist on this receptive and active equality and calm. Even something of it, *alpam api asya dharmasya*, is a great step towards perfection; a first firmness in it is the beginning of liberated perfection; its completeness is the perfect assurance of a rapid progress in all the other members of perfection. For without it we can have no solid basis; and by the pronounced lack of it we shall be constantly falling back to the lower status of desire, ego, duality, ignorance.

This calm once attained, vital and mental preference has lost its disturbing force; it only remains as a formal habit of the mind. Vital acceptance or rejection, the greater readiness to welcome this rather than that happening,

the mental acceptance or rejection, the preference of this more congenial to that other less congenial idea or truth, the dwelling upon the will to this rather than to that other result, become a formal mechanism still necessary as an index of the direction in which the Shakti is meant to turn or for the present is made to incline by the Master of our being. But it loses its disturbing aspect of strong egoistic will, intolerant desire, obstinate liking. These appearances may remain for a while in a diminished form, but as the calm of equality increases, deepens, becomes more essential and compact, *ghana*, they disappear, cease to colour the mental and vital substance or occur only as touches on the most external physical mind, are unable to penetrate within, and at last even that recurrence, that appearance at the outer gates of mind ceases. Then there can come the living reality of the perception that all in us is done and directed by the Master of our being, *yathā prayukto'smi, tathā karomi*, which was before only a strong idea and faith with occasional and derivative glimpses of the divine action behind the becomings of our personal nature. Now every movement is seen to be the form given by the Shakti, the divine power in us, to the indications of the Purusha, still no doubt personalised, still belittled in the inferior mental form, but not primarily egoistic, an imperfect form, not a positive deformation. We have then to get beyond this stage even. For the perfect action and experience is not to be determined by any kind of mental or vital preference, but by the revealing and inspiring spiritual will which is the Shakti in her direct and real initiation. When I say that as I am appointed, I work, I still bring in a limiting personal element and mental reaction. But it is the Master who will do his own work through myself as his instrument, and there must be no mental or other preference in me to limit, to interfere, to be a source of imperfect working. The mind must become a silent luminous channel for the revelations of the supramental Truth and of the Will involved in its seeing. Then shall the action be the action of that highest Being and Truth and not a qualified translation or mistranslation in the mind. Whatever limitation, selection, relation is imposed, will be self-imposed by the Divine on himself in the individual at the moment for his own purpose, not binding, not final, not an ignorant determination of the mind. The thought and will become then an action from a luminous Infinite, a formulation not excluding other formulations, but rather putting them into their just place in relation to itself, englobing or transforming them even and proceeding to larger formations of the divine knowledge and action.

The first calm that comes is of the nature of peace, the absence of all unquiet, grief and disturbance. As the equality becomes more intense, it takes on a fuller substance of positive happiness and spiritual ease. This is the joy of the spirit in itself, dependent on nothing external for its absolute existence,

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nirāśraya, as the Gita describes it, *antah-sukho antarāramah*, an exceeding inner happiness, *brahmasparśam atyantam sukham aśnute*. Nothing can disturb it, and it extends itself to the soul's view of outward things, imposes on them too the law of this quiet spiritual joy. For the base of it is still calm, it is an even and tranquil neutral joy, *ahaituka*. And as the supramental light grows, a greater Ananda comes, the base of the abundant ecstasy of the spirit in all it is, becomes, sees, experiences and of the laughter of the Shakti doing luminously the work of the Divine and taking his Ananda in all the worlds.

The perfected action of equality transforms all the values of things on the basis of the divine *ānandamaya* power. The outward action may remain what it was or may change, that must be as the Spirit directs and according to the need of the work to be done for the world,—but the whole inner action is of another kind. The Shakti in its different powers of knowledge, action, enjoyment, creation, formulation, will direct itself to the different aims of existence, but in another spirit; they will be the aims, the fruits, the lines of working laid down by the Divine from his light above, not anything claimed by the ego for its own separate sake. The mind, the heart, the vital being, the body itself will be satisfied with whatever comes to them from the dispensation of the Master of the being and in that find a subtlest and yet fullest spiritualised satisfaction and delight; but the divine knowledge and will above will work forward towards its farther ends. Here both success and failure lose their present meanings. There can be no failure; for whatever happens is the intention of the Master of the worlds, not final, but a step on his way, and if it appears as an opposition, a defeat, a denial, even for the moment a total denial of the aim set before the instrumental being, it is so only in appearance and afterwards it will appear in its right place in the economy of his action,—a fuller supramental vision may even see at once or beforehand its necessity and its true relation to the eventual result to which it seems so contrary and even perhaps its definite prohibition. Or, if—while the light is deficient,—there has been a misinterpretation whether with regard to the aim or the course of the action and the steps of the result, the failure comes as a rectification and is calmly accepted without bringing discouragement or a fluctuation of the will. In the end it is found that there is no such thing as failure and the soul takes an equal passive or active delight in all happenings as the steps and formulations of the divine Will. The same evolution takes place with regard to good fortune and ill fortune, the pleasant and the unpleasant in every form, *maṅgala amaṅgala*, *priya apriya*.

And as with happenings, so with persons, equality brings an entire change of the view and the attitude. The first result of the equal mind and spirit is to bring about an increasing charity and inner toleration of all persons, ideas,

views, actions, because it is seen that God is in all beings and each acts according to his nature, his *swabhāva*, and its present formulations. When there is the positive equal Ananda, this deepens to a sympathetic understanding and in the end an equal universal love. None of these things need prevent various relations or different formulations of the inner attitude according to the need of life as determined by the spiritual will, or firm furtherings of this idea, view, action against that other for the same need and purpose by the same determination, or a strong outward or inward resistance, opposition and action against the forces that are impelled to stand in the way of the decreed movement. And there may be even the rush of the Rudra energy forcefully working upon or shattering the human or other obstacle, because that is necessary both for him and for the world purpose. But the essence of the equal inmost attitude is not altered or diminished by these more superficial formulations. The spirit, the fundamental soul remain the same, even while the Shakti of knowledge, will, action, love does its work and assumes the various forms needed for its work. And in the end all becomes a form of a luminous spiritual unity with all persons, energies, things in the being of God and in the luminous, spiritual, one and universal force, in which one's own action becomes an inseparable part of the action of all, is not divided from it, but feels perfectly every relation as a relation with God in all in the complex terms of his universal oneness. That is a plenitude which can hardly be described in the language of the dividing mental reason for it uses all its oppositions, yet escapes from them, nor can it be put in the terms of our limited mental psychology. It belongs to another domain of consciousness, another plane of our being.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES*

OUTSIDE THE BODY CONSCIOUSNESS

Q: Last night I was having a walk in the yard when I began to feel that it was not I who was doing the walking, but some form which I did not know at all. It seemed to be devoid of much vitality or consciousness. As I came into the area where it was a little darker, the things that were lying about looked as if they existed in a dreamland,—and in the midst of them was this form walking about like one in sleep. All this is rather strange!

SRI AUROBINDO: It is a very usual experience. It means that for a moment you were no longer in your body, but somehow either above or somehow outside the body-consciousness. This sometimes happens by the vital being rising up above the head or, more rarely, by its projecting itself into its own sheath (part of the subtle body) out of the physical attachment. But it also comes by a sudden even if momentary liberation from the identification with the body consciousness, and this liberation may become frequent and prolonged or permanent. The body is felt as something separate or some small circumstance in the consciousness or as something one carries about with one etc. etc., the exact experience varies. Many sadhaks here have had it. When one is accustomed, the strangeness of it (dreamland etc.) disappears.

WIDENESS

Q: During the evening meditation with Mother I felt a very strong pressure on the head; as it was difficult to bear I opened my eyes to relieve the tension.

SRI AUROBINDO: Probably the accumulated Force became more than the physical being could receive. When that happens the right thing to do is to widen oneself (one can do it by a little practice). If the consciousness is in a state of wideness then it can receive any amount of force without inconvenience.

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* Compiled from Sri Aurobindo's unpublished letters.

MOTHER INDIA

At the beginning the experience of wideness like other experiences comes only from time to time. It is only afterwards that it becomes frequent and remains long, till finally it settles and the consciousness remains always wide.

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This means that as before there was a widening of the mind and the vital, so now there has begun a widening of the physical consciousness.

ANANDA

Q: In the afternoon I was looking at the deep blue sky when all of a sudden I felt a descent of Ananda.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is Ananda in the mind and vital.

Q: If my Ananda was vital and mental, is there a psychic Ananda too?

SRI AUROBINDO: I did not say it was vital and mental, but that it was Ananda manifesting itself in the mental and vital—a quite different thing; for the one Ananda (the true thing) can manifest in any part of the being.

Q: Is Ananda a major experience?

SRI AUROBINDO: Light, Peace, Force, Ananda constitute the spiritual consciousness; if they are not among the major experiences, what are?

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There are two conditions, one of Ananda, another of great calm and equality in which there is no joy or grief. If one attains the latter, afterwards a greater more permanent Ananda becomes possible.

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To be full of peace, the heart quiet, not troubled by grief, not excited by joy is a very good condition. As for Ananda, it can come not only with its fullest intensity but with a more enduring persistence when the mind is at

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peace and the heart delivered from ordinary joy and sorrow. If the mind and heart are restless, changeable, unquiet, Ananda of a kind may come, but it is mixed with vital excitement and cannot abide. One must get peace and calm fixed in the consciousness first, then there is a solid basis on which the Ananda can spread itself and in its turn become an enduring part of the consciousness and nature.

