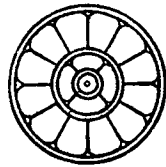


# MOTHER INDIA

FEBRUARY 21, 1959: THE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



# MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XI

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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## OURSELVES

SRI AUROBINDO

*(February 21 is the Mother's birthday. On this luminous day ten years ago "Mother India" started on its career. It chose that starting-point not only because it drew its inspiration from her and Sri Aurobindo but also because she is the true spirit of India the ageless God-lover. At the end of a decade and at the threshold of our eleventh year, we cannot do better in regard to the ideal for which we work than reproduce a statement by Sri Aurobindo published on his own birthday—August 15—in 1920. This statement, entitled "Ourselves", stood at the head of a Weekly started in Chandernagore with the designation: "Standard-Bearer." What Sri Aurobindo set up as the Manifesto of "Standard-Bearer" is also the most appropriate for us who march under the flag of the Mother's Symbol and aspire to the golden future that her hands are stretched out to build from the vision that the Master's eyes have seen.)*

WE come into the field to-day entrusted with a special mission and as bearers of a new ideal and a new message. The message we bear to humanity is the message of a spiritual ideal and of a life that must be its expression and the growing body of its reality. Our endeavour shall be to prepare the paths and to accomplish the beginning of a great and high change which we believe to be and aim at making the future of the race and the future of India. Our ideal is a new birth of humanity into the spirit; our life must be a spiritually inspired effort to create a body of action for that great new birth and creation.

A spiritual ideal has always been the characteristic idea and aspiration of India. But the progress of Time and the need of humanity demand a new orientation and another form of that ideal. The old forms and methods are no longer sufficient for the purpose of the Time-Spirit. India can no longer fulfil herself on lines that are too narrow for the great steps she has to take in the future. Nor is ours the spirituality of a life that is aged and world-weary and burdened with the sense of the illusion and miserable inutility of all God's mighty creation. Our ideal is not the spirituality that withdraws from life but the conquest of life by the power of the spirit. It is to accept the world as an effort of manifestation of the Divine, but also to transform humanity by a greater

## MOTHER INDIA

effort of manifestation than has yet been accomplished, one in which the veil between man and God shall be removed, the divine manhood of which we are capable shall come to birth and our life shall be remoulded in the truth and light and power of the spirit. It is to make of all our action a sacrifice to the master of our action and an expression of the greater self in man and of all life a Yoga.

The West has made the growth of the intellectual, emotional, vital and material being of man its ideal, but it has left aside the greater possibilities of his spiritual existence. Its highest standards are ideals of progress, of liberty, equality and fraternity, of reason and science, of efficiency of all kinds, of a better political, social and economical state, of the unity and earthly happiness of the race. These are great endeavours, but experiment after experiment has shown that they cannot be realised in their truth by the power of the idea and the sentiment alone : their real truth and practice can only be founded in the spirit. The west has put its faith in its science and machinery and it is being destroyed by its science and crushed under its mechanical burden. It has not understood that a spiritual change is necessary for the accomplishment of its ideals. The East has the secret of that spiritual change, but it has too long turned its eyes away from the earth. The time has now come to heal the division and to unite life and the spirit.

This secret too has been possessed but not sufficiently practised by India. It is summarised in the rule of the Gita, *yogasthah kuru karmam*. Its principle is to do all actions in Yoga, in union with God, on the foundation of the highest self and through the rule of all our members by the power of the spirit. And thus we believe to be not only possible for man but the true solution of all his problems and difficulties. This then is the message we shall constantly utter and this the ideal that we shall put before the young and rising India, a spiritual life that shall take up all human activities and avail to transfigure the world for the great age that is coming. India, she that has carried in herself from of old the secret, can alone lead the way in this great transformation of which the present *sandhyā* of the old *yuga* is the forerunner. This must be her mission and service to humanity,—as she discovered the inner spiritual life for the individual, so now to discover for the race its integral collective expression and found for mankind its new spiritual and communal order.

Our first object shall be to declare this ideal : insist on the spiritual change as the first necessity and group together all who accept it and are ready to strive sincerely to fulfil it : our second shall be to build up not only an individual but a communal life on this principle. An outer activity as well as an inner change is needed and it must be at once a spiritual, cultural, educational, social and economical action. Its scope, too, will be at once individual and communal,

## OURSELVES

regional and national, and eventually a work not only for the nation but for the whole human people. The immediate<sup>1</sup> of this action will be a new creation, a spiritual education and culture, an enlarged social spirit founded not on division but on unity, on the perfect growth and freedom of the individual, but also on his unity with others and his dedication to a larger self in the people and in humanity, and the beginning of an endeavour towards the solution of the economic problem founded not on any western model but on the communal principle native to India.

Our call is to young India. It is the young who must be the builders of the new world,—not those who accept the competitive individualism, the capitalism or the materialistic communism of the West as India's future ideal, nor those who are enslaved to old religious formulas and cannot believe in the acceptance and transformation of life by the spirit, but all who are free in mind and heart to accept a completer truth and labour for a greater ideal. They must be men who will dedicate themselves not to the past or the present but to the future. They will need to consecrate their lives to an exceeding of their lower self, to the realisation of God in themselves and in all human beings and to a whole-minded and indefatigable labour for the nation and for humanity. This ideal can be as yet only a little seed and the life that embodies it a small nucleus, but it is our fixed hope that the seed will grow into a great tree and the nucleus be the heart of an ever-extending formation. It is with a confident trust in the spirit that inspires us that we take our place among the standard-bearers of the new humanity that is struggling to be born amidst the chaos of a world in dissolution, and of the future India, the greater India of the rebirth that is to rejuvenate the mighty outworn body of the ancient Mother.

<sup>1</sup> A word seems missing after "immediate"—perhaps "form" or "result" or "effect".  
(Editor)



## SOME LETTERS AND SAYINGS OF THE MOTHER

*Q. It is hard for me to understand how one who had been absorbed in Yoga for years, who had been considered by you to have the nature of the Saints, could drift away and have a fall from the Yogic life.*

The mistake in your psychology is its excessive simplification. You look at one side and with exaggerated emphasis and ignore the rest. A person may have certain qualities but not to perfection, and there is in the subconscious the very contradiction of these qualities. If one does not take care to eliminate this contradiction, then at any moment under the pressure of circumstances the what is in the subconscious may rise up with force and bring about a collapse, what is called a fall from the Yoga.

(30-11-1943)

*Q. If a person who was declared by you to be "saintly" in nature could come away from the Yogic life of many years, I can't help feeling quite sad and discouraged.*

I may point out to you that nothing irreparable has happened. Of course the further one wanders away from the path, the more radical will be the conversion needed to return to it; but the return is always possible.

(22-12-1943)

My dear child, I quite agree with you that there is a power other and much much powerful than that of the doctors and the medicines and I am glad to see that you put your trust in it. Surely it will lead you through all difficulties and in spite of catastrophic warnings. Keep your faith intact and all will be all right.

(28-5-1948)

It is evidently the working of the Kali force that has lit and is directing this fire in you. There is nothing wrong in its action; it is not an anger personal to you but the wrath of a divine power and it must be allowed to act; in fact, I think you could not stop it from burning in you even if you wanted to stop it. This man has drawn it on himself and there is nothing wrong in what is happening, he alone is responsible. Of course, it must not be used for any personal aim or in any self-regarding way.

(8-10-1950)

It is always a sign of strength to be able to say things gently and it is always weakness that bursts out into unpleasantnesses.

(18-4-1956)

All difficulties are there to test the endurance of the faith.

(13-6-1956)

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## THE MOTHER'S ACTION

*(From Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo)*

22-4-1935

MYSELF : The Mother appears to be reducing her physical contact with us.

SRI AUROBINDO : The Mother was giving freely of her physical contact in former years. If the sadhaks had had the right reactions, do you think she would have drawn back and reduced it to a minimum ? Of course if people know in what spirit to receive from her the physical touch is a great thing, but for that the constant physical nearness is not necessary. That rather creates a pressure of the highest forces which how many can meet ?

11-3-1937

MYSELF : X seems to think that the Mother is harder than you.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is because the Mother's pressure for change is always strong—even when she does not put it as force, it is there by the very nature of the Divine Energy in her.

21-4-1937

MYSELF : We are told the Mother can act best if a sadhak is sincere. But what is meant by this ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What is meant by sincere sadhana ? In the Mother's definition of sincere, it means "opening only to the Divine Forces" i.e. rejecting all the others even if they come.

10-7-1936

MYSELF : Is it true that physical work opens one more than, say, literary occupations to the Mother's action ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Many find it easy to think of the Mother when working; but when they read or write, their mind goes off to the thing read or written and they forget everything else. I think that is the case with most. Physical work on the other hand can be done with the most external part of the mind leaving the rest free to remember or to experience.

## UNDERSTANDING THE SUPERMIND

*(From Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo)*

17-4-1937

MYSELF : You won't say anything about the Supramental till it descends. It is this great mystery about it that makes us pin all our faith on it and the word Supermind goes from mouth to mouth. Ah, if we could have faint glimpses of it !

SRI AUROBINDO : Not much utility in this mouth to mouth business. If people set themselves seriously to the task of psychic or spiritual opening or development, it would be much more useful—even for the coming of the Supramental. If I tried to explain about the Supramental, it would be all UP with the Supramental. The rest of the lives of the sadhaks would be spent in discussing the supramental and how near Nirod or Nishikanta or Anilbaran was to the Supramental or whether this was supramental or that was supramental or whether it was supramental to drink tea or not etc. etc. etc. and there would be no more chance of any sadhana.

26-6-1938

MYSELF : Your Supermind business baffles our understanding and some of us are sceptic about it and some think it not worth-while at present to bother about it.

SRI AUROBINDO : Well, it may not be necessary to understand it but it is advisable not to misunderstand it. The scepticism is stupid, because how can one pronounce for or against about something one does not know or understand at all ?

Certainly it is better not to bother about it and to do what is immediately necessary. The attempt to understand has led many to take for the Supermind something that was not even spiritual and to suppose themselves supermen when all they were doing was to go headlong into the ultra-vital.

MYSELF : Does one need to understand your Yoga in order to practise it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : If one has faith and openness that is enough. Besides

## UNDERSTANDING THE SUPERMIND

there are two kinds of understanding—understanding by the intellect and understanding in the consciousness. It is good to have the former if it is accurate, but it is not indispensable. Understanding by the consciousness comes if there is faith and openness, though it may come only gradually and through steps of experience. But I have seen people without education or intellectuality understand in this way perfectly well the course of the Yoga in themselves, while intellectual men make big mistakes e.g. take a neutral mental quietude for the spiritual peace and refuse to come out of it in order to go farther.

## THE ASHRAM AND ITS YOGA

*(From Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo)*

### I

2-4-1937

MYSELF : Suddenly to drop without doing anything wrong—why such a setback ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Everybody drops. I have dropped myself thousands of times during the sadhana. What rose-leaf-princess sadhaks you all are !