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE

Q: I have been concentrating on both the head and the heart centres. In meditation the being falls silent, but the head gets heavy and I feel some working going on there. I hope I am not going to get knowledge only, because this is the centre for knowledge; I want bhakti and love too.

SRI AUROBINDO: When things come in this order the head opens up first and the heart afterwards—finally all the centres. If you are satisfied only with peace, knowledge and mukti, then perhaps the heart centre may open to that only. But if you want the love, then the descending Power and Light will work for that also.

THE DESCENT OF THE FORCE

Yes, it was the same experience. You went inside under the pressure of the Force—which is often though not always the first result—went into a few seconds' samadhi according to the ordinary language. The Force when it descends tries to open the body and pass through the centres. It has to come in (ordinarily) through the crown of the head (Brahmarandhram) and pass through the inner mind centre which is in the middle of the forehead between the eyebrows. That is why it presses first on the head. The opening of the eyes brings one back to the ordinary consciousness of the outer world, that is why the intensity is relieved by opening the eyes.

AUGUST DARSHAN

Q: During this Darshan, instead of Ananda, Force or Light I felt a great dryness.

SRI AUROBINDO: It depends upon your condition whether the Ananda or Force or Light descends or whether the resistance rises. It is the resistance of the ordinary physical consciousness ignorant and obscure that seems to have

MOTHER INDIA

risen in you. The period of 15th is a period of great descents but also of great resistances. This 15th was not an exception.

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If you get something by the darshan it is better to go home and absorb it; if not, it doesn't matter. Only you have to take care not to absorb deleterious influences at the gathering—I mean, moods of doubts, depression, indifference to things spiritual, etc. etc.

NOVEMBER DARSHAN

Q: When I came for your Darshan, it seemed as if it was Shiva himself I was seeing. I felt Ananda too. The consciousness of these things remained for two or three days, and then as if evaporated.

SRI AUROBINDO: There is no reason to be discouraged by what you call the evaporation of the consciousness that you got on the darshan day. It has not evaporated but drawn back from the surface. That usually happens when there is not the higher consciousness or some experience. What you have to learn is not to allow depression, but remain quiet allowing time for the assimilation and ready for fresh experience or growth whenever it comes.

A DREAM

A STORY BY SRI AUROBINDO*

A POOR man was sitting in a dark hut thinking of his miseries and of the injustice and wrongs that could be found in this world of God's making. Out of *abhiman* he began to mutter to himself, "As men do not want to cast a slur on God's name, they put the blame on Karma. If my misfortunes are really due to the sins committed in my previous birth and if I was so great a sinner, then currents of evil thoughts should still be passing through my mind. Can the mind of such a wicked person get cleansed so soon? And what about that Tinkari Sheel who has such colossal wealth and commands so many people! If there is anything like the fruits of Karma, then surely he must have been a famous saint and sadhu in his previous life; but I see no trace of that at all in his present birth. I don't think a bigger rogue exists—one so cruel and crooked. All these tales about Karma are just clever inventions of God to console man's mind. Shyamsundar¹ is very tricky; luckily he does not reveal himself to me, otherwise I would teach him such a lesson that he would stop playing these tricks."

As soon as he finished muttering, the man saw that his dark room was flooded with a dazzling light. After a while the luminous waves faded and he found in front of him a charming boy of a dusky complexion standing with a lamp in his hand, and smiling sweetly without saying a word. Noticing the musical anklets round his feet and the peacock plume, the man understood that Shyamsundar had revealed himself. At first he was at a loss what to do; for a moment he thought of bowing at his feet, but looking at the boy's smiling face no longer felt like making his obeisance. At last he burst out with the words, "Hullo, Keshta,² what makes you come here?" The boy replied with a smile, "Well, didn't you call me? Just now you had the desire to whip me! That is why I am surrendering myself to you. Come along, whip me." The man was now even more confounded than before, but not with any repentance for the desire to whip the Divine: the idea of punishing instead of patting such a sweet youngster

* Translated by Prithwindra from the Bengali original. The story was published in *Jagannather Rath*.

¹ One of Sri Krishna's names.

² Ibid.

did not appeal to him. The boy spoke again, "You see, Harimohon, those who, instead of fearing me, treat me as a friend, scold me out of affection and want to play with me, I love very much. I have created this world for my play only; I am always on the look-out for a suitable playmate. But, brother, I find no one. All are angry with me, make demands of me, want boons from me; they want honour, liberation, devotion—nobody wants me. I give whatever they ask. What am I to do? I have to please them; otherwise they will tear me to pieces. You too, I find, want something from me. You are vexed and want to whip someone. In order to satisfy that desire you have called me. Here I am, ready to be whipped—*ye yathā mām prapadyante*, I accept whatever people offer me. But before you beat me, if you wish to know my ways, I shall explain them to you. Are you willing?" Harimohon replied, "Are you capable of that? I see that you can talk a good deal, but how am I to believe that a mere child like you can teach me something?" The boy smiled again and said, "Come, see whether I can or not."

Then Sri Krishna placed his palm on Harimohon's head. Instantly, currents of electricity started flowing all through his body; from the *mulādhāra* the slumbering *kundalini*-power went up running to the head-centre (*brahmarandhra*), hissing like a serpent of flame; the head became filled with the vibration of life-energy. The next moment it seemed to Harimohon that the walls around were moving away from him, as if the world of forms and names was fading into Infinity leaving him alone. Then he became unconscious. When he came back to his senses, he found himself with the boy in an unknown house, standing before an old man who was sitting on a cushion, plunged in deep thought, his cheek resting on his palm. Looking at that heart-rending despondent face distorted by tormenting thoughts and anxiety, Harimohon could not believe that this was Tinkari Sheel, the all-in-all in their village. Then, extremely frightened, he asked the boy, "Keshta, what have you done? You have entered someone's dwelling in the dead of night like a thief! The police will come and thrash the life out of us. Don't you know Tinkari Sheel's power?" The boy laughed and said, "I know it pretty well. But stealing is an old practice of mine, and, besides, I am on good terms with the police. Don't you fear. Now I am giving you the inner sight, look inside the old man. You know Tinkari's power, now witness how mighty I am."

At once Harimohon could see into the man's mind. He saw, as in an opulent city ravaged by a victorious enemy, innumerable terrible-looking demons and ogres who had entered into that brilliant intelligence, disturbing its peace and composure, plundering its happiness. The old man had quarrelled with his young son and turned him out; the sorrow of losing his beloved child had cowed down his spirit, but anger, pride and vanity had shut the door of his heart

and were guarding it. Forgiveness had no entry there. Hearing calumnies against his own daughter he had driven her away and was lamenting over the cherished one he had lost. He knew that she was chaste but the fear of social censure and a feeling of shame coupled with his own arrogance and selfishness had put a curb on his affection. Frightened by the memory of a thousand sins the old man was trembling, but he did not have the courage or the strength to mend his evil ways. Now and then thoughts of death and of the other world came to him and filled him with terror. Harimohon saw also that from behind these morbid thoughts the hideous messenger of death was constantly peeping out and knocking at the door. Whenever this happened, the old man's heart sank and he frantically screamed with fear.

Horrified by this sight Harimohon looked at the boy and exclaimed, "Why, Keshta! I used to think this man the happiest of all!" The boy replied, "Just there lies my power. Tell me now which of the two is mightier— this Tinkari Sheel or Sri Krishna, the master of Vaikuntha? Look, Harimohon, I too have the police, sentinels, government, law, justice, I too can play the game of being a king; do you like this game?" "No, my child," answered Harimohon, "it is a very cruel game. Why, do you like it?" The boy laughed and declared, "I like all sorts of games; I like to whip as well as to be whipped." Then he continued, "You see, Harimohon, people like you look at the outward appearance of things and have not yet cultivated the subtle power of looking inside. Therefore you grumble that you are miserable and Tinkari is happy. This man has no material want: still, compared to you, how much more this millionaire is suffering! Can you guess why? Happiness is a state of mind, misery also is a state of mind. Both are only mind-created. He who possesses nothing, whose only possessions are difficulties, even he, if he wills, can be greatly happy. But just as you cannot find happiness after spending your days in dry piety, and as you are always dwelling upon your miseries, so too this man who spends his days in sins which give him no real pleasure is now thinking only of his miseries. All this is the fleeting happiness of virtue and the fleeting misery of vice, or the fleeting misery of virtue and the fleeting happiness of vice. There is no joy in this conflict. The image of the abode of bliss is with me: he who comes to me falls in love with me, wants me, lays his demands on me, torments me—he alone can succeed in getting my image of bliss." Harimohon went on eagerly listening to these words of Sri Krishna. The boy continued, "And look here, Harimohon, dry piety has lost its charm for you, but in spite of that you cannot give it up, habit¹ binds you to it; you cannot even conquer this petty vanity of being pious. This old man, on the other hand, gets no joy

¹ Sanskara.

from his sins, yet he too cannot abandon them because he is habituated to them, and is suffering hell's own agonies in this life. These are the bonds of virtue and vice; fixed and rigid notions, born of ignorance, are the ropes of these bonds. But the sufferings of that old man are indeed a happy sign. They will do him good and soon liberate him."