MYSELF : Is it not that we have to work very hard at Yoga in this Ashram and it takes very long to get to our goal ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Allow me to point out that here there are any number of people who have had experiences which could be highly prized outside. There are even one or two who have had the Brahman realisation in a single year. But it is the fashion here to shout and despair and say we have got nothing and nobody can get anything in this Yoga. I believe the pretensions of the Pondicherry sadhaks to have an easy and jolly canter to the goal or else think themselves baffled martyrs would be stared at with surprise in any other Ashram.

11-4-1937

The difficulty is a myth. The difficulty is in the change of Nature or transformation which comes afterwards. Otherwise the difficulty in the beginning is the same for this or any other Yoga. Some go fast, some go slow here, also elsewhere.

I don't suppose the later stages of the transformation including the physical would be possible elsewhere. In fact in those outside none of the three transformations seems to have begun. They are all preparing. Here there are at least a few who have started one or two of them. Only that does not show outside. The physical or external alone shows outside.

30-6-1938

## THE ASHRAM AND ITS YOGA

SRI AUROBINDO : Queer idea all you fellows seem to have of “the prestige of the Ashram”. The prestige of an institution claiming to be a centre of spirituality lies in its spirituality, not in newspaper columns or famous people.

Lord, man, it is not for changing or moulding character that this Ashram exists. It is for moulding spirituality and transforming the consciousness.

11-3-1937

MYSELF : How is it that in spite of tremendous pouring of Force by the Mother and you, X could not change many of his ideas about the Yoga in our Ashram ?

SRI AUROBINDO : His mind changed somewhat, but his vital clung to the feeling of frustration by the Yoga and therefore abused the Yoga. It wanted either satisfaction of its play or brilliant experiences to replace them or both together. Not getting its way, it damned the Yoga as grim, horrible, etc. All the time it refused to go on steadily with the thing that would be effective.

25-6-1937

SRI AUROBINDO : Everything once gained is there and can be regained. Yoga is not a thing that goes by one decisive rush one way or the other—it is a building up of a new consciousness and is full of ups and downs. But if one keeps to it the ups have a habit of resulting by accumulation in a decisive change—therefore the one thing to do is to keep at it. After a fall don't wail and say, “I'm done for,” but get up, dust yourself and proceed farther on the right path.

## II

2-9-1935

MYSELF : The departure, from the Ashram, of a person with extraordinary power is serious.

SRI AUROBINDO : Pooh ! a sincere heart is worth all the extraordinary powers in the world.

MYSELF : What a pathetic and tragic end for Y ! All the world will laugh at him and won't you share in the laughter ? What is your attitude from the Supramental ? Won't you care ?

SRI AUROBINDO : And why a tragic or pathetic end ! He is as merry as a grig and as sure of himself as a god. He says he has only one step to make and he is going to make it no matter whatever happens or who does what.

Do you think I care ? What a very human mind you have ! But why want me to share in it ? what is in the minds of the sadhaks matters because that is part of my work, but what you call all the world (meaning the small part of [it] interested in Y outside) can laugh or not—what difference does it make ? My bringing down of the Supramental does not depend on the *নিন্দাস্তুতি*<sup>1</sup> or *মানঅপমান*<sup>2</sup> dealt out from there. And is care for these things part of the ordinary spiritual consciousness even and if I am to be inferior in these matters to a spiritual man, Z for instance, how am I to be not only Supramental and superman but supramentalise others ? Have you never thought of these things and will you and the others live always in the ordinary mundane social consciousness and feelings and ideas and judge me and my work from that sorry standpoint ?

21-4-1937

MYSELF : When somebody leaves the Ashram, I feel a kick, a shock, a heartquake.

SRI AUROBINDO : May I ask why ? People have been leaving the Ashram since it began, not only now. Say 30 or 40 people have gone, 130 or 140 others have come. The big Maharathis, X, Y, Z, departed from this too damnable Ashram where great men are not allowed to do as they like. The damnable Ashram survives and grows. A and B and C fail in their yoga—but the yoga proceeds on its way, advances, develops. Why then kick, shock and heartquake ?

As for W, he has been going some dozen or dozen and a half times, only pulled back with great difficulty. Wants immediate siddhi in perfect surrender, absolute faith, unshakable peace. If all that is going to take time, can't do the Yoga. Feels himself unfit. Not being allowed to reach the Paratpara Brahman at once, had better rush out into the world and dissipate himself into the Nihil. Besides got upset by every trifle and, as soon as upset, lost faith in the Mother—and without faith no Yoga possible. Reasoning, sir, reasoning—the mighty intellect in its full stupidity. Understand now ?

MYSELF: I hold the view that the Supramental is descending concentratedly and that those who resist, who are between two fires, have either to quit or to submit.

SRI AUROBINDO : Even if it were so, that is their own business. The Divine is driving nobody out except in rare cases where their staying would be a calamity to the Ashram; if they cannot bear the pressure and rush away,

<sup>1</sup> praise and blame

<sup>2</sup> honour and dishonour

listening to the "go away, go away" push and suggestions of the Hostile can it be said then that it was the Divine who drove them away and the push and suggestion of the Hostile is that of the Divine ? A singular logic ! The "go, go," push and suggestion have been successfully there ever since the Ashram started and even before when there was no Ashram. How does that square with your theory that it is due to the concentrated descent of the Force ?

Why should I stop the business—that is to say postpone the possibility for another millennium because A or B gets shaky or many others look homeward ? Will that postponement change the lower nature or get rid of the Asuras ?

What occult secret ? It is a fact always known to all Yogis and occultists since the beginning of time, in Europe and Africa as in India, that wherever Yoga or Yajna is done, there the hostile Forces gather together to stop it by any means. It is known that there is a lower nature and a higher spiritual nature—it is known that they pull different ways and the lower is strongest at first and the higher afterwards. It is known that the hostile Forces take advantage of the movements of the lower nature and try to spoil through them, smash or retard the siddhi. It has been said as long ago as the Upanishads (hard is the path to tread, sharp like a razor's edge); it was said later by Christ 'hard is the way and narrow the gate by which one enters into the kingdom of heaven' and also 'many are called, few chosen'—because of these difficulties. But it has also always been known that those who are sincere and faithful in heart and remain so and those who rely on the Divine will arrive in spite of all difficulties, stumbles or falls. That is the occult knowledge pertinent here.

I have expatiated—but in the line of common sense, not occultism.



## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DIVINE

(From Nirodbaran's Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo)

9-6-1935

MYSELF : I believe that if I and somebody else broke some rules of the Ashram, I would get a thunder from you whereas he or she might not, or else might get something less.

SRI AUROBINDO : That does not stand. Sometimes you might get nothing except perhaps an invisible stare; sometimes I might say "Now look here, Nirod, don't make an immortal ass of yourself—that is not the transformation wanted"; still another time I might shout "Now ! now ! what the hell ! what the blazes !" So it would depend on the occasion, not only on the person.

MYSELF : Of course the Divine loves us all equally and even profoundly; but are there not some or a very few in whom there are some unknown elements for which the Divine takes them closer to Himself ? I feel this is true, though I don't know.

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course you don't—nor does anybody. Is love a creation of the reason or dealt out by this or that scale ? Or does the Divine calculate "This fellow has so much of this or that quality ? I will give him just so much more than to this other."

MYSELF : Occasionally we get a gulp of misery at the Divine's softer heart for some and hard blows for others (figuratively, of course).

SRI AUROBINDO : All that is rather beside the point. There is a universal divine love that is given equally to all—but also there is a *special relation* with each man—it is not a question of more or less—though it may appear so. But even that less or more cannot be judged by human standards. The man who gets a blow may, if he has a certain relation, feel it is a divine caress; he may even say, erecting his own standard, "She loves me more than others, because to others She would not give that blow, to me She felt She could give it", and it would be quite as good a standard as the kind treatment one—as standards go. But no standards apply. For in each case it is according to the relation. The cause of the relation? It differs in each case. Cast your plummet into

## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DIVINE

the deep and perhaps you shall find it—or perhaps you will hit something that has nothing at all to do with it.

11-6-1935

MYSELF : Your “special relation” is rather ambiguous. Is it guided by the need and temperament of an individual sadhak ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The need and temperament are one element only. It is the relation as a whole from which everything flows. These things are not arranged by some mental vision or calculated intention. The source is deeper and it is a reality behind which acts.

MYSELF : Some say Divine Love is like a rose; those who come near to it—i.e. open themselves more—will necessarily get more of it. A rational view, with some truth.

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course—but those who don't open themselves get it too—without knowing it often. Unfortunately many don't recognise or appreciate their good luck and may even go grumbling and stumbling off into the darkness.

MYSELF : I suppose those whose psychic being has evolved much through many births will come nearer and be dearer to the Divine than those whose psychic is still a child.

SRI AUROBINDO : The psychic is always a child — बालवन<sup>1</sup> — only it can be a very wise child.

<sup>1</sup> *Bālavan*

## AN UNPUBLISHED POEM OF SRI AUROBINDO

KRISHNA

(Cretics)

O IMMENSE Light and thou, O spirit-wide boundless Space,  
Whom have you clasped and hid, deathless limbs, gloried face ?  
Vainly lie Space and Time, "Void are we, there is none."  
Vainly strive Self and World crying, "I, I alone."  
One is there, Self of self, Soul of Space, Fount of Time,  
Heart of hearts, Mind of minds, He alone sits, sublime.  
Oh no void Absolute self-absorbed, splendid, mute,  
Hands that clasp hold and red lips that kiss blow the flute.  
All He loves, all He moves, all are His, all are He!  
Many limbs sate His whims, bear His sweet ecstasy.  
Two in One, Two who know difference rich in sense,  
Two to clasp, One to be, this His strange mystery.

## SRI AUROBINDO AND THE INDIAN SITUATION IN 1920

*(Towards the end of 1920 there were various rumours about Sri Aurobindo's views on the political events then taking place. Some represented him as for the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, others as for Mahatma Gandhi's Non-cooperation. The Chandernagore Weekly "Standard-Bearer" which was functioning under Sri Aurobindo's inspiration requested him through Motilal Roy to give a clarification. He sent a reply which was published in that Weekly's issue of 21st November 1920. We are reproducing it below for its historical interest as a sort of supplement to the letter to Joseph Baptista dated January 5, 1920, which was reproduced in last month's "Mother India".)*

All these assertions are without foundation. I have made no pronouncement of my political views. I have authorised nobody whether publicly or privately to be the spokesman of my opinions. The rumour suggesting that I support the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and am opposed to Non-cooperation is without basis. I have nothing to do personally with the manifesto of Sir Ashutosh Choudhuri and others citing a passage from my past writings. The recorded opinions of a public man are public property and I do not disclaim what I have written; but the responsibility for its application to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and the present situation rests entirely with the signatories to the manifesto. The summary of my opinions in the *Janmabhumi*, representing me as an enthusiastic follower of Mahatma Gandhi, of which I have only come to know the other day, is wholly unauthorised and does *not* "render justice to my views" - either in form or in substance. Things are attributed to me in it which I would never have dreamed of saying. It is especially adding insult to injury to make me say that I am ready to sacrifice my conscience to a Congress mandate and recommend all to go and do likewise. I have not stated to any one that "full responsible Self-Government completely independent of British control" or any other purely political object is the goal to the attainment of which I intend to devote my efforts and I have not made any rhetorical prophecy of a colossal success for the Non-cooperation movement. As you well know, I am identifying myself with only one kind of work or propaganda as regards India, the endeavour to reconstitute her cultural, social and economic life within larger and freer lines than the past on a spiritual basis.