So far Harimohon had been listening silently to Sri Krishna's words. Now he spoke out, "Keshta, your words are undoubtedly sweet, but I don't trust them. Happiness and misery may be states of mind, but outer circumstances are their cause. Tell me, when the mind is restless because of starvation, can anyone be happy? Or when the body is suffering from a disease or enduring pain, can any one think of you?" "Come, Harimohon, that too I shall show you," replied the boy.

Again he placed his palm on Harimohon's head. As soon as he felt the touch, Harimohon saw no longer the dwelling of Tinkari Sheel. On the beautiful, solitary and breezy summit of a hill an ascetic was seated, absorbed in meditation, with a huge tiger lying prone at his feet like a sentinel. Seeing the tiger Harimohon's own feet would not proceed any farther. But the boy forcibly dragged him near to the ascetic. Incapable of resisting the boy's pull Harimohon had to go. The boy said, "Look, Harimohon." Harimohon saw, stretched out in front of his eyes, the ascetic's mind like a diary in which on every page the name of Sri Krishna was inscribed a thousand times. Beyond the gates of the Formless Samadhi¹ the ascetic was playing with Sri Krishna in the sunlight.

Harimohon saw again that the ascetic had been starving for many days, and for the last two his body had experienced extreme suffering because of hunger and thirst. Reproachingly Harimohon asked, "What's this, Keshta? Babaji loves you so much and still he has to suffer from hunger and thirst? Have you no common sense? Who shall feed him in this lonely forest full of tigers?" The boy answered, "I will feed him. But look here for another bit of fun." Harimohon saw the tiger go straight to an ant-hill which was close by and break it with a single stroke of the paw. Hundreds of ants scurried out and began stinging the ascetic angrily. The ascetic remained plunged in meditation, undisturbed, unmoved. Then the boy sweetly breathed in his ears, "Beloved!" The ascetic opened his eyes. At first he felt no pain from the stings; the all-enchanting flute-call which the whole world longs for was still ringing in his ears—as it had once rung in Radha's ears at Vrindavan. At last, the innumerable repeated stings made him conscious of his body. But he did not stir. Astonished, he began muttering to himself, "How strange! I have never known such things! Obviously it is Sri Krishna who is playing with me. In the guise

¹ Nirvikalpa samadhi.

of these insignificant ants he is stinging me.” Harimohon saw that the burning sensation no longer reached the ascetic’s mind. Rather every sting produced in him an intense ecstasy all over his body and, drunk with that ecstasy, he began to dance, clapping his hands and singing the praise of Sri Krishna. The ants dropped down from his body and fled.

Stupefied, Harimohon exclaimed, “Keshta, what is this spell?” The boy clapped now his hands, turned round twice on a foot and laughed aloud, “I am the only magician on earth. None shall understand this spell. This is my supreme riddle. Did you see it? Amid this agony also he could think only of me. Look again.” The ascetic sat down once more, self-composed; his body went on suffering hunger and thirst, but his mind merely perceived the suffering and did not get involved in it or affected by it. At this moment, a voice, sweeter than a flute, called out from the hill, “Beloved!” Harimohon was startled. It was the very voice, sweeter than a flute, of Shyamsundar. Then he saw a beautiful dusky-complexioned boy come out from behind the rocks, carrying in a dish excellent food and some fruits. Harimohon was dumbfounded and looked towards Sri Krishna. The boy was standing beside him, yet the boy who was coming resembled Sri Krishna in every detail! This boy came and, throwing a light on the ascetic, said, “See what I have brought for you.” The ascetic smiled and asked, “Oh, you have come? Why did you keep me starving so long? Well, take your seat and eat with me.” The ascetic and the boy started eating the food from the dish, feeding each other, snatching away each other’s share. After the meal was over, the boy took the dish and disappeared in the darkness.

Harimohon was about to ask something when, all of a sudden, he saw that there was neither Sri Krishna nor the ascetic, neither the tiger nor any hill. He found himself living in a well-to-do quarter of a town; he possessed much wealth, a family and children. Every day he was giving alms in charity to the Brahmins and to the beggars; he was regularly taking the Divine Name three times a day; observing all the rites and rituals prescribed in the Shastras, he was following the path shown by Raghunandan, and was leading the life of an ideal father, an ideal husband and an ideal son.

But the next moment he saw to his dismay that the residents of the locality he was living in had neither mutual good-will nor any happiness; they considered the mechanical observance of social conventions the highest virtue. Instead of the ecstatic feeling that had been his in the beginning, he now had a feeling of suffering. It seemed to him as if he had been very thirsty but, lacking water, had been eating dust,—only dust, infinite dust. He ran away from that place and went to another locality. There, in front of a grand mansion, a huge crowd had gathered; words of blessing were on every one’s lips. Advancing, he saw Tinkari Sheel seated on a verandah, distributing large amounts of money to the crowd;

no one was going away empty-handed. Harimohon chuckled and thought, "What is this dream? Tinkari Sheel is giving alms!" Then he looked into Tinkari's mind. He saw that thousands of dissatisfactions and evil impulses such as greed, jealousy, passion, selfishness were constantly astir there. For the sake of virtuous appearance and of fame, out of vanity, Tinkari had kept them suppressed, kept them starving, instead of driving them away from within.

In the meantime someone took Harimohon on a swift visit to the other world. He saw the hells and heavens of the Hindus, those of the Christians, the Muslims and the Greeks, and also many other hells and heavens. Then he found himself sitting once more in his own hut, on the same old torn and dirty mattress with Shyamsundar in front of him. The boy remarked, "It is quite late in the night; now if I don't return home I shall get a scolding, everybody will start beating me. Let me therefore be brief. The hells and the heavens you have visited are nothing but a dream-world, a creation of your mind. After death man goes to hell or heaven, and somewhere works out the tendencies that existed in him during his last birth. In your previous birth you were only virtuous, love had no way into your heart; you loved neither God nor man. After leaving your body you had to work out your old trend of nature, and so lived in imagination among middle-class people in a world of dreams; and as you went on leading that life you ceased to like it any more. You became restless and came away from there only to live in a hell made of dust; finally you enjoyed the fruits of your virtues and, having exhausted them, took birth again. In that life, except for your formal alms-giving and your soulless superficial dealings, you never cared to relieve anyone's wants,—therefore you have so many wants in this life. And the reason why you are still going on with this soulless virtue is that you cannot exhaust the karma of virtues and vices in the world of dream, it has to be worked out in this world. On the other hand Tinkari was charity itself in his past life; and so, blessed by thousands of people, he has in this life become a millionaire and knows no poverty; but as he was not completely purified in his nature, his unsatisfied desires have to feed on vice. Do you follow now the system of Karma? There is no reward or punishment, but evil creates evil, and good creates good. This is Nature's law. Vice is evil, it produces misery; virtue is good, it leads to happiness. This procedure is meant for purification of nature, for the removal of evil. You see, Harimohon, this earth is only a minute part of my world of infinite variety, but even then you take birth here in order to get rid of evil by the help of Karma. When you are liberated from the hold of virtue and vice, and enter the realm of Love, then only you are freed of this activity. In your next birth you too will get free. I shall send you my dear sister Power, along with Knowledge, her companion; but on one condition,—you should be my playmate, and must not ask for liberation.

A DREAM

Are you ready to accept it?" Harimohon replied, "Well, Keshta, you have hypnotised me! I intensely feel like taking you on my lap and caressing you, as if I had no other desire in this life!"

The boy laughed and asked, "Did you follow what I said, Harimohon?" "Yes, I did", he replied, then thought for a while and said, "O Keshta, again you are deceiving me. You never gave the reason why you created evil!" So saying, he caught hold of the boy's hand. But the boy, setting himself free, scolded Harimohon, "Be off! Do you want to get out of me all my secrets in an hour's time?" Suddenly the boy blew out the lamp and said with a chuckle, "Well, Harimohon, you have forgotten all about whipping me! Out of that fear I did not even sit on your lap, lest, angry with your outward miseries, you should teach me a lesson! I do not trust you any more." Harimohon stretched his arms forward, but the boy moved farther and said, "No, Harimohon, I reserve that bliss for your next birth. Good-bye." So saying, the boy disappeared into the dark night. Listening to the chime of Sri Krishna's musical anklets, Harimohon woke up gently. Then he began thinking, "What sort of dream is this! I saw hell, I saw heaven, I called the Divine rude names, taking him to be a mere stripling, I even scolded him. How awful! But now I am feeling very peaceful." Then Harimohon began recollecting the charming image of the dusky-complexioned boy, and went on murmuring from time to time, "How beautiful! How beautiful!"

ILION

SRI AUROBINDO

(A passage which was missing at the end of Book III, "The Book of Partings.")

PARIS next with his host came brilliant, gold on his armour,
Gold on his helm; a mighty bow hung slack on his shoulder,
Propped o'er his arm a spear, as he drove his car through the gateway.
Next Deiphobus drove and the hero strong Aeneas,
Leading their numbers on. Behind them Dus and Polites,
Helenus, Priam's son, Thrasymachus, grizzled Aretes,
Came like the tempest his father, Aiamos, son of the Northwind—
Orus old in the battle¹ and Eumachus, kin to Aeneas,
Who was Creusa's brother and richest of men in the Troad
After Antenor only and Priam, Ilion's monarch.
Halampus drove and Corecbus² led on his Lycian levies.
Who were the last to speed out of Troya of all those legions
Doomed to the sword? for never again from the ancient city
Foot would march or chariots crash in their pride to the Xanthus.
Aetor the old and Tryas the conqueror known by the Oxus,
They in the portals met and their ancient eyes on each other
Looked amazed, admiring on age the harness of battle.
They in the turreted head of the gateway talked and conversed.
"Twenty years have passed, O Tryas, chief of the Trojans,
Since in the battle thy car was seen and the arm of thy prowess
Age has wronged. Why now to the crowded ways of the battle
Move once more thy body infirm and thy eyes that are faded?"
And to Antenor's brother the Teucrian, "Thou too, O Aetor,
Old and weary hast sat in thy halls and desisted from battle.
Now in Troy's portals I meet thee driving forth to the mellay."
Aetor answered; "Which then is better, to wretchedly perish
Crushed by the stones of my falling house or slain like a victim
Dragged through the blood of my kin on the sacred hearth of my fathers,
Or in the battle to cease mid the war-shouting hymn of chariots

¹ Alternative: 𐤀 "fight".