## MOTHER INDIA

As regards political questions, I would request my friends and the public not to attach credence to anything purporting to be a statement of my opinions which is not expressly authorised by me or issued over my signature.

A.G.

*(In the course of a comment on Sri Aurobindo's declaration, the "Standard-Bearer" said : "...The 'Janmabhumi' nonsense was especially unwarranted—we refrain from quoting the still stronger word from the unpublished portion of the letter addressed to Mr. Roy—and, as we are privately told, Sri Aurobindo himself does not understand how any one with brains in his head could have accepted such childish rubbish as belonging to him....There is only one truth in all these otherwise meaningless talks; it is that the country is anxious to have Aurobindo in their midst in this day of supreme trial, to lead them and guide them, to inspire their hearts and show them the way. The desire is sincere, it is natural, it is inevitable, for the country loves Aurobindo and Aurobindo loves the country, and the longing, the attraction, the call of real love is always genuine, natural and inevitable. Such a call is bound to be fulfilled at the right moment and in the right direction, in the manner decreed by the Mother Herself and not as you or we resolve or as the country determines. The path chosen by human wisdom and the path willed by the Mother do not always agree. Sri Aurobindo's all-consecrated sadhana is to incarnate the Mother's Will.")*

## THE INTEGRAL YOGA IN THE UPANISHADS

SRI AUROBINDO

*(Translated by Niranjana from the Bengali original in "Vividha Rachanavali")*

The Integral Yoga, the divine life founded on the Self, in a human body, and the integral Lila conducted by the Divine Power, these we preach to be the supreme goal of our human birth; the fundamental basis of this conclusion does not rest upon a mentally constructed new thought, nor does it derive its authority from the letters of any ancient manuscript, the proof of any written scripture or the formula of any philosophy. It is based upon a spiritual knowledge more integral; it is based upon the burning experience of the Divine Reality in the soul, life, mind, heart and body. This knowledge is not a new discovery but old and indeed eternal. This experience is the experience of the ancient Vedic rishis, of the supreme Truth-Seers of the Upanishads. It is the experience of those Truth-Hearing Poets. It sounds new in the low-aspiring, fruitlessly busy and despondent life of a fallen India of the Kali-yuga. Where most people are content to lead a semi-human existence, and so few ever make an effort to develop even their full manhood, there cannot be any question about the new godhood. But it was with this ideal that our strong Aryan forefathers shaped the first life of the nation. At the rapturous dawn of the Sun-knowledge, the fervent call of the Vedic chants sung by the bird of felicity, self-lost with Soma wine in its voice, rose to the feet of the Universal Being. The high aspiration of enshrining the glorious image of the immortal Universal being in the soul of man, in the life of man, by shaping an all-round divinity, was the primary mantra of the Indian civilization. Gradual enfeeblement, deformation and forgetting of that mantra are the causes of the decline and the misfortune of this country and the nation. To utter that mantra again, to strive for that realisation again, are the only perfect path, the only irreproachable means for their revival and progress because this mantra is the eternal truth where both the individual and the collectivity find their fulfilment. This is the profound significance of the effort of man, the building up of nations, the birth and the gradual development of civilisation. All other aims whose pursuit tires our mind and life are minor and partial aims, aids

to the true intention of the gods. All other fragmentary realisations which gratify us are no more than rest-houses on the way—fixing of victory flags on the peaks along the path. The true aim, the true realisation is the unfolding of the Brahman, Its self-manifestation, the visible diffusion of the Power of the Divine, the Lila of His Knowledge and Ananda, not in a few great souls but in everybody in the nation and the entire humanity.

We see the first form and stage of this knowledge and this sadhana in the Rigveda, the earliest characters inscribed on the Stupa near the entrance to the temple of the Aryan dharma at the beginning of history. We cannot say with certainty that it finds expression for the first time in the Rigveda, because even the Rishis of the Rigveda admit that those who were before them, the early ancestors of the Aryan race, the “primeval fathers of the human race”, had discovered this path of truth and immortality for the later man. They also say that the new Rishis were only following the path which had been shown to them by the ancient Rishis. We find that the mantra of the Rigveda is the echo of the words of the “fathers”, of the Divine speech they uttered ; consequently, the form of the dharma that we see in the Rigveda can be said to be its earliest form. The knowledge of the Upanishads, the sadhana of the Vedanta are only a very noble and generous transformation of this dharma. The knowledge of the supreme Divine and the sadhana for attaining the Divine life of the Vedas, the Self-knowledge and the sadhana for realising the Brahman of the Upanishads, both of them are based on a synthetic dharma ; various aspects of the cosmic Purusha and the cosmic Shakti, the supreme Divine unifying all the truths of the Brahman, the experience and the pursuit of the All-Brahman are its intimate subject-matter. Then started the age of analysis. The Purva Mimansa, the Uttara Mimansa, the Sankhya, the Yoga, the Nyaya, and the Vaisheshika of the Vedantas, each of them took up a partial philosophy of the truth and developed different ways of the sadhana. Finally, the parts of the partial philosophies gave rise to Monism, Dualism, Qualified Monism, the Vaishnava and the Shaiva schools, the Puranas and the Tantras. The attempt at synthesis also never stopped. We find that effort in the Gita, the Tantras and the Puranas ; each of them has been successful to a certain extent ; many new experiences have been gained but no longer do we find in them the comprehensiveness of the Vedas and the Upanishads. It looks as if the ancient spiritual message of India took its birth in some all-pervading brilliant light of knowledge where even to reach, let alone the question of crossing beyond it, became impossible or difficult for the predominantly intellectual later ages.

## MOTHER INDIA

(*A Letter*)

WHY are you so surprised at the cover design of *Mother India* ? What have present political or geographical arrangements got to do with it ? When we speak of Mother India we mean the Spirit that is India, the National Being that constitutes the subtle unifying reality of the millions of men who have lived through history with the cultural consciousness which we call Indian. This Spirit has worked not only through these men but also through a certain dimension of land into which it has breathed its presence. That area and shape of land is the most outward body of Mother India. And her body does not cease to be that area and shape just because politicians have divided it into parts named differently by them. What we have shown in the map on our cover is nothing political but something cultural and spiritual that has existed in the past and still exists and by its eternal existence will set right the geography of politicians. All the parts which once were India's own but now are geographically outside her will be ultimately reintegrated with the "heart-land"—and the power that shall reintegrate them some day is symbolised at the centre of our cover, the power of the Divine Mother whose one face and form has been brought forth as India's own national genius by the unbroken spiritual aspiration, askesis and achievement running through Indian history.

24-1-1959

K. D. SETHNA



## HYMN TO THE MOTHER

### BANDEMATARAM

*(Sri Aurobindo's Translation from the Bengali of Bankim Chandra Chatterji)*

*(The Mantra of India's fight for independence, independence without which India would not fulfil her spiritual destiny, the "Bandemataram" deserves to be ever remembered. Especially does it deserve to be never forgotten because it is charged not only with patriotic fervour but also with spiritual ardour. And all who grow oblivious of its power in the past and of its roots in the very essence of India will get out of touch with the true future of the country. It is not for nothing that Sri Aurobindo called Bankim Chandra a Rishi for composing this Hymn, and spread it from Bengal, whose battle-cry it first became, to the entire land and made it the soul-mover of the nation. It is not for nothing that Sri Aurobindo rendered it into inspired English. And no more appropriate occasion can there be to set its beauty vibrating once more than February 21, the birthday of the Mother who guides his Ashram of Integral Yoga and the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education—February 21 this year when the Master's relics will be installed in the very province from which Bankim Chandra's Mantra about the Mother rang forth.)*

Mother, I bow to thee !  
Rich with thy hurrying streams,  
Bright with thy orchard gleams,  
Cool with thy winds of delight,  
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,  
Mother free.  
Glory of moonlight dreams  
Over thy branches and lordly streams,—  
Clad in thy blossoming trees,  
Mother, giver of ease,  
Laughing low and sweet !  
Mother, I kiss thy feet,  
Speaker sweet and low !  
Mother, to thee I bow.

## HYMN TO THE MOTHER

Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,  
When the swords flash out in seventy million hands  
And seventy million voices roar  
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore ?  
With many strengths who art mighty and stored,  
To thee I call, Mother and Lord !  
Thou who savest, arise and save !  
To her I cry who ever her foemen drave  
Back from plain and sea  
And shook herself free.

Thou art wisdom, thou art law,  
Thou our heart, our soul, our breath,  
Thou the love divine, the awe  
In our hearts that conquers death.  
Thine the strength that nerves the arm,  
Thine the beauty, thine the charm.  
Every image made divine  
In our temples is but thine.

Thou art Durga, Lady and Queen,  
With her hands that strike and her swords of sheen,  
Thou art Lakshmi lotus-throned,  
And the Muse a hundred-toned.  
Pure and perfect without peer,  
Mother, lend thine ear.  
Rich with thy hurrying streams,  
Bright with thy orchard gleams,  
Dark of hue, O candid-fair  
In thy soul, with jewelled hair  
And thy glorious smile divine,  
Loveliest of all earthly lands,  
Showering wealth from well-stored hands !  
Mother, mother mine !  
Mother sweet, I bow to thee,  
Mother great and free !

## THE SLEEPER AWAKES

SHE slept. Her face was old and seared with the lines of suffering, poverty and want. Yet there was about it a beauty, a patience, a long-suffering, a mildness, a lack of bitterness and reproach or cynicism which gave to it an endearment, a gentleness touching to the heart.

She slept. What else was there to do ? In sleep there was a swift escape from the harshness of a present bleak reality into the golden splendours of the days that had been. She dreamt. She dreamt of times long past when youth had been free to strive, free to stand erect before his fellow-man, free to breathe the common air of liberty. She dreamt of days when she had held in her hands the wealth of princes, the vast riches of a prosperous earth, the benefice of her honoured gods and their treasured wisdom, the glorious pageantry and pomp, the joy of things of beauty and grace.

Who would not dream who had such dreams to dream ? And who could boast of such a rounded plenitude ? Who would not dream and who would wish to wake ? The care-worn face was soothed in slumber deep, the heart at peace with its own precious images.

But now behold there comes a figure radiant, her own true son who gently bids her wake : "Awake, awake, the time is come again. You who have slept so long, been led so oft, now you must learn to lead...For only you contain within your heart the wisdom that the leader needs."

The sleeper stirs, casts off her wreath of dreams...

"Awake, awake, for there is much to do..."

The dreamer, India, arises from her couch...and look, her face is young again and smiling glad in joyful recognition. She looks towards her humble son, who is yet her Lord, the Lord of Righteousness and Truth : Sri Aurobindo.

GODFREY

## SRI AUROBINDO COMES TO BENGAL

ONE cannot think of Bengal without thinking of Sri Aurobindo. India may try to ignore or forget him, the present-day Bengal may be far removed from what Sri Aurobindo's Bengal was, but he who came and left a white trail blazing across her firmament remains for ever enshrined behind her surface consciousness in spite of the conjoint efforts of various forces to obscure the silver line within. So, as time passes, we find a frequent reference to his name and a re-emergence of his light in the cultural and spiritual life of Bengal, though probably not yet in her political field. True, we hear from all sides tales of woe and cries of lamentation, "Bengal is dead, the Bengal of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo is moribund."

Is Bengal really dead? Can a country whose soil has been the *Lilabhumi* of God with his chosen playmates ever fall into impotence? We must look a little deeper. Though it is no longer that fiery Bengal, neither is it something that has undergone a change beyond recognition. The change is only on the surface and is a temporary phase. For Sri Aurobindo's Force works, very often so invisibly that none can perceive the subtle current, and it produces an unexpected result illumining all darkness and years of patient waiting. Such is the import behind the journey of Sri Aurobindo's relics to Bengal and its sudden electric effect.

Sri Aurobindo came away from Bengal as suddenly as he had chosen her for his field of activity. So one might say that he completely forgot his past, a greater spirit having called him to a higher mission. One might declare that his consciousness saw the world as a battlefield to be conquered for God, and Bengal could be no more than a faint dot on the map of his new dynamic vision. I do not view these things in that light. Sri Aurobindo did not easily forsake anything that had once touched his heart and drawn out of it the hidden divine spring. He became the God-man, but the man in him never ceased to nourish, however dimly, the child-flame that he had himself kindled. He always kept in touch with Bengal's destiny and followed closely her passage through a long tunnel of darkness and despair, never failing to respond to her soul-call in times of dire peril. His casual remarks bear testimony to the fact. When, after the partition, somebody apprehended a great calamity facing the Hindus of Bengal, Sri Aurobindo said, "Do you think that a population of three and a half crores can be wiped out from the earth?" At another time when the Hindus were submitting meekly to all sorts

of repressions and became panicky before the orgy of massacre, his spirited comment was, "Since when has Bengal become so weak and effeminate?" Soon after this, an unseen Force came into play. He had seen Bengal's plight, her division, the demoniac communal upsurge and, even before that, the war-cloud threatening her with invasion, betrayal, destruction, famine and starvation. Prayers for help had incessantly poured in from the representative souls of the mighty race fallen into disgrace. He had sent ungrudgingly his potent spiritual force to the people in distress.

But how many have perceived his invisible Hand? Sceptics may be found who will declaim, "If the hand was there, it was most ineffectual, for the burden of our misery has piled up instead of going down." Miseries have increased because Bengal has turned her back on her dharma, has denied her Saviour and fallen upon the flesh-pots of power as her true sustenance. No doubt, various factions with their inevitable fruits of bale have brought down the high crown to the mire. When Sri Aurobindo was asked, "Why is Bengal so much in travail? In the forefront of all battles and new movements, why today is she the battle-ground of parties and leaders?", he remarked, "Because there is no leader." "So long as there is no leader, will she go on in this way? Is there no prospect of any such leader coming up? Where is he to come from?" "If there is an aspiration for it, the leader takes birth," was the surprising reply.

No leader seems to have been born, since the aspiration was wanting. And Bengal has no longer turned out heroes and fiery dreamers but self-seeking men who have claimed power and enjoyment as the reward of sacrifice. Hence the country's decline. The Shakti withdrew behind the veil and, working imperceptibly, began to prepare, from within, the silent change. The aspiration that had died has revived and grown under the harrow of suffering and a new Dawn has burst upon the horizon. For, behind this huge mass-rally, we see once more the heaven-ascending call of the Swadeshi days, and Sri Aurobindo has responded. We see before our mind's vision Bengal leaping triumphantly towards another new birth, not by any means a political, but a spiritual renaissance. Behind Bengal's apparent decadence this was the secret divine purpose and we firmly believe it was Sri Aurobindo's invisible and right guidance that has led Bengal to this hour of God.

Whatever the appearance we must bear,  
 Whatever our strong ills and present fate,  
 When nothing we can see but drift and bale,  
 A mighty Guidance leads us still through all.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*.

## ŚRĪ AUROBINDO COMES TO BENGAL

Therefore the Divine Shakti, the Mother, sends with her own hands of radiant Power Sri Aurobindo's relics to Bengal, and Her inspired children pay homage to them in an unprecedented manner. These relics are Bengal's leader, master and saviour. For what are relics ? A piece of bone, a piece of nail or hair simply to be kept in a casket and worshipped like an image ? Is it not said that out of the bones of Dadhichi was made the thunder of the gods ? The relics of the Avatar are charged with that divine thunder which is sure in its work and tremendous in its self-effectivity. It will work slowly or fast as the instruments handling the power will allow it to move in its cosmic field of action. But work it must, bringing to birth a "New Island"—Navadwipa—in the heart of the old Bengal. Once a primitive island was transfigured by Buddha's relics thousands of years ago and it has since remained faithful to his teachings. In this "New Island" of Sri Chaitanya appear Sri Aurobindo's relics, rays of the apoclypt Sun. Bengal has found her Leader.

NIRODBARAN

*(Reproduced from "Hindusthan Standard")*

## WHAT IS SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM DOING FOR HUMANITY?

WE are often asked what we are doing for the society. We would answer :

### INDIRECT WORK

a) The Ashram provides an unparalleled opportunity for the aspirants of the Higher Life to live in a dynamic atmosphere conducive to spiritual growth under the direct guidance and protection of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo and to perfect themselves in the Truth of the Divine Spirit.

b) The vast literature of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo and their disciples continuously published and circulated by the Ashram is a force for the widening of the intellectual horizon of humanity and has gone a long way in rooting out beliefs and traditions of a dead past and sowing in their place new seeds of a luminous future.

c) Thousands of visitors coming to the Ashram go back with the breath of a new atmosphere charged with the vibrations of a collective endeavour to grow in the ways of a Higher Knowledge, Power and Beauty and they carry back with them a living inspiration.

d) Many of the disciples and followers of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother staying outside the Ashram have organised themselves into groups and centres all over the world and are working effectively, in ways suited to their environment, to spread the light of their inspiration among the masses in the different spheres of their lives.

### OUR WORK

We do not believe in the efficacy of social, economical, political, religious or similar effort, devoid of a central Truth of the soul, in helping humanity to get rid of misery. These approaches cannot permanently solve the problems of man though they may provide temporary relief from distress and alleviate suffering to a certain extent. As long as the nature of man remains what it is, he will always be subject to limitations and sufferings. Even the most prosperous and materially advanced countries of the world have not been able to solve these problems. People are not contented there. They may have food, clothes,

## WHAT IS SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM DOING FOR HUMANITY ?

shelter, comforts, security—all in plenty. Yet, necessary as such things are, they alone have not been able to bring happiness. There is still a vacuum waiting to be filled and it is that that we are trying to get hold of for the total benefit of humanity.

### SRI AUROBINDO'S TEACHINGS

Sri Aurobindo has said "To fulfil God in man is man's manhood". With the teaching, influence, example and guidance of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo we are trying to evoke and establish the Divine Truth in us, change our nature and "bring heaven down on earth." We firmly believe that this is the only radical way to remove the miseries of man. We are set to it with an attitude of "do or die".

### WE MUST NOT GRUDGE THE TIME

No doubt, this is a very difficult and laborious work, but when successful it will take man forward in the path of evolutionary progress by a very big stride. The path is long and our patience has to be unending. Considering the magnitude of the work and the revolutionary nature of its goal, even a few centuries of effort are not too big a price or too long a wait for its accomplishment.

### WHY WE DO NOT WANT TO GO OUT OF THE ASHRAM

For the practice—Sadhana—leading to the fulfilment of our Ideal, certain conditions are needed in the environment. The Mother has organised the life in the Ashram with this object in view, namely, to provide surroundings, conditions and opportunities for such a growth and she is actively helping it to blossom under the protective wings of Her Divine Grace. We have no wish to forfeit this golden opportunity even for a moment. Besides, it is futile to go out on any mission until we are really equipped in an adequate measure. That is not yet.

### WHY WE DO NOT WORK AMONGST WORLDLY PEOPLE FOR THEIR UPLIFT

Though on the way to fulfilment we do not claim to have yet achieved it. Our gains are still to be gathered and stabilised. At present, we neither come in the category of men of the world governed and guided by their own standards of life and conduct nor have we arrived at a full status in the Higher



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Life, with its own godly values. It could be surely helpful to none but adding to the chaos, if anyone in this transitional stage were to set out on “future work”.

## THE TRUTH IS ACTIVE

But one thing is certain and that is : the Divine Force embodied in the Mother and Sri Aurobindo is actively at work in each individual, not only in the Ashram but everywhere in the world in proportion to each one's capacity and aspiration. The Power may not be visible but it is acting and to those whose eyes are open the results are fully visible though man in the mass is not conscious of it or perhaps is unwilling to recognise it.

PRANAB KUMAR BHATTACHARYA

## SANĠACCHADHVAM (WORLD, UNITE)

“BE UNITED” : the message has rung through the ages ever since the Vedic Rishi uttered the Mantra. All great leaders of thought, spiritual men and intellectuals, saints and devotees, have repeated the mantra in various ways; men of action, great statesmen and rulers of kingdoms have tried to give it practical shape in our own day. This is the meaning of our past history, this the goal towards which we are being led.

To unite is to come together. But one can come together in peace, one may meet in war. More often than not, men when they meet discuss and dispute, sometimes even come to blows. This is true not only in our individual lives but also in the lives of the nations. The world today is more united than ever before in history; the prospect of war has never loomed larger.

Therefore, to come together is not enough. Even to think with the mind that men are all essentially equal does not guarantee eternal peace. Peace is of the soul. Unless therefore we learn to live in our souls and meet the others in our souls, there can be no ultimate safety, no solution of the problem of collective living. And the problem is urgent.