² Alternative: 𐤀 "Arintheus".

ILION

Knowing that Troy yet stands in her pride though doomed in her morrows?
So have the young men willed and the old like thee who age not,
Old are thy limbs, but thy heart still young and hot for the war-din.
Tryas replied; "To perish is better for man or for nation
Nobly in battle, nor end disgraced by disease or subjection.
So have I come here to offer this shoulder Laomedon leaned on,
Arms that have fought by the Oxus and conquered the Orient's heroes
Famous in Priam's wars, and a heart that is faithful to Troya.
These I will offer to death on his splendid altar of battle,
Tribute from Ilion. If she must fall, I shall see not her ending."
Aetor replied to Tryas; "Then let us perish together,
Joined by the love of our race who in life were divided in counsel.
All things embrace in death and the strife and the hatred are ended."
Silent together they drove for the last time through Ilion's portals
Out with the rest to the fight towards the sea and the spears of the Argives.
Only once from their speed³ they gazed back silent on Troya
Lifting her marble pride in the golden joy of morning.
So through the ripening morn the army, crossing Scamander,
Filling the heavens with the dust and the war-cry, marched on the Argives.
Far in front Troy's plain spread wide to the echoing Ocean.

³ Alternative to "from their speed": "as they drove".

SUBTLE SENSES*

SRI AUROBINDO

1933-1936

Q: What are subtle senses?

Sri Aurobindo: Subtle senses are the inner senses which perceive things not perceived by the physical sense.

When the inner senses open one hears subtle sounds, smells subtle smells, feels subtle touches etc. That is perfectly normal.

Q: Sometimes a peculiar fragrance comes from the Mother, quite different from any known to us normally.

Sri Aurobindo: It must be a subtle supraphysical fragrance, like the supraphysical light seen by the eyes.

Q: Can it be said that each person has his own particular smell?

Sri Aurobindo: Yes—even a different kind of physical smell—dogs acquaint themselves with new people by smelling them, other animals also rely in the same way on smell, which shows that each thing and each person has its own smell.

Q: You have said: "If one develops the occult faculty and the occult experience and knowledge, these things can be of great use and therefore practical." But in my case the development of subtle faculties remains a thing apart from the general progress of the sadhana.

Sri Aurobindo: They were merely signs of the opening. Their becoming of importance depends upon the development of the occult knowledge and powers.

Q: What is this knowledge?

Sri Aurobindo: The knowledge as to what the smells are and indicate.

Q: A sweet juice flows in my mouth. I feel it coming as if out of the teeth.

Sri Aurobindo: It is a form of the flow of Ananda from above—when it takes a quite physical form the Yogins call it Amrita.

* Compiled from Sri Aurobindo's unpublished letters.

SUBTLE SENSES

Q: Why is there then a bitter taste sometimes?

Sri Aurobindo: It is not certain—It may be either something in the physical conflicting with the Amrita that comes up—or the opening of the subtle taste. When that comes, there comes often a salt or a bitter as well as a sweet taste in the mouth. In the end the sweet taste swallows up the others.

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Any of the combined tastes, salt, bitter, sweet etc. can come there at the end of the tongue.

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There are sour, pungent and astringent tastes—but also others that do not come under any classification.

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When the mind becomes quiet, there are certain sounds that are heard, which are supposed to be signs of the awakening of the subtle senses and the inner consciousness.

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These are sounds that come when the subtle consciousness is developing—some are like bells, crickets, etc., others like articulate sounds. Nothing can be said of them except that they denote this opening of the subtle consciousness and the subtle senses.

They come from the supraphysical planes.

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Q: Some tapping sounds are heard near the region of the chest as if something were breaking.

Sri Aurobindo: It means the breaking of old formations, constructions, knots etc. of the emotional nature.

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Q: Now I am getting loud sounds on the head, which are not quite the same as before.

Sri Aurobindo: They are frequently heard when the force of sadhana is strong—I suppose they are sounds made by the vibration of subtle forces.

THE SECRET OF THE VEDA

SRI AUROBINDO

SELECTED HYMNS

THE RIBHUS, ARTISANS OF IMMORTALITY

RIGVEDA. I. 20.

1. LO, the affirmation made for the divine Birth with the breath of the mouth by illumined minds, that gives perfectly the bliss;

2. Even they who fashioned by the mind for Indra his two bright steeds that are yoked by Speech, and they enjoy the sacrifice by their accomplishings of the work.

3. They fashioned for the twin lords of the voyage their happy car of the all-pervading movement, they fashioned the fostering cow that yields the sweet milk.

4. O Ribhus, in your pervasion you made young again the Parents, you who seek the straight path and have the Truth in your mentalisings.

5. The raptures of the wine come to you entirely, to you with Indra companioned by the Maruts and with the Kings, the sons of Aditi.

6. And this bowl of Twashtri new and perfected you made again into four.

7. So establish for us the thrice seven ecstasies, each separately by perfect expressings of them.

8. They sustained and held in them, they divided by perfection in their works the sacrificial share of the enjoyment among the Gods.

COMMENTARY

THE Ribhus, it has been suggested, are rays of the Sun. And it is true that like Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga and Aryaman they are powers of the solar Light, the Truth. But their special character in the Veda is that they are artisans of Immortality. They are represented as human beings who have attained to the condition of godhead by power of knowledge and perfection in their works. Their function is to aid Indra in raising man towards the same state of divine light and bliss which they themselves have earned as their own divine privilege. The hymns addressed to them in the Veda are few and to the first glance exceedingly enigmatical; for they are full of certain figures and symbols always repeated. But once the principal clues of the Veda are known, they become on the contrary exceedingly clear and simple and present a coherent and interesting idea which sheds a clear light on the Vedic gospel of immortality.

The Ribhus are powers of the Light who have descended into Matter and are there born as human faculties aspiring to become divine and immortal. In this character they are called children of Sudhanwan,¹ a patronymic which is merely a parable of their birth from the full capacities of Matter touched by the luminous energy. But in their real nature they are descended from this luminous Energy and are sometimes so addressed, "Offspring of Indra, grandsons of luminous Force." For Indra, the divine Mind in man, is born out of luminous Force as is Agni out of pure Force, and from Indra the divine Mind spring the human aspirations after Immortality.

The names of the three Ribhus are, in the order of their birth, Ribhu or Ribhukshan, the skilful Knower or the Shaper in knowledge, Vibhwa or Vibhu, the Pervading, the self-diffusing, and Vaja, the Plenitude. Their names indicate their special nature and function, but they are really a trinity, and therefore, although usually termed the Ribhus, they are also called the Vibhus and the Vajas. Ribhu, the eldest, is the first in man who begins to shape by his thoughts and works the forms of immortality; Vibhwa gives pervasiveness to this working; Vaja, the youngest, supplies the plenitude of the divine light and substance by which the complete work can be done. These works and formations of immortality they effect, it is continually repeated, by the force of Thought, with the mind for field and material; they are done with power; they are attended by a perfection in the creative and effective act, *swapasyavā sukṛtyayā*, which is the condition of the working out of Immortality. These formations of the artisans of Immortality are, as they are briefly summarised in

¹ "Dhanwan" in this name does not mean "bow" but the solid or desert field of Matter otherwise typified as the hill or rock out of which the waters and the rays are delivered.

the hymn before us, the horses of Indra, the car of the Ashwins, the Cow that gives the sweet milk, the youth of the universal Parents, the multiplication into four of the one drinking-bowl of the gods originally fashioned by Twashtri, the Framer of things.