Is there any prospect of an early solution ? We do not know. We can only mention some facts that seem to bring the prospect nearer. In the first place, the last two wars have brought it home to most people that we must not fight again. Next, the inventions of science are reducing distances at such a rapid rate that a time may soon come when the world will appear to be no bigger than your thumb; the old Sanskrit image, *kara-badara-saḍṛśam-akhila-bhuvana-talam*, may not then appear to be altogether an image. The nations have started to feel for their souls, to assert their individuality against dominant Powers, to seek the meaning of their separate existence. Plans are afoot for the elimination of war, for more harmonious relations in the international field, for the creation of something approaching a world-state.

But the least noisy of all is the attempt that is being made here, in Pondicherry, under the auspices of our Master and the Mother, to develop a community of men and women who will be united in their souls, through a bond that is not of family or nation, but of a love that overpasses them all,—the love for the Divine. The old Vedic prayer seems to be on the way to fulfilment.

SANAT K. BANERJI

## HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US\*

REMINISCENCES OF VARIOUS PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE MOTHER

(Continued from the last issue)

(12)

### DISPENSER OF PEACE AND COURAGE

I WAS a person of a very nervous constitution. Hardly could I tolerate any painful scenes. They would make me fall unconscious. In 1953 I was admitted into a hospital for an operation. The date of the operation was fixed : it was to be two days after my admission. The fear of the impending operation made me pale and almost faint. In the meantime I had a glimpse into the operation room where another patient was being operated on. No sooner did I look in than I fell unconscious. The doctor advised me not to move towards the operation room. I failed to understand how I would be able to bear the operation. To add to my distress, I saw that all the cases, similar to mine, were coming out of the operation room almost half-dead.

The next day I was to be operated on. I sat down just at 8 p.m. in the hospital cabin and began to read *Prayers and Meditations* of the Mother. I not only felt but saw clearly that streams of peace, just like a downward flow of cold water, were entering into my head and inundating my whole body. Within four or five minutes all my fears and agonies disappeared and I became careless and fearless as if nothing were going to happen.

The following day, peacefully and gladly I entered the operation room at the appointed hour and lay waiting on the operation board for two and a half hours but laughing and delivering a lecture on "what Sri Aurobindo's Ashram is" and "Who is the Mother ?" etc. etc. To the great astonishment of all, I asked the civil surgeon to operate deeply and radically. Another patient, who was to be operated on after me, was weeping at the gate of the operation room. I explained to him how fearless I felt. Rather I was speaking as in a conference. Such extraordinary happenings moved the civil surgeon and turned him into a devotee of the Mother.

<sup>1</sup> Readers are invited to send their experiences to the Editor.

## HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE CAME TO US

### FROM LINGERING PAIN TO LIBERATING PEACE

My father was seriously ill. His sickness was so painful and at so advanced a stage that he as well as we thought it would be better if he left his body soon.

We wrote about it to the Mother and her blessings worked in such a way that we who were in the service of our father round-the-clock could not even know the time of his death—it was so silent and peaceful. What happened is this. After finishing our lunch, we sat at the bedside of our father who was in a coma, and started singing adoration of the Divine Mother and Sri Aurobindo. The whole atmosphere seemed as if a serene peace were manifested all around. As we completed our song, we saw that our father had expired during our singing. Nobody wept or cried. Later on, all functions, from the cremation to the *shraddha*, were performed peacefully. We could all the time feel that the Divine Mother was with us in each of our functions, and we could very well believe that she was taking care of the soul of the deceased.

### SHE ARRANGED ALL FOR ME

I intended to visit the Ashram in December last but I had to give up the idea as no arrangement for money could be made.

Then my children wrote from the Ashram that I must visit Pondicherry on the Mother's birthday. But no solution to my problem of money was visible. So I thought that this time too I would not be able to go. Yet I had a silent faith that if the Mother wanted me to be there, she would do something about my monetary requirements.

For some time, in the light of revised pay-scales, the official decision on my scale of pay had been pending. Though I was entitled to the new scale of pay, there was some technical hitch which delayed the decision in my case for a pretty long time.

A few days before the Mother's birthday, our office treasurer sent to me, for signature, a bill for quite a good sum of money due to me as arrears. But, strangely enough, these arrears were neither according to the new pay-scales, nor were they according to the old ones. For, the money was less if calculated according to the former and more if calculated according to the latter. But the amount was just sufficient to cover the expenses for my return ticket to and from Pondicherry and other necessary expenditure during the journey and my stay in the Ashram.

Surprised as I was I thought of referring the matter to the treasurer and inquiring how he had come to calculate my arrears in the way he had done. But a thought came to me that the amount had come to me by the

## MOTHER INDIA

Mother's Grace and that I should not reject it or try to tamper with the aid given me for something for which I had intensely aspired and longed, because, in any case, the necessary adjustments could very well be done later, on my raising the issue after returning from Pondicherry.

I took the money in all sincerity and transparency of faith, for I concluded from the timely help that the Mother had signalled me to go to the Ashram.

*( To be continued )*

*Compiled and Reported by*

HAR KKISHAN SINGH

## THE GRACE OF SRI AUROBINDO\*

*(Continued from the issue of December 5, 1958)*

(2)

### CALL OF THE LORD

At the time I was about 30 years old. I had not been to the Ashram. I had not read anything of Sri Aurobindo or the Mother and I knew next to nothing about them. Only once I had heard about Pondicherry from an Ashram sadhak who had been to our place. But that piece of information was like one of those common ones that a man takes lightly or casually. With some members of my family and other friends I set out on a pilgrimage to Badrinath. A few days before we left our village, I constantly used to hear as if somebody was telling me not to go on a pilgrimage. As I could not clearly understand its meaning, I did not pay any heed to it.

We reached Gangotri and spent a few days there. During those days I started seeing even in my waking state an Ashram-like place where there lived serene and holy persons dressed in white. I used to see a Rishi and a foreign lady dressed in a sari. I saw them many times a day in vision. These I knew in later days to be Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Along with this I continued to hear the words being constantly whispered in my ears, "Don't go on a pilgrimage!"

During the journey, when after each halt I started packing my luggage, I caught a fever. It remained till I thought of dropping the idea of going further. This made the temperature come down. When again I thought of going to the holy places, the fever came back and, with each decision to abandon my plans, I would tend to be relieved. This see-saw went on for seven days and during this period I was always seeing visions of the Ashram, the inmates and the Gurus of the Ashram, the Rishi and the foreign lady dressed in a sari. At last I had to drop totally my idea of the pilgrimage. My companions came to leave me back in my house. But as soon as we got into the train, all fever stopped and when I returned to my house I was completely well.

\* Readers are invited to send their experiences to the Editor.

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Still I could not give up the idea of pilgrimage. My son advised me to go to Pondicherry and stay a few days there, warning me not to stay on. Yet, strangely enough, my grandson of four years was constantly telling me that I would not return and would remain at the place where I was going.

I stayed ten days in the Ashram, in a house where now the steelless marvel structure of cement, the Golconde, stands. I felt great peace and I told the Mother that I wanted to stay in the Ashram. Although my outer living was not comfortable and I had to do a lot of personal work during my stay as a visitor, yet all was done with extreme ease and in a joyful condition. I had never before enjoyed such peace and happiness. I wrote to Sri Aurobindo about my condition and he replied, "You have got the psychic touch."

Then I wrote to Sri Aurobindo that though I wanted to stay here I did not know anything about his Yoga and only had extreme devotion to Krishna. I got the answer from the Mother that I could stay. This made me stay here never to return to my place. My other companions and relatives went away and I continue to enjoy the Grace of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

*(To be continued)*

*Compiled and reported by*

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## THE POET AND THE SEER

PLATO has exiled the poet from his *Republic*—in his ideal society there is no place for the poet—this is a stern condemnation. It is a matter of surprise to us, even of disbelief. Especially when we notice that there is no dearth of poetry in Plato himself—he was no dry-as-dust reasoner like his disciple Aristotle. In genius and temperament he was a true poet. The literary grace that expresses itself in his style is still regarded as something of an ideal. But why is he then so averse to the poets ?

Plato's charge is that poets are no worshippers of truth. They are but servitors of imagination, of pseudo-truth or falsehood. Not only that. Their entire skill is to make falsehood appear truth and imagination reality; they give to an airy nothing a local habitation and a name—and, what is worse, they make this falsehood and imagination as far as possible beautiful and attractive. What then is the consequence ? Men are easily deluded and fascinated by the false beauty of a visionary world and depart from truth, good and real beauty. Poetry, the sweetheart, is the enchantress, the Circe, whose only work is to delude men and turn them into pigs or at least lambs.<sup>1</sup> Do you not see what a low opinion of the gods is entertained by such a great poet as Homer ? In what respect are such gods superior to men ? All the weaknesses of men are found in them, perhaps on a bigger scale in a more hideous form. These gods are recommended for worship by poets !

The poet indulges imagination and is by nature human in the extreme. Poetry has no direct relation or inseparable connection at all with truth. The worshipper of truth will find in poetry no motto worthy of acceptance. Especially the poet will not be able to furnish any clue to the truth that lies beyond the ken of the human mind, beyond all that can be grasped by the daily experiences and perceptions of men, and that truth which is really the deepest and supreme in men. Plato's reasoning amounts to this in modern terms.

<sup>1</sup> Whatever may be the case of the poet, it is not that such a notion does not prevail in India at least about the votaries of other arts. The Vishuddha Path has classed the painter with the cook, that is, both are taken to serve the same purpose, both cater only to the pleasure of the senses.

Manu enjoins that the householder must abstain from vocal and instrumental music and from the dance. Dancer, singer and house-builder have no right to be present in the ceremonies performed for the departed soul. Chanakya has put the singer in the same category with the harlot.

It may also be remembered in this connection that portraiture and image-making are prohibited in the Hebrew and the Mohammedan religions.



## MOTHER INDIA

What Plato says does not, on reflection, appear to be utterly worthless. The vital world is the source of the poet and all other artists who are creators. When the vital is stirred things spring up from it and take shape. This vital itself is the magic power of the urge for enjoyment and action. For the satisfaction of these two urges towards delight and enjoyment the vital is constantly engaged in creating things. The spell of the vital does not care to find how far they are truth, and how much is their worth in terms of the right and the ultimate good. It is enough if it can build a castle in the air and derive joy from it. But it is not at all necessary that the castle in the air should be a reality.<sup>2</sup> It is enough if it comes within the domain of experience and gives satisfaction. This vital is again the field of all desires and impulses of men. The attractions of the vital keep men confined to an absolutely human plane. Poetry is the unrivalled drug to enslave men to the mortal world.

The poet says,

The good that is awake in the midst  
Of all conflicts is the good  
Which Thou approvest.

Or,

Shadowless is thy Light...  
The beauty of which is enhanced  
By my tears.

These expressions are wonderful and sweet to the ear. But the deep spiritual realisation or the highest truth which these words pretend to convey is but happy imagination and pleasant fancy. The true realisation of the spiritual consciousness is quite a different thing.

Liberation ? Where will ye find liberation,  
Where does it abide ?  
The Lord Himself has donned  
The bondage of creation,  
And is enchained with all.

Here the poet for the moment puzzles us by his curious thought and skilful composition. But it is doubtful if to the calm consciousness of the truth-seer there is anything more than the movements of the natural man's complexes behind such an emotion. This very thing is called 'Siren Song' in English.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Shaw has given the name of hell to one such world, *vide* his play *Man and Superman*.

## THE POET AND THE SEER

If the poet be such a terrible creature then why is he called a Rishi ? The Rishi is the seer of truth. The poet is really a poet only when he is a seer, that is to say, one who has the direct vision of truth. But the question may be asked : "What is this truth ?" One may say, as there is a spiritual truth so there is a mundane truth; there is no hard and fast rule that the poet should be the seer of the spiritual truth only. He has an insight into the nature of earthly beings; therefore in this respect he is a seer. If he has realised the truth and beauty of the life in nature and gives an expression to them, even then his status as a Rishi will remain quite irrefragable. He will be called a poet and seer even if he fails to see or show the real nature of the Ideal but can unfold the reality of the practical life.

It is doubtful if Plato would recognise even a seer-poet of this type. He might say the poet whose heart is pure or has been purified, whose consciousness has transcended the human consciousness, who has direct vision of truth, that is to say, who seizes the 'Idea' by a vision beyond the fourth dimension, he alone deserves to be called a seer-poet, one who can express in a living manner the truth, the 'Idea' which is at once the supreme beauty and the supreme good. If Plato had known the poets of our Upanishads he might have changed his conception of the poet.

The poetic genius can manifest in two ways. The one is artificial imagination, the other is divine vision or direct experience. The artificial imagination is nothing but fancy. This fancy may be superbly fascinating but that would be the restive cleverness of the fickle vital and the outward senses—the delight of thought, of the critical reason; on the other hand, the divine or direct experience illumines the thing-in-itself, the truth. This is the truth-vision of the soul, the Psychic Being. The poet who depends only on fancy may possibly be a poet but never the seer-poet who sees with the divine vision and creates. In fact, the seer-poet sees nothing save spirituality. We have shown above the difference between the spiritual and the mundane aspect of the truth. But in reality in the eyes of the seer-poet there is no such distinction at all. The divine sees the Self not only in things spiritual but also in things terrestrial. Even when the seer-poet speaks of the gross, the body, he speaks of the truth behind the gross, the truth behind the body-self. The totally material and vulgar can never be the object of fine art.

Perhaps Plato would not accept this kind of philosophy. He would not be prepared to give an equal importance to the two phenomena—the arduous of the life-process and the pleasures of poetry—balanced side by side as two separate entities of the same value. It is well and good if the poetical work can be made an aid to the discipline of life. Otherwise, just for the sake of creation of beauty, for mere enjoyment, for the skilful and sweet display of the ordinary

## MOTHER INDIA

intelligence and of the unregenerated vital, poetry should not be harboured in our consciousness. Therefore Plato wants us to become hermits of an unknown purity. Not the creation of the poet but that of the philosopher is the thing needed.

The poet wants to snatch beauty from the longings of the natural vital, Plato's wisdom is all for the ultimate truth seized out of the moral sense. But there is no necessity of this duel between the poet and the philosopher. The true poet will seize beauty through the pure sense of delight in the purified vital and at the same time intuit the absolute truth with the divine vision. The vision of the Truth breaks out of the sense of delight, while the sense of delight finds its culmination in the truth-vision. Thus the poet and the seer become united and the delightful and the good stand identified.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

*(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali in "Rup O Ras")*

## THREE POEMS

5TH DECEMBER 1958

BURNING reality of bliss unveils  
Its nameless hold on time's solitary scene;  
The firmament of the soul wakes, burdened, white  
To meet its splendour absolute and rare.  
And light becomes the mid-day-face of God.

9TH DECEMBER 1958

Out of the womb of Her heart She brought forth His seed;  
Out of His seed the creation's flame began  
And spanned the cosmos with its sky's surprise  
And He awoke self-thrilled into Her day.

1ST JANUARY 1959

Sudden, triumphant She leaned into the abyss  
Arrayed with Her flame and iridescence divine.  
She smote with lightning-arms the tremorless rocks.  
A huge uncompromising darkness was all,  
Total in force, in rigid disobedient void.  
All joy was spent, all faith was vacant, nude.  
Bereft of peace the spirit was lost and blind.  
But then Her gnostic arms hammered the Unknown  
To make a path in the Insoluble.  
A fissure was seen, the gloom defeated stood still.  
A light unborn beneath awoke and lived  
Smiting in power and thrilling ecstasy.  
The world renewed its heart of blank despair;  
The soul was crowned with a Sun, an aureate Name.  
She with Her body bridged the night and noon.

ROMEN

## THE ADVENT OF IMMORTALITY OF THE PHYSICAL

It was winter then, the trees were bare—  
Bare of joy, no birds made there a nest.  
Cold was the brooding sky, the uncertain air.  
We walked alone, gone was our gracious Guest  
The Sun—and the Moon in Her white silence throned  
Above, seated in Solitude and Night.  
Then came a voice which soft intoned  
A Name; then warmth and memory and Light  
Returned full-flooding all the heart and mind,  
A Ray from higher worlds came summoned down,  
The clouds were parted and a sacred Wind  
Bore on messenger wings the Sun-lit crown.  
All Nature gazed on Immortality—  
The Mother crowned with New Divinity.

NORMAN DOWSETT

## BEAUTY AND THE SOUL

THE soul lives on Beauty.  
By Beauty it is fed, even as the body  
Sustains itself with food.  
The soul thirsts for Beauty.  
For Beauty is a wine that ever soothes,  
A sweet replenishment, refreshing and renewing  
To a heart grown weary, parched, or hardened  
With the trial and strain, the common shackles,  
The nourishless husks of habit  
And dull care...

The soul lives by Beauty.  
It is the soft white hand on the anguished brow,  
The tender touch that takes away the pain,  
The awakening light to eyes grown dark and dim,  
The Flame that sets aglow again the embers  
Of the soul.

The soul lives for Beauty,  
Call Beauty what you will—  
Maria, Madonna, Mahalakshmi,  
For She that is Beauty can never be closed  
Within a name, and her names are countless,  
Nor yet within a form, and oh how sweet, how rapturous  
How soul-entrancing are her many forms...  
But see whatever beauteous form ye will  
Of East or West and all that lies between  
And dare to look deep; for you will spy  
Beneath the form, beneath convention's name  
The sweet unchanging smile of the Eternal,  
The crystal-pure Divine,  
The white undimmed Resplendence,  
The ever-beackoning One,  
The Mother.

GODFREY

## LITTLE WORLD

My little world is a vast widening sea of bliss,  
A silent power rushing to the Beyond's shores,  
Dissolving the shadows and dark ignorant abyss,  
A tide that shall cross eternity's distant doors.

My little world is a growing circle of burning lights,  
A myriad stars that wink in the sky of my dream  
And the blue streaks of the moon kindling the topless heights;  
From there the splendours of my soul outgleam.

My little world is a spark of the Infinite's fire  
A tree of shimmering beatitude grows my tiny world,  
Deep-rooted in the earth the spirit-empire  
Is studded with a million miracles and aureoled !

My little world is a flower of knowledge, the psyche-flame,  
Its outward gaze is the universe garbed in a multitude,  
Its inward gaze the Unique's Play that became  
The Mystery in the Night to rise to its heavenhood.

RENUKADAS DESHPANDE

## THUS SANG MY SOUL

(POEMS TO THE MOTHER)

(12)

### V. SELF-FATHOMING AND SOUL'S STRUGGLE

*(Continued)*

#### 32. THE NOOKS OF OBSCURITY

O Mother, the more I look deep down my being,  
The more I find in the nooks of obscurity,  
Inert, dark, dense or closed without light-seeing,  
A sleeping life wedlocked to falsity.

O break these falsehood-idols, break forever,  
Release the life, the light, the power divine  
Concealed in them; each atom make a lever  
For deeper diggings in self's inconscient mine.

The more I look within, the more I find;  
Not deserts must I explore or mirage scan  
In search of nectar, but my ego grind  
And dive in my own infinite self and span.

*(To be continued)*

HAR KRISHAN SINGH



## IN THIS CRISIS

THAT the world has now pushed itself into the grip of a tremendous crisis admits of no doubt. And difficult it is to fathom the depth of deformation and depravity in which human nature and human society have sunk. There is a description of the darkest days of *Kali* when even the last traces of religion had been wiped out; man had become irreligious to the last degree; even in his stature he had shrunk to a pigmy. Today's man seems certainly to have diminished to such an extent; his life and consciousness have greatly narrowed down; a drop of water is now his ocean. From what is happening all round one can justifiably say that the realities of *Kali* have now overpassed its original conception.

Man seeks worldly improvement and prosperity. That means extreme selfishness; there is nothing that this lure of self-aggrandisement cannot make man do, without the least twinge of conscience; it means falsehood, pretence, cleverness, deceit, harshness, cruelty, rudeness, crookedness—all these seem to have become a unanimously approved state of things and accepted as the human way, as human temperament and human nature. If anyhow there occurs an exception anywhere to the general rule, it gives rise to surprise and suspicion.

Leave aside worldly men. And look at the youths on whom the weight of the world has not yet fallen, who speak of visions and ideals. What is their nature today? Their liberty means licence, absolutism; any sort of obedience or observance of rule is, in their eyes, slavery; it takes away from their self-respect. We see at each step everywhere how rude and arrogant have become the students of these days. From men's life has passed away the sense of restraint, politeness, largeness of heart, gracefulness. It is not that want has impoverished human nature to such a miserable extent. Even where there is no want we find the same play of desire and impulse. It seems that some black force from somewhere has possessed man, which tempts him into mean ways and mean things, which has given his outlook a downward turn, towards whatever makes of him a beast, a fiend, a demon. And this state of things is proudly accepted and propagated as an ideal, not as an imaginary ideal of the more ancient days, but as a modern materialistic "scientific" ideal.

It may not be that the earth at any time was a paradise or her social order a *Ramrajya*, a well-ordered life of peace and joy. Still there was, above all, a restraining force, a discipline, a sense of *dharma* ("that which upholds all"). Those who did not keep within the bounds of order and discipline were outlaws. But now to break order is to break the chains; and the boast goes forth, "I am the unbound tresses of the graceful damsel with flame-lit eyes."

A new creation may demand a pulling down and a burning up of the old. But everything depends on by what power, in consonance with what ideal, on what lines and in what manner we do it.

## IN THIS CRISIS

The *atyasrami Sannyasis* (those who have surpassed the four *asrams* or the four prescribed stages of life) obey no social law, they are outlaws. But they have acquired that right, for they follow a higher law, a spiritual discipline.