The hymn opens with an indication of its objective. It is an affirmation of the power of the Ribhus made for the divine Birth, made by men whose minds have attained to illumination and possess that energy of the Light from which the Ribhus were born. It is made by the breath of the mouth, the life-power in the word. Its object is to confirm in the human soul the entire delight of the Beatitude, the thrice seven ecstasies of the divine Life.¹

This divine Birth is represented by the Ribhus who, once human, have³ become immortal. By their accomplishments of the work—the great work of upward human evolution which is the summit of the world-sacrifice,—they have gained in that sacrifice their divine share and privilege along with the divine powers. They are the sublimated human energies of formation and upward progress who assist the gods in the divinising of man. And of all their accomplishments that which is central is the formation of the two brilliant horses of Indra, the horses yoked by speech to their movements, yoked by the Word and fashioned by the mind. For the free movement of the luminous mind, the divine mind in man, is the condition of all other immortalising works.²

The second work of the Ribhus is to fashion the chariot of the Ashwins, lords of the human journey,—the happy movement of the Ananda in man which pervades with its action all his worlds or planes of being, bringing health, youth, strength, wholeness to the physical man, capacity of enjoyment and action to the vital, glad energy of the light to the mental being,—in a word, the force of the pure delight of being in all his members.³

The third work of the Ribhus is to fashion the cow who gives the sweet milk. It is said elsewhere that this cow has been delivered out of its covering skin,—the veil of Nature's outward movement and action,—by the Ribhus. The fostering cow herself is she of the universal forms and universal impetus of movement, *viśvajuvam viśvarūpām*, in other words she is the first Radiance, Aditi, the infinite Consciousness of the infinite conscious Being which is the mother of the worlds. That consciousness is brought out by the Ribhus from the veiling movement of Nature and a figure of her is fashioned here in us by them. She is, by the action of the powers of the duality, separated from her offspring, the soul in the lower world; the Ribhus restore it to constant companionship with its infinite mother.⁴

¹ *Ayañ devāya janmane, stomo viprebhir āsayā; akāri ratnadhātamaḥ.*

² *Ya indrāya vacoyujā tataksur manasā hari; samibhir yajñam āsata.*

³ *Taksan nāsatyābhyām, pariṣmānañ sukham ratham.*

⁴ *Takṣan dhenum sabardughām. For the other details see R. V. IV. 33.4 and VIII, 36.4 etc.*

Another great work of the Ribhus is in the strength of their previous deeds, of the light of Indra, the movement of the Ashwins, the full yield of the fostering Cow to restore youth to the aged Parents of the world, Heaven and Earth. Heaven is the mental consciousness, Earth the physical. These in their union are represented as lying long-old and prostrate like fallen sacrificial posts, worn-out and suffering. The Ribhus, it is said, ascend to the house of the Sun where he lives in the unconcealed splendour of his Truth and there slumbering for twelve days afterwards traverse the heaven and the earth, filling them with abundant rain of the streams of Truth, nourishing them, restoring them to youth and vigour.¹ They pervade heaven with their workings, they bring divine increase to the mentality;² they give to it and the physical being a fresh and young and immortal movement.³ For from the home of the Truth they bring with them the perfection of that which is the condition of their work, the movement in the straight path of the Truth and the Truth itself with its absolute effectivity in all the thoughts and words of the mentality. Carrying this power with them in their pervading entry into the lower world, they pour into it the immortal essence.⁴

It is the wine of that immortal essence with its ecstasies which they win by their works and bring with them to man in his sacrifice. And with them come and sit Indra and the Maruts, the divine Mind and its Thought-forces, and the four great Kings, sons of Aditi, children of the Infinite, Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, the purity and vastness of the Truth-consciousness, its law of love and light and harmony, its power and aspiration, its pure and happy enjoyment of things.⁵

And there at the sacrifice the gods drink in the fourfold bowl, *camasaṁ caturvayam*, the pourings of the nectar. For Twashtri, the Framer of things, has given man originally only a single bowl, the physical consciousness, the physical body in which to offer the delight of existence to the gods. The Ribhus, powers of luminous knowledge, take it as renewed and perfected by Twashtri's later workings and build up in him from the material of the four planes three other bodies, vital, mental and the causal or ideal body.⁶

Because they have made this fourfold cup of bliss and enabled him thereby to live on the plane of the Truth-consciousness they are able to establish in the perfected human being the thrice seven ecstasies of the supreme existence

¹ R. V. IV. 33. 2, 3, 7; 36. 1, 3; I. 161. 7.

² R. V. IV. 32-2.

³ R. V. V. 36. 3.

⁴ *Ywānā pitarā, punaḥ, satyamañtrā rjūyavaḥ, rbhavo viṣṭyakarta.*

⁵ *Sam vo madāsa agmata, mdrena ca marutwatā; ādityebhiḥ ca rājabhiḥ.*

⁶ *Uta tyam camasaṁ navam, twastur devasya niskṛtam; akarta caturāḥ punaḥ.*

poured into the mind, vitality and body. Each of these they can give perfectly by the full expression of its separate absolute ecstasy even in the combination of the whole.¹

The Ribhus have power to support and contain all these floods of the delight of being in the human consciousness; and they are able to divide it in the perfection of their works among the manifested gods, to each god his sacrificial share. For such perfect division is the whole condition of the effective sacrifice, the perfect work.²

Such are the Ribhus and they are called to the human sacrifice to fashion for man the things of immortality even as they fashioned them for themselves. "He becomes full of plenitude and strength for the labour, he becomes a Rishi by power of self-expression, he becomes a hero and a smiter hard to pierce in the battles, he holds in himself increase of bliss and entire energy whom Vaja and Vibhva, the Ribhus foster....For you are seers and thinkers clear-discerning; as such with this thought of our soul we declare to you our knowledge. Do you in your knowledge moving about our thoughts fashion for us all human enjoyings,—luminous plenitude and fertilising force and supreme felicity. Here issue, here felicity, here a great energy of inspiration fashion for us in your delight. Give to us, O Ribhus, that richly-varied plenitude by which we shall awaken in our consciousness to things beyond ordinary men."³

¹ *Te no ratnām dhātana, trīr ā sāptāni sunvate; ekam ekam suśastūbhīḥ.*

² *Adhārayanta vahnayo, abhajanta sukṛtyayā; bhāgam devesu yajñyam.*

³ R. V. IV. 36. 6-9.

FOR THE NEW-COMER

(Compiled from Sri Aurobindo's Unpublished Letters)

Q: What is the method of gathering of the mind?

A: The method of gathering of the mind is not an easy one. It is better to watch and separate oneself from the thoughts till one becomes aware of a quiet space within into which they come from outside.

Q: When adverse suggestions rise in a sadhak's mind, how should he prevent them? Is it by aspiration? And, of course, your kind help and blessings?

A: Yes, and by elimination of old interests and attachments.

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X has been always like that. It is the activity of his mind which is very restless; sometimes he gets a psychic opening and is all right, then the mind comes across and he becomes confused and miserable. Going away will not cure him; "thinking over things" will only make him more confused and lost. He is a man who can be rescued from all that only by a complete and permanent psychic opening, through the heart not the mind.

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You say in your letter, "I want a heart that can respond to all my moods, that can understand me, that can do me justice, that can love me intensely and exclusively." What you describe is a vital demand of ego for emotional self-satisfaction; it is Maya. This vital love brings only suffering and disappointment; it does not bring happiness; it never gets satisfied and, even if it is given that something it seeks for, it is never satisfied with it.

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Q: All kinds of thoughts which bring up desires are coming in and then vital difficulties raise their heads.

A: The only thing to do with such thoughts is not to indulge them, to send them away at once. Vital difficulties are the common lot of every human being

and of every sadhak. They are to be met with a quiet determination and confidence in the Divine Grace.

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Q: I have read both in "The Synthesis of Yoga" and The Mother's "Conversations" that every act and movement, thought and word should be an offering. Even if this is a strictly mental effort without the heart's devotion, as it may be at first, it is sure to lead to devotion, provided the effort is sincere. This discipline is quite possible in acts of a more or less mechanical nature like walking or eating, but where the work involves mental concentration, as in reading or writing, it seems well-nigh impossible. If the consciousness has to be busy with the remembrance, the attention will get divided and the work will not be properly done.

A: It is because people live in the surface mind and are identified with it. When one lives more inwardly, it is only the surface consciousness that is occupied and one stands behind it in another which is silent and self-offered.

Q: Does this consciousness come only by aspiration or can one have it by following a mental discipline?

One starts by a mental effort. Afterwards it is an inner consciousness that is formed which need not be always thinking of the Mother.

Q: I hear that the Mother has some special hours when she works for us and that the best way to receive at that time is to open oneself. What is exactly meant by "opening oneself?"

A: These are acts of the mind; openness is a state of consciousness which keeps it turned to the Mother, free from other movements expecting and able to receive what may come from the Divine.

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Many of the sadhaks are in the habit of thinking Mother is displeased, not smiling at them, angry when it is quite otherwise. This usually happens when their own consciousness is not at peace or when they are thinking or conscious of faults or wrong movements or wrong acts that they may have done. The idea that the Mother is angry is an imagination; if there is anything not as usual, it is in the sadhak himself and not in the Mother.

HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS

I OBSERVE, intently and intensely, the three photographs of Sri Aurobindo placed in the Ashram Reception Room.

The big middle one which was probably taken some time in the 1920's looks as fresh and vibrant with dynamic tranquillity as ever. How perfectly poised and self-possessed, how very beautiful and sweetly simple is the whole bust! True, there is, on the surface, a rather austere, even forbidding detachment, a certain aloofness. The wide-open, flame-lit eyes of bewitching beauty and love ever look at you, observe them from whatever angle you like; they penetrate you through and through, and yet, they look so far, far away from you, as though they were fixed upon some object which is much above and beyond your reach. In spite of the intimate humanness of the appearance, there is in it a solid gravity of the super-saint, a sort of rocky determination, an unshakable, firm assuredness, a kind of superhuman steadfastness which at once create a big margin of difference, build a long bridge of distance between him and the beholder. But who can help silently exclaiming to oneself, "Here is divinity indeed, incarnating itself in human flesh and form, here is the god of power and beauty and peace and victory?" And when you begin to perceive, as your gazing communion with him deepens, the faint—rather extremely faint—smile playing upon his underlip, you know that here is the god of all knowledge, all delight and all help too.