That is why we believe that the fundamental reason why human beings have become so inhuman is that a demoniac influence has possessed them. An asuric force has descended on earth—it wants to appropriate the whole earth, to engulf the entire humanity. Perhaps this is its last chance. That is why it is in the field with all its powers and exerts all its strength. It is from this angle that we view the strifes and tussles going on throughout the world. It is a struggle between two forces : one tamasic, the other resplendent—the one is for man's uplift, the other for his downfall; the one for creation, the other for catastrophe.

Hence a great responsibility faces every one of us—every one of our lives has assumed a special value and a special fulfilment. Each of us must take his stand either on this or the other side. However small and insignificant we may be, whether we consciously adopt some ideal or *sadhana* or not, practically each of our thoughts, feelings, urges or actions must be either for one side or for the other. So each of us has before him an immense responsibility which he must accept willingly or unwillingly. We all know that a modern war is a total war—it is not simply for the trained soldier but for all—men, women, children. In society there is no distinction as between military and non-military. All have come straight to the front-line and taken their stand there. There is no more any chance, any way, any excuse to move aside or away into the background 'You are military, so am I'—this is the prevailing mood.

But then we have to know clearly on which side we are—on the side of truth or of falsehood; what we want for the earth—light or darkness.

To those who are grouped round Sri Aurobindo, who have adopted his *sadhana*, or who desire his light and blessings on the path of life, their course is clear. But then on this very account their responsibility too is twice as much. While remaining in the midst of the asuric surroundings, they have to show, in their thoughts, impulses, actions, in their mind, life and body, that here too one can tread the path of light, can survive in the struggle for existence, and not only that, even when 'the sky lours and the night is densely dark, when clouds roar and lightnings flash, when from moment to moment thunders crash and the tempest grows wilder and fiercer,' we have to show that even through such dangers it is as reasonable as safe to take the path of light, to walk the way of the gods. Whatever the immediate gains offered by the other path, proofs are not wanting that the ultimate end is terrible. We have to face the situation with a firm faith and conviction, a one-pointed devotion and determination, courage and spirit, and go through our day-to-day life, showing at every

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step that success, fulfilment and prosperity are not the exclusive gifts of the Asura only; the Divine also has that power. On the other hand, the scope, extent and variety of that power are wider and higher.

We will not suffer the field of life and its riches to pass into the asuric hold. 'Give the devil his due' or 'Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's'—this will not be our motto. That would be a betrayal of faith, an attitude of divided loyalty. He alone is the Sovereign; He has no partner in this domain. 'I thy Lord am a jealous God.' There can therefore be no compromise or friendship with the Asura, with the untruth. Neither is it wise to avoid or bypass him. No, not that. We have to look the opponent in the face; we have to refuse his demand and impose ours on him. Strong in the strength of all our inner force, calling down the divine Light of which we are devoted servants, protected by its power, we have to break into the very ranks of the asuric forces and go on baffling and overcoming them and in place of their ways and doings we have gradually to establish the ways and doings of Truth, Light and God.

Thus will be possible the creation of a new world; it will have its beginnings just when into the old, vitiated, disintegrating forms centres of the new have found their way and made for themselves a place within and have started putting gradual pressure on them. Be these centres individuals or groups, their connection and cooperation with divine forces and divine springs of action will be easier and more effective in proportion as they become more and more sincerely devoted, more and more self-surrendered, more and more one-pointed in thought, word and deed. Then will they march on, armoured and protected, leaving, at every step, landmarks of their victory.

In these critical days of catastrophic possibilities everything is unsteady and unstable, nothing certain and dependable. Whatever earthly support we may clasp or clamp to our breast, whether rank and wealth, our near and dear ones, or even the observance of religious vows and ideals, all will prove fragile and unreliable, like figures drawn upon water. Amid these all-enveloping instabilities there is only one fixed object. Those who will hold on to it will have safety; it is they who will be able to save what is worthy of being saved; it is they who will see the sunny day; centring round them will dawn the new happy Age. The best friend of man is the divine being in him, the divine consciousness, in other words, the divine Will—not ambition and desire for earthly things, for personal care and comfort but the high purpose and urge of the World-Mother, *Etadāmbanam shreshtham etadāmbanam param*—She is the best, the Supreme Refuge.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(Translated by Tinkari Mitra from the Bengali article in "Srinwantu", Kartik, 1365.)

## BUDDHISM *VIS-A-VIS* HINDUISM

*(Continued from the previous issue)*

### *Anatta* (Not-Self)<sup>1</sup>

ANOTHER peculiarity of Buddhism is the denial of or silence regarding the individual human soul. Some hold that Buddha never denied the soul-principle; that what he denied was the ego, the human personality or individual human mind which is generally mistaken for the human soul. Plucking a handful of leaves from the tree under which he was sitting, he told Ananda that as there were many more leaves on the tree than in his palm, similarly the truths which he had withheld were more numerous than those he had revealed. "Soul" was one of these withheld truths. In Buddha's view, revealing it would not have meant much. In the first instance, the truth of the soul cannot be described in human language. For another reason, the affirmation of soul or any permanent self either individual or cosmic did not help the individual in arriving at those truths. That could only be done by a strenuous individual effort of negating all that was mutable, all that belonged to the phenomenal world. All thought-clusters, all sensation-groups, all form-constellations mistaken for permanent entities or abiding realities have to be negated.

On the other hand, affirmation of a permanent soul-principle would probably have been harmful. Aspirants tend to confuse or identify it with their body or mind; at least, almost invariably with the subtle and sattvic modification or status of their mind, when in fact even in its highest reaches it is merely a pudgala, a skandha, a concatenation of various principles and therefore subject to change and destruction.

Whatever be the truth, denial or silence, the lack of affirmation of the soul-Principle in the Buddhist literature will have to be accounted for. The soul

<sup>1</sup>There are definite statements by Buddha which clearly prove that he rejected theories which preached annihilation of self altogether. Explaining why he refused to answer a certain monk by a simple yes or no, he said, "If I, Ananda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta asked me, 'Is there not the self?' had answered: 'The self is not,' then that, Ananda, would have confirmed the doctrine of the Samanas and the Brahmanas who believe in annihilation."

On another occasion, complaining against those who called him "an unbeliever" preaching "the real entity's destruction, annihilation, dying away," he said, "What I am not, what is not my doctrine, that I am accused of."

occupies a central position in the religious thinking of all mankind at different ages. The "person of the measure of a thumb", the "dwarf seated in the middle", in the language of the Upanishads, is a recurring experience of those attracted by the Divine call in all ages.

At first glance, the absence of the soul in Buddhism seems to agree with at least one interpretation of the Vedanta which denies any permanent individual soul in man. But this view neither agrees with other views of the Vedanta nor with the general religious intuition of man.

Apart from the practical reasons we have discussed above, there could be two other reasons of a spiritual nature for the denial of or silence about the soul. One is that in deep trance, all sense of individuality—even of spiritual individuality—is lost and one is immersed in a nameless Cosmic or Transcendental Incommunicable Consciousness, in a Limitless Shunnya or in an Ocean of Self-Existence. Here the testimony of Sri Aurobindo would be very interesting. According to him it is not possible to situate Nirvana as a world or plane, for the Nirvana-push is to a withdrawal from the world and world-values; it therefore is a state of consciousness or rather superconsciousness without habitation or level. It is an absolute silence of mind and cessation of activities, constructions, representations, which can be so complete that not only to the silent mind but also to the passive senses the whole world is emptied of its stability and reality and things appear as only unsubstantial forms without any real habitation or else floating in something that is a nameless infinite. This infinite or else something still beyond is That which alone is real; an absolute calm, peace, liberation is the resulting state. In his own experience of Nirvana, Sri Aurobindo lost all sense of the individual soul, every trace of the self individual or cosmic. He says, "I myself had my experience of Nirvana and silence in the Brahman. It came first simply by an absolute stillness and blotting out as it were of all mental, emotional and other inner activities...I did not become aware of any pure 'I' nor even of any self, impersonal or other—there was only an awareness of That as the sole Reality, all else being quite unsubstantial, void, non-real. As to what realized that reality, it was a nameless consciousness which was not other than That; one could perhaps say this, though hardly so much as this, since there was no mental concept of it, but not more...Consciousness (not this or that part of consciousness or an 'I' of any kind) suddenly emptied itself of all inner contents and remained aware only of unreal surroundings and something real but ineffable."

So one need not go to find one's soul or the permanent individual principle, nor need one find the universal self, the unchangeable principle behind the flux of things, in order to make contact with a transcendental realm. One

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could begin by unloosening and dissolving that knot called the mind or the ego and directly go and be liberated in some transcendence, in some nameless, formless consciousness, which can be defined as neither self nor not-self, which is aloof, incommunicable and without any Nama or Dhama. It could be the Nirvana of Buddha, or the Shunnya or Nihil of the later-day Buddhists, or "the supreme Eternal Brahman which can be called neither being nor non-being" of the Gita.

*(To be continued)*

RAMSWARUP

# Students' Section

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## THE MAGICIAN

### PERSONS

1. ALOK, a boy of 12.
2. SWAPAN, his friend.
3. SHANKAR, a fairy's child.
4. MAGICIAN, no age.
5. UPAKSHA, a young hermit.
6. TAO-KO, a Chinese.
7. MINDAS, a Greek.
8. HAMA-GUCHI-GOHE, a Japanese.
9. NYMPHS.

### SCENE I

*(Alok is playing in his room. Swapan calls him from outside.)*

SWAPAN : Alok !

ALOK : Yes, Swapan ! *(Stands up and leans through the window.)* Why are you standing outside ? Come, come in.

SWAPAN : *(Coming in)* Well, how is it you are still at home ? Is it also holiday for your school ?

ALOK : Ah, holiday ! I hate this holiday ! Why should it fall on the days when we have our class for story ? Stories, I love them !

SWAPAN : Hang your stories ! Are you still a baby to cry for stories ?

ALOK : What ? Don't you like them ? Stories from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the legends of Greece and Rome, of Egypt, of China and the heroic tales of Japan ? Whenever anyone wishes to make me a gift, it is story-books that I choose. I forget everything else, when I read stories.

SWAPAN : Let's then drop the matter. By the way, do you know what's there on next Sunday ? Ha, ha ! It is Christmas ! My father has promised to take me to the City Theatre just on this occasion. I believe you know what I mean. A very great magician has come. What fun it will be ! Why don't you come along

## THE MAGICIAN

with us ? I'll ask my father to get a ticket for you too. Really, I'll be happy indeed if you come !

ALOK : No ! No ! You don't know how angry my father will be, if he hears of my going to the Theatre. He says that this is the age for serious studies. Now, at this age, we must spend every minute in learning as much as we can, and not go on making merry !