To me the whole picture incarnates the message of more than Himalayan heights which the present aspiring humanity has to scale, the steadiness, patience and perseverance with which we have to march forward and upward. It also gives me the unmistakable sense of a quiet, protective and helping presence; of a magnificent dream which is about to be fulfilled.

The two *mahasamadhi* photographs which are on the right and left hand sides of this spell-binding bust breathe, though taken from two different angles, a single, soulful message. It is the message of infinite depths. A whole globe of intensely coiled and concentrated peace and power is contained there, particularly in the deep-closed eyes and solemn-set lips and brow. It is as though some great god were exclusively engaged in an unfathomably deep *tapas* of some new manifestation or creation, or some majestic, lion-looking sovereign had completely withdrawn himself into the innermost kingdom of his being, full of the

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opulence of a divine peace, to do something unthinkably transformative for the common world of his subjects.

Just as the middle photograph opens out, to one's meditative vision, the expanding glories of the steadily rising heights, these side ones open to the inward eyes the huge oceans of peace and power below.

The Reception Room is, thus, like a door which, when thrown open, reveals to you the simultaneous and unified prospect of utmost Heights and richest Depths, the play of the cosmic dual movements of Ascent and Descent, of Spirit and Matter.

Closely and meditatively, I observe the opening of such a door through these triple photographs, like a child, with eyes of wonder and trust, I observe these radiant Gates of the Father's kingdom; I observe, like a pupil full of the eager spirit of pure quest, these luminous shadows of the Divine Teacher; it is like an ardent lover full of a passionate devotion that I embrace these warm rays of the ineffable Splendour; like a faithful servant I am all alert and astir to listen to the least commands of my Lord and Master; I observe the subtle, surprising strings of the Divine's Love in which He has bound me—and I feel uplifted, elevated to a higher, finer mode of life and consciousness, I feel already transmuted into some richer luminous substance, expanded into some new universe of vastness, bathed and refreshed in some deep pool of immeasurable coolness.

O, how can I effectively sing through my limited words and phrases the limitlessness of the swiftly and mysteriously purifying power of His flaming Heights and His delightful Depths, the twin Liberators solemnly portrayed before me?

KRISHNA PRASAD

THE SUPREME SUN

A DECIMAL point in the vastness of Eternity,
So it seemed to my first human sight,
But here the finite was measuring the Infinite.

Even my cosmic gaze failed to contain that orb!
The golden Sun was bigger than all our sky,
It shadowed the luminous stars of the Way.

Calm, serene and joyous were the beams
Of that mighty Sun which stood alone,
Menacing the very existence of the Inconscient.

NAGIN DOSHI

THE WAYS OF THY LIGHT

QUICK and articulate is Thy ruby light,
A lightning mass from a grand Elysian sea
Whose breath is ecstasy,
Whose cadence is the sweep of the Infinite.

Alone and all-visioning with hushed control
Thy diamond light descends with vivid force
From a rich and thrill-less source,
The imperial vastness of Thy solar soul.

Intense, dawn-magical is thy deathless ray
Shot from the ethers of shoreless plenitude's zone
Immaculate, unknown,
With wings of spirit-awaking power of Day.

Thy light is golden, strange with glory's Sun
Whose charge of summit no death-bound heart can bar.
From beyond the gates of the Star
It brings the pressure of God-dominion...

And yet the sod slumbers, naked and lost,
Unconscious of Thy thunder and Thy call
Stupendous, unimaginable
And all Thy magnificence of holocaust.

O wake us to Thy million-pinioned light,
O Queen of bourneless immortality
Whose breath is ecstasy
And sweep on us with cadence of the Infinite!

ROMEN

THE TOWN OF PONDICHERRY AND SRI AUROBINDO

*An extract from the report of the speech made by U. N. Dhebar,
President of the Congress, at the Pondicherry Town Hall on
July 17, 1955*

“I FEEL very happy in coming to this new and beautiful place. I have been told that the name Pondicherry itself means ‘new town’. This town is also new by its liberation from French rule and by its merger with *Akhila Bharata*.

“For myself, Pondicherry is particularly new and sacred because Sri Aurobindo selected it for the work of his divine mission on earth. Sri Aurōbindo was a fighter for the independence of our country. When he saw that the field was ready and that other competent men were there to carry on the fight, he answered the call of the Spirit and became the fighter for a greater freedom and a greater light for humanity.

“Pondicherry stands now for a new vision and a new life in the wake of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Not only India or Asia but the whole world is turned towards Pondicherry for this new life. We are swimmers in the same ocean. Let us try to reach the shore as comrades and as brothers and sisters.”

Students' Section

THE MOTHER'S TALKS

(To The Children of The Ashram)

CHOOSING TO DO YOGA

To do Sri Aurobindo's Yoga means to seek to transform oneself integrally, to have this single aim in one's life: that alone exists, nothing else. You feel it in yourself whether you want it or not. If you do not, you can have a life of good will, service, understanding; you can work in many other ways. But between that and doing Yoga there is a great difference.

To do Yoga you must want it consciously, you must know first of all what it is,—know what it is and then take the resolution. And once the resolution is taken you must waver no more. When you go to it, you must take it up fully conscious of what you are doing. When you say "I want to do Yoga", you must know what you are deciding about. That is why when I have spoken to you I have not laid much stress upon this aspect of the thing. I have surely spoken about it and even perhaps a good deal—I am here to speak, and you to listen; but what I mean is that whatever I may have said generally, it is only when individually one comes to me and says that he wants to do Yoga, that I say "yes" (or "no", if necessary). For such persons things become different, the conditions of life become different, particularly inner things and conditions.

Always there is a Consciousness here and it acts constantly to rectify your position: all the while it puts you in the face of obstacles that prevent you from progressing, it makes you dash your nose against your own errors and blindnesses. But this happens only in the case of those who have decided to do Yoga. For others the Consciousness acts as a light, a knowledge, a force for progress, so that you may reach the maximum of your capacities, develop yourself as far as possible in an atmosphere as favourable as it may be, leaving you, however, completely free to choose.

The decision must come from within. All who come consciously for Yoga, knowing what Yoga is, have to accept conditions of life very different

THE MOTHER'S TALKS

from those that others enjoy — externally perhaps there may not be any difference, but internally there is a wide gulf. There is a kind of absoluteness in the Consciousness that does not allow any deviation from the Path: errors committed become immediately visible with such consequences that one cannot deceive oneself any longer and things take a very serious aspect.

You all, my children, I may tell you,—I have already told you many times and I still repeat, you live in an uncommon freedom. Externally there are a few small restrictions, for, as we are many and have not the whole earth at our disposal, we have to submit ourselves to some discipline to a certain extent, so that there may not be too much disorder; but internally you live in wonderful liberty, no social restraint, no moral restraint, no intellectual restraint, no fixed principle, nothing is there, save and except a light. If you wish to profit by it, you get the profit; if you do not want, you are free not to profit by it.

But the day you make a choice, and when you do it with all sincerity and you feel within you a radical decision, things become, as I say, quite different. There is the light and there is the way to follow, straight on, one must not turn aside. It deceives none and none can deceive it. Yoga, you must know, is not just a play. When you choose, you must know what you have done. And when you have chosen your way, you must stick to it. You have no more right to hesitate. You have to go ahead. That is all.

The least, however, that I expect from you is the will to do things well, an effort towards progress, the desire to be in life something better than ordinary humanity. You are brought up, you have grown up under conditions that are unusually luminous, conscious, harmonious, full of good will. And in answer to that it is proper that you should be upon earth in some way an expression of that light and harmony and good-will. That would be something fair.

One can do the Yoga, the Yoga of Transformation—of all things the most difficult—only when one feels that one is here, upon earth, for this alone and has nothing else to do, that this is the sole reason of one's existence. Even if you have to toil hard, suffer, struggle, it is of no consequence: "This alone and nothing else",—then it is a different matter. Otherwise I tell you: Be always happy, be always good; be good, meaning, be more understanding, know that you are growing up under exceptional conditions, try to live a life higher, nobler and truer than the ordinary life and let a little of this Consciousness, this light and this benevolence express itself in the world.

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It is not for a personal and egoistic aim that you seek perfection, it is for the sake of manifesting the Divine, it is to put all at the service of the Divine.

You do not do Yoga with the intention of perfecting yourself personally, for your own sake, but for the divine work that has to be done, for the fulfilment of the Divine Will.

So long as a personal aspiration is there, a personal desire, an egoistic will, it is a mixture, it is not the exact expression of the divine will. The only thing that counts is the Divine, His Will, His manifestation, His expression. You are for that, you are that, and nothing else. If there happens to be a feeling of I, of ego, of the individual person, it means that you are not yet what you ought to be. I do not say that the thing can be done forthwith, but that this is the truth of the matter.

For, on this level, on the spiritual level, too many people,—in fact, the majority of those who take up the spiritual life— do Yoga for personal reasons, all kinds of personal reasons: some because they are disgusted with life, others because they are unhappy, some others because they wish to have more knowledge, others again because they want to be spiritually great, yet others because they want to learn things so that they may teach them to others, and so on, there are a thousand personal reasons to do the Yoga. But there are not many to do the simple act of giving oneself to the Divine—this act in all its purity and consistency—so that the Divine may take one up and do with one what He wants. With that you go straight to your goal and never run the risk of making a mistake. But all the other motives are mixed up, tainted with ego and they can lead you hither and thither and far away from the goal.

This feeling that there is for you only one reason for existence, one single motive, the total complete perfect consecration to the Divine, to such a degree that you are unable to distinguish between yourself and the Divine, you become the Divine wholly, absolutely, without any personal reaction whatsoever intervening: this is the ideal attitude. And that is the only one with which you can progress safely in life, protected from everything, protected even from yourself—for of all dangers the greatest is that which comes from one's own self, one's egoistic self.

8-6-1955.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

GUIDANCE FOR THE YOUNG

(Some Letters of The Mother)

LA bienveillance est une étape indispensable vers l'élargissement et l'illumination de la conscience.

Benevolence is an indispensable stage for the enlargement and illumination of the consciousness. 25-5-1934

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Il est entendu que si l'on veut faire le yoga, il ne faut jamais mentir.

It is understood that if one wishes to do the yoga, one should never tell a lie. 23-5-1934

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Comme une règle je n'aime pas répondre à des questions concernant les autres personnes. Chacun, dans le yoga, doit s'occuper de son propre progrès et n'a rien à faire avec le progrès des autres.

As a rule I do not like to answer questions about other people. Each one, in the yoga, should occupy himself with his own progress and have nothing to do with the progress of others. 23-5-1934

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Parler sur les autres n'est non seulement pas utile, mais le plus souvent nuisible.

To talk about others is not only useless but most often harmful. 18-5-1934

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Oui, il ne faut jamais céder à la nature inférieure non seulement quand elle se manifeste en toi, mais aussi quand elle se manifeste dans les autres.

MOTHER INDIA

Yes, one should never yield to the lower nature not only when it manifests in oneself but also when it manifests in others. 30-10-1934

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N'écoute jamais les mauvais conseils et ne suis jamais les mauvais exemples, n'accepte aucune autre influence que celle du Divin, et ton malaise disparaîtra.

Never listen to bad advice and never follow bad examples, accept no other influence than that of the Divine, and your uneasiness will disappear.

30-10-1934

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Chacun a ses remèdes et ses habitudes qui peuvent être bons pour lui mais qu'on aurait grand tort de généraliser et de vouloir appliquer aux autres.

Each one has his remedies and his habits, which may be good for him but it would be a great mistake to generalise and to want to apply them to others.

26-6-1934

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La règle la plus sûre est de ne pas vous identifier à la conversation. De regarder tout cela de haut et de loin comme si c'était un autre qui écoutait et qui parlait, et de ne dire que ce qui est absolument indispensable.

The safest rule is not to identify yourself with the talk, to look at all that from above and from afar as if it were somebody else who was listening and speaking, and to say only what is absolutely indispensable.

4-7-1934

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Il est impossible de donner de règle extérieure [sur la relation avec les autres], chaque cas devrait recevoir sa solution particulière. C'est l'attitude intérieure qui doit être *vraie* et parfaitement sincère.

It is impossible to give an outer rule [about one's relation with others], each case must have its own particular solution. It is the inner attitude that has to be *true* and perfectly sincere.

23-8-1934

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GUIDANCE FOR THE YOUNG

Plutôt que d'éviter ainsi l'un ou l'autre, sans grand profit, il vaudrait tellement mieux changer sa conscience, la fermer à toutes ces influences et la garder ouverte seulement au Divin!

Rather than avoid in this way one person or another, without any great profit, it would be so much better to change one's consciousness, shut it to all these influences and keep it open to the Divine alone! 24-9-1934

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Garder constamment l'attitude de concentration sur la Vie Divine est plus important que de se faire ses règles trop strictes.

To keep constantly the attitude of concentration on the Life Divine is more important than to make for oneself too strict rules. 21-5-1934

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Si c'est de l'amour divin que tu veux parler, on ne peut l'avoir qu'en renonçant à l'amour humain qui est son travestissement et sa caricature.

If it is divine love you wish to speak of, one can have it only by giving up the human love which is its travesty and its caricature. 26-9-1934

MY BOYHOOD UNDER SRI AUROBINDO

PEACE AND SILENCE

January, 1934

SELF: Can things like depression and despair arise in a person even though he has peace?

SRI AUROBINDO: If there is established peace in the inner being, they can arise but would trouble only the surface—not the inner peace. If there is established peace in the outer being too they will not at all arise.

SELF: How is it that I have suddenly lost the state of Ananda and love that I was experiencing?

SRI AUROBINDO: In order to keep it the whole system must become calm, quiet and free from demands.

SELF: The physical does not seem to be ready yet to receive properly love and Ananda.

SRI AUROBINDO: The quiet and calm have to be increased so as to be a firm basis for the love and Ananda.

SELF: When one is experiencing the silence, what should be the correct attitude towards the Mother?

SRI AUROBINDO: Consecration.—It means the devoting of all that comes to you, all your experiences and progress to the Mother.

SELF: In the silence, should one keep the mind blank or aspiring?

SRI AUROBINDO: Keep the aspiration always.

SELF: What kind of aspiration should one have during such a state?

SRI AUROBINDO: Aspiration for the growth of the true consciousness.

SELF: I hope that this first descent of the silence does not fade away soon.

SRI AUROBINDO: Remain very quiet in your mind and do not disperse it.

SELF: It is a little difficult to keep the silence whilst reading and working. What should I do?

SRI AUROBINDO: The same thing—do all with a quiet mind, not throwing yourself out in what you do, but seeing quietly what is done and what happens.

SELF: Whilst doing physical work is it possible to maintain the silence unaffected by the thoughts that keep on coming mechanically?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is quite possible for thoughts to pass without disturbing the silence—but for that you must be perfectly detached from the thoughts and indifferent to them.

SELF: The silence is felt deep within, but there is still some disturbance on the surface.

SRI AUROBINDO: It means that you feel a consciousness within you which is calm and silent, not disturbed by external thoughts, grief or disturbance—as when the sea is disturbed on the surface but below the surface all is still and calm.

SELF: How is it that the silence seems to be fading already?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is not always quite stable in the beginning—but it returns always till it fixes¹ itself, provided you quietly aspire.

SELF: Is it impossible to stabilise the silence from the very beginning?

SRI AUROBINDO: It can be done sometimes—though entire stability is not usual in the beginning.

SELF: If I absorb myself fully in the work, the consciousness goes outwards too.

SRI AUROBINDO: You can be absorbed without throwing yourself out—that means a silent concentration.

SELF: From where does the silence come to us?

SRI AUROBINDO: From above—from a higher consciousness in which silence is always the background even of thought and action.

¹ Uncertain reading (Editor.)

SELF: We usually speak of complete silence, calm, peace, etc. Will you kindly say something about these so that we can understand the real difference between them?

SRI AUROBINDO: Calm is a strong and positive quietude, firm and solid—ordinary quietude is mere negation, simply the absence of disturbance.

Peace is a deep quietude where no disturbance can come—a quietude with a sense of established security and release.

In complete silence there are either no thoughts or thoughts come, but they are felt as something coming from outside and not disturbing the silence.

Silence of the mind, peace or calm in the mind are three things that are very close together and bring each other.

SELF: If quietude means only a freedom from disturbance, then even ordinary people have it.

SRI AUROBINDO: The world would be a very different place from what it is if quietude were the usual state of the ordinary people.

SELF: What is the function of the peace and silence in us? What purpose do they serve?

SRI AUROBINDO: As the basis of the true consciousness that is to replace the ordinary restless and troubled human consciousness.

SELF: Regarding the diffusion of my consciousness you said, "Probably some quite involuntary relaxation in some part of the consciousness—that always happens. One has to be quiet till one gets back the movement."

SRI AUROBINDO: Quiet means to keep the inner quietude and keep turned to the Mother with the aspiration, will or call for the return of the right condition.

SELF: Generally by noon-time my being gets tired, so I give it rest for a quiet assimilation. It is so difficult to keep up the intense state all the time.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is often like that—the period of intense activity is limited to a particular part of the day and then the rest of the time there is a lull.

Your deeper experiences are only just beginning—these ups and downs are common at that period. It is not many who can keep a fairly even sadhana.

SELF: Was the silence bestowed upon me in answer to my noon prayer?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is the result of the aspiration.

NAGIN DOSHI

SPRING - SONG

A
FANTASIA
OF
DANCE & SONG
HERALDING THE NEW DAWN

Written, Composed & Arranged
BY
TEACHERS & STUDENTS
OF
THE SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
AND OF
THE INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY CENTRE

Produced
For the occasion of
AUGUST 15th DARSHAN
SRI AUROBINDO'S BIRTHDAY

SPRING SONG

Prelude

O dim humanity arise!
Awake O sleeping earth;
Look to the sunlight in the skies—
'Tis the hour of a greater Birth!

Look up ye fields of ripening corn,
Ye children of the Sun—
A bright new world waits to be born
From this New Life now begun.

Rise from your sleep ye fields of Night,
Ye caverns dim with decay—
Flee! ye shadows from the Light,
This is the Glorious Day!

Lift up your hearts ye warriors bold,
Let your voices sing,
Victory comes! and the age of Gold
Will make the heavens ring.

Awake ye children! 'tis the Hour
When The Mother of heaven and earth
Gathers around Her every flower
Into Her own New Birth.

'Tis the Hour when the seven rivers of Light
Go out on Her cosmic streams
And the gods awake to the marvellous sight
Of the birth of Her rainbow gleams.

'Tis the hour of Spring! when the rose and the bee
Meet in a fond embrace,
When a glimpse of immortality
Is caught in a moment of Grace.

When the air is filled with a vibrant song
And the blood is astir like wine,
And a joy and a wonder the whole day long
Sings of the Mother Divine.

MOTHER INDIA

Then awake ye children! 'tis the Hour
When heaven meets the earth,
When every awakened human flower
Enters a Brave New Birth.

Awake ye flowers of the earth
Gone, gone is the Night
Awake ye seeds from the sleeping earth
To Life and Truth and Light!

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1st Flower: ' Oh I'd like to be tall like the stately trees
 And reach to a higher breeze.

2nd Flower: I'd like to be made of pure sun-light
 And blossom through the night.

North Wind: HO! HO! I blow
 From the top of the world,
 Come play with me pretty flowers.

1st Flower: Oh no! Oh no!
 My petals are furled
 Through the cold, cold winter hours.

North Wind: Then come you clouds of wind and rain,
 The flowers won't play with me—
 Come O Monsoon! beat again
 The earth, each plant and tree.

Monsoon: North Wind, you called me from my rest,
 I'm filled with the wind and the rain,
 I come from the mountains of the west
 To prosper the earth and the grain.

SPRING SONG

- 2nd Flower:* Oh why do you come
Three times in a year?—
We long for the warmth of the sun.
- North Wind:* I must have some
Playmate, my dear,
That's the law since the world begun.
- Monsoon:* My rivers are flowing, my lakes are full,
The oceans rise to the moon,
'Twi'x earth and heaven a mighty pull
Is the heart of the last monsoon.
- 3rd Flower:* O Lord of the sun
Look down on me,
I aspired to be like a noble tree.
Is all now done?
My race so quickly run?
- Chorus:* O come! O come!
Bright Golden Sun
O come to the sleeping earth.
- 1st Flower:* Come South Wind fair
With your golden hair,
Sweep the dark clouds from the skies.
- Chorus:* Sweep the dark clouds from the skies.
- North Wind:* Oh, where are you going my friend
Of the rain?
Will you not play with me again?
- Monsoon:* Oh no, I must flee
Ere the South Wind comes,
She doesn't agree with me.
- North Wind:* Yes, let us run,
For the mighty Sun
Wants to change my ways
Into more gentle days. *(They run out)*

MOTHER INDIA

- Chorus:* Oh to sleep and dream
Of another birth,
To sleep and dream
Deep deep in the earth,
Deep deep in the earth.
- 3rd Flower:* O sleep, sweet sleep,
To dream and sleep!
- 4th Flower:* I feel so tired.
- 5th Flower:* I too, I too.
- Chorus:* O Mother Earth!
We seek New Birth,
Deep deep
In the Land of Sleep.
- Song of Sleep:* Deep in a sun-sleep far above
The vital worlds they rest
Left on a lonely isle of love
Where golden swan-birds nest,
- Left on the magic shores of sleep
Where silence reigns supreme,
Comes thy Face from ocean's deep
On wings of golden dream.
- Spin ye worlds! out of the Night
Out of the cosmic Dance
Till there come a greater Light
Free from the earth's long Trance.
- South Wind:* Spring is coming! Spring is coming!
Wake you sleeping flowers,
Come you birds and butterflies
And dance among the hours.

SPRING SONG

(Birds and butterflies come dancing in)

Spring is coming! Spring is coming!
Open wide your eyes,
See the golden Sun is shining
Over all the skies.

Spring: Awake you flowers!
Awake and see
A new dawn has begun,
Come gentle showers
Of ecstasy,
Look up! and see the Sun.
Here is the bulbul and the bee,
Here are my woodland elves,
Here is the squirrel to welcome me
And the rabbits to feed themselves (*Cuckoo is heard*)
Hark! the song of the cuckoo—hear!
It stirs the heart of the earth
Into a golden atmosphere,
Into a Golden Birth,

But where are the children, where are they?
They greet me every year,
Running and laughing in their play
They are to me most dear.

Squirrel: Sometimes they bring us nuts and bread,

Rabbit: And once they brought me sweets instead.

Bulbul: They only come at certain hours
After they have seen the flowers.

Squirrel: They must be still in winter's sleep

Rabbit: O No! they're not a lazy heap
Like *you*, it is too soon,
For yet hangs there the winter moon.

MOTHER INDIA

South Wind: That is not the moon, but the face of Father Time.
He says be quick new stars wait to be born.
Awake the children, say—This is the Dawn.

Chorus: Awake the children, say—This is the Dawn.

Spring: I am the Dawn of the year
Born of the Light,
I am to earth most dear
I am Delight,
I am the call from afar,
I am God's choice,
I am the song of the star,
I am His voice
Come to me Harmony
And Beauty too,
Come gather round about me
All of you
Come to me Red Rose sweet,
Bring me a girl
Swift on the back of a bee
Wrapped in a pearl
And you O Happy Heart,
Sunlight and skies
Play their joyous part
In your blue eyes
Come to me Jasmine White,
Purity's face,
Rose of the tropic night,
Perfume of Grace
Come sweet Violet Blue,
Bring me a boy
True and modest like you
Yet full of joy
Fly! Sweet Morning Glory
Up on a cloud,
Let earth hear your story,
Sing it aloud!
Go! Protection ring,
Oh ring the earth!

SPRING SONG

This is the hand of Spring,
This is New Birth!

Wake the children! Bring
Them here to me—
To the land of Spring
And Immortality.

South Wind:

But who will bring them, who
Will ope their eyes?

Spring:

The song of the cuckoo
And the butterflies (*the cuckoo is heard*)

SPRING SONG

The song of the cuckoo, cuckoo!
The buzz of the bee
Will come to waken you
And set you free—

And butterfly wings
Will flatter your eyes
And where the cuckoo sings
There true love lies.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo! the bird of the Spring,
Awakes the earth.
Cuckoo! come make a ring
Come joy! come mirth!

Come blossoms, bees, and butterflies!
Come creatures big and small.
Come heaven from your sleeping skies.
Awake now one and all!
Awake now one and all!

MOTHER INDIA

(*Scene II*)

INTRODUCTION

The children are plucking flowers
In the Garden of Dream
Where all the golden hours
Are a Rainbow stream
Of Light and anticipation—
It is a place
Of Hope and New Creation,
Where heaven's Grace
Awaits each sleeping dawn:
A psychic world
Where souls wait to be born;
From a rose petal furled
Comes the music of children's laughter,
And the dreams that follow after.

DANCE OF THE SPARROWS

Listen! Listen! birds are singing—
What a merry sound!
Listen! Listen! dawn bells ringing—
Day is newly crowned.

Swift as light the morning sparrows
Dart across the sun
Like a flight of Cupid's arrows
Waking every one.
Listen! Listen! Joy bells ringing gather all around,
Hark each flower and bird is singing Spring at last is found!

Listen! Listen! bells are dancing to the dancing feet,
Sunlight glancing, glancing, glancing down the dancing
street.

Listen! Listen! far away now. Dancing far away—
Down the valley where the rainbow meets the Dawn of Day.

SPRING SONG

- 1st Child:* Oh! I had such a lovely dream,
I dreamt that I could fly,
I had no need of wings
But seemed to float through the sky.
- 2nd Child:* I too had a dream
That my body was made of light
And shone like a stream
Of brightness—O so bright!
- 3rd Child:* Oh Look! what is this flower?
- 4th Child:* It is a Rose!
- 5th Child:* It comes at the golden hour
When true Love grows.
- 1st Child:* I too have a flower, see,
But its name for me
Is Immortality.
- 2nd Child:* This Jasmine is Purity
Every one knows,
- 3rd Child:* And this is a Rose!
- 4th Child:* And this is Obedience
- 5th Child:* And this is for man and nation,
For its name is New Creation.
- 1st Child:* But what have you got, say,
Baby sunshine—beam?
Come get up it's day!
Tell us what did you dream?
- 6th Child:* I did not dream but I wished on a star
And my wish went sailing—Oh so far,
To a land of Light where dreams come true
And the Mother of Dreams will welcome you.

MOTHER INDIA

SONG:

(The wish of a Star)

Oh! I wish we could go each girl and boy
To that happy land of light, of light and joy
Where our body is bright! And we can fly.
In a land of light where immortality
Is for every girl and boy for ever a joy.
Oh to fly so far—on the wish of a star!
On the wish of a star! On the wish of a star!

Enter South Wind:

Chorus: Oh, who are you?
Oh, who are you?

South Wind: I am the South wind fair and free,
The fairest things I bring,
I am the wind of Liberty,
I bring the New Born Spring.

Chorus: Oh the Spring! the Spring!
She brings the Spring!

(South Wind goes to the entrance and introduces Spring)

SYMBOLIC DANCE

Spring: Come children rise and follow me,
The spirit of Spring will set you free
To the land of Immortality,
Of Love and Liberty.
A land where Truth will always bring
The soul of Happiness
And in your hearts eternal Spring
Will bloom to Consciousness.
A land where every girl and boy
Lives in eternal Day;
Where love-light weaves a golden Joy

SPRING SONG

Out of the prayers you pray.
A land where Powers wait to be born,
New Powers of Love and Delight,
Between the edge of the coming Dawn
And the fleeting clouds of Night.
I am the Dawn of the year
Born of the Light
Banishing all earth's fear
Banishing Night.
I am the Call to the Flower,
I am the Flower,
I am the Voice of the hour, I am the Hour.

Come all you children, follow me, come every bird and flower—
The Mother of Immortality gives God's most Glorious Hour.

NORMAN DOWSETT