SWAPAN : My goodness ! As for my father, he believes that if we can understand and enjoy greatness in everything, then, when we grow old, we can ourselves be great. Take it easy, my friend ! I'm sure your father won't mind your accompanying us.

ALOK : I wish I could go ! But I don't want to hurt my father ! So you come back from the show, and tell me what it is all about !

*(A horn is heard from the opposite street.)*

SWAPAN : Excuse me ! My father is going to his office ! I must remind him of the show ! He must buy the tickets today ! Bye-bye, Alok !

*(He runs out before finishing his words.)*

## SCENE II

*(Christmas night. Full moon. Alok is sleeping in his room. The moonbeams fall on his face. His lips are moving, as if muttering. Suddenly a voice is heard.)*

VOICE : Alok !

ALOK : *(In his sleep)* Who ? Swapan ? Come, friend ! What's the matter ?

VOICE : *(While a boy slowly enters the room)* Come, Alok ! let's go to the magician. Hurry up ! Magic !

ALOK : Magic ? No ! No ! My father will scold me. I can't go.

VOICE : Hurrah ! Where is your father ? Who is scolding ? Can't you recognise me ? I am Shankar. Certainly you've heard of fairies. My mother is one of them. Fairies love me very much. My mother has taught me to come down every night to play with children who are kind, who never tell lies, who have faith in God. As if you don't remember how often we've played together !

ALOK : Shankar ? What a sweet name ! So, what were you telling me ? Was it about magic ?

SHANKAR : Yes, magic ! Yesterday my mother told me that you would like to see magic. If you really want, come then, come to our magician.



## MOTHER INDIA

He is also a man, but his magic is such that even Gods love him. Don't fail to meet him ! He is a very good man. You don't know how much he loves me, and how many tricks he shows me.

ALOK : *(Clapping)* Hurrah ! Let's go then. But do you know the way ? What a beautiful night ! Oh, I can no more bear this joy that seems to break my heart ! What a joy ! Come, come along !

SHANKAR : Come along !  
*(He goes and holds Alok's hand and sits down on his bed.)*

### SCENE III

*(The Magician's room where he is seen playing on some musical instrument. Alok and Shankar listen intently to him. Suddenly he stops his music, seeing the boys.)*

MAGICIAN : Come, come, friends ! Hullo, Shankar ! Who is this new friend ?

SHANKAR : Now, Magician, don't ask me that ! As if you don't know him ! He is Alok. I have brought him to show him some of your tricks. Won't you show him something ? Please, do show something new !

MAGICIAN : Something new ? Well, well ! Everything seems so new tonight ! You are new, Alok is new, the moon is new, new is the earth ! How can I alone remain old ? Now, tell me what trick you want to see !

SHANKAR : The one that last time you promised to show ! The magic of coal and diamond !

ALOK : Coal and diamond ? What fun ! One is as black as it can be, and the other—oh ! if I had a piece of it, how happy I would be !

MAGICIAN : *(Showing a few paper-boxes on a mat in front of him)* Fetch me then some of these boxes.  
*(Shankar and Alok run and bring a few boxes.)*

MAGICIAN : *(Opening the boxes one after another)* Sit down ! One ! Two ! Three ! Here it is ! Good luck ! Fortunate !

SHANKAR : *(Surprised)* Fortunate ? Who is fortunate ? Alok ?

MAGICIAN : Yes, Shankar ! I have already told you how fortunate you are. And today I see how fortunate is our new friend Alok !

ALOK : How do you know it ?

MAGICIAN : Patience, my friend ! That's what I'll show you tonight through my magic. But, before that, let me tell you a short story so that you may enjoy my magic more.

ALOK and SHANKAR : *(Together)* Story, please ! Let's have it first !

## THE MAGICIAN

MAGICIAN : (*After thinking for a minute or two*) Can you tell me who is the greatest magician in the world ?

ALOK : Oh yes ! P.C.Sorcar !

SHANKAR : Pshaw ! It's you !

MAGICIAN : No, my friends. It's the One whom we call God. Can you guess why? He knows some magic by the help of which He once created the sky, the stars, the sun, the earth, the moon, the air, the water and so many other things ! But when he found that the stomach of his earth was full of large blocks of coal along with other things, He decided to change the coal into diamond. On the other hand, by his magic, God created many small living things in the water. These things, like insects and sea-weeds, grew bigger and bigger, and various plants and creatures began to grow on land too.

SHANKAR : What are creatures ?

ALOK : As if your teachers never told you what creatures are. These are something that is created.

SHANKAR : (*Astonished*) Then you, and Magician, and I,—the animals, the birds,—all of us are creatures ?

MAGICIAN : (*Smiling*) Yes, Shankar !

ALOK : What about the story ?

MAGICIAN : Coming to it. Now, when the plants, the insects and the animals covered the surface of land and sea, God created huge creatures to eat them up. And do you know what he did next ? He had a great piece of clay in his cupboard, which was to him very precious. He took it out and began creating dolls. What are these dolls, can you guess ?

ALOK : Men !

MAGICIAN : Bravo ! It seems you know the story. Who told it to you ?

ALOK : (*Timidly*) One evening my father told me something of the sort, but, Magician, I like very much your way of telling it. Please go on !

SHANKAR : Yes, please !

MAGICIAN : And in each man God began putting a piece of coal. Each piece of coal had a tiny spark of fire in it; one could hardly see it with the ordinary eye !

SHANKAR : Then ?

MAGICIAN : Then, one morning, God found that the dolls he was making became very soon dry, ugly and full of wrinkles. It was all due to the air and the light of the earth that easily spoiled the beauty of God's clay. Disgusted, God started breaking the dolls and, taking out the pieces of coal from each one of them, he went on putting the pieces in newer dolls. And each time he did this...

MOTHER INDIA

(A pause. Magician thinks.)

ALOK : What happened ?

MAGICIAN : Yes, each time he did this the pieces of coal became brighter and brighter. They began to shine ! And from black, little by little, they became like glass !

SHANKAR : No, Magician ! This story seems to have no sense in it. And it is rather dry. What has it to do with magic ?

ALOK : Yes, what about magic ?

(Suddenly a few nymphs enter Magician's room and start to sing and dance.)

*Nymphs sing :*

Ding-Dong ! Tick-Tock ! Ka-Lim-Pong !  
Let us sing a magic song !  
Let us dance and let us play  
From dawn to dusk, from night to day !...  
Clap to left and turn to right !  
Sing a magic song that might  
Reach the fairies' woodland home !  
Flowers, birds and angels, come !  
Come to dance and come to sing,  
Children, Gods and nymphs in ring !  
Magic night and magic song :  
Ding-Dong ! Tick-Tock ! Ka-Lim-Pong !

MAGICIAN : (*Smiling*) Daughters of God ! You may stop your song and dance for some time. Here are my old friend Shankar and my new friend Alok. They are waiting to see my tricks which shortly I'll begin.

NYMPHS : Magic ? We too would like to stay and see it. May we ?

MAGICIAN : No ! You will have to help me in my magic. (*Takes a sheet of paper and writes something on it. Then gives it to the Nymphs.*) Here is your work ! Please hurry up ! In the meantime let me get ready.

(*The Nymphs go out.*)

MAGICIAN : (*Turning to Alok and Shankar*) I've already told you how a flame went on growing in the pieces of coal. Thus, after hundreds of years, some of those pieces have become precious diamonds.

## THE MAGICIAN

SHANKAR and ALOK : (*Together*) Diamonds ! Where ?

MAGICIAN : Patience, friends ! You can never see them just like that. But if you go on praying to God, he will certainly show them to you. And, once you see one of these diamonds, you can easily know what you were in your past lives. And, if you sincerely pray to the diamonds to make you good, make you ideal children, then the diamond in you will grow very big, very precious, and you'll go nearer to God.

ALOK : Magician, have you seen any of these diamonds ?

MAGICIAN : (*Laughing loudly*) Surely, my friend ! So many pieces of diamond and coal God has kept with me ! They are here, in these boxes. (*Picks up a gem.*) Tell me what is the story behind this diamond, and what it became afterwards !

SHANKAR : How can we know ?

MAGICIAN : Well, I know. Here starts my magic. But, before that, shut your eyes and get ready for the show.

(*They all sit down silently*)

### SCENE IV

(*Before them stands a young hermit in ordinary dhoti and chaddar beautifully worn. Long hair. A dot of ash on his brow.*)

MAGICIAN : (*To Alok and Shankar, in a low tone*) Here you see this young hermit. It was he who had in him this piece of diamond, seven lives ago. Hear from him about that life.

HERMIT : My name is Upaksha. I was born in the family of a very famous Rishi. But you don't know me because right from my childhood I have avoided man and his company. At the age of seven I left home and went to a cave, in quest of God. After spending long years there, I understood that a new sun was going to shine on the earth. The light of that sun will change man into golden man, and the earth, even its dust, will become pure gold. One day, in a dream, someone ordered me, "Go back among men, to society, and spend there seven long lives, before you get ready for the new sun that is going to rise !" ... Also I heard another voice, "Never run away from men; without men, without society one can never find God !"

MAGICIAN : (*Softly*) All right, Hermit, I won't detain you any more !

## MOTHER INDIA

*(As soon as Upaksha goes out, enters another man—short, stout, small-eyed.)*

NEW-COMER: I was born in China. And my name is Tao-Ko. Long, long ago there lived in China a great sage. He was my master. Day and night he used to go on reading and writing. He had to look for leaves on which he could write. That was indeed a great trouble for him. So, one day, I found out how to make paper. You are laughing at my discovery ! But in those days no one knew what paper was. My master was very satisfied with me. He blessed me, and prayed for me so that I could do better things in my next life.

MAGICIAN : Thank you, Tao-Ko, for your story. Good-bye !

*(Just after Tao-Ko's exit, bugles are heard from outside. Enters a man with sword and shield in his hands, and winged helmet on his head.)*

HE : I am Mindas. My wish was to conquer other nations, to become an emperor. But in war I found no joy. I looked for joy in studies. That too gave me no joy. One day I met a merchant from India. He spoke to me of the Buddha. Peace and joy I found in the Master's teachings. I want joy ! I want peace !

*(He marches out of the room.)*

MAGICIAN : *(To Alok and Shankar)* Now, look ! Here comes a man who had this diamond three lives ago. Just before that it was Mindas who had it. And, the life before that, immediately after Tao-Ko's passing away, it was in Egypt that this diamond had its home. Listen to what this man says.

NEW MAN: *(With long hair and beard, and a long robe)*: I am Hama-Guchi-Gohe ! Still I remember,—I was the head of a village ! It was a moonlit night like this. The villagers flocked to the sea-beach to enjoy the moon. Japan is a land of festivals. My hut was on the top of a hill, from where I was watching my people...Suddenly I heard a terrible noise and, as I looked forward, I saw heavy black clouds rising up from the sea. Soon a typhoon would come ! And the villagers would be washed off for ever. They were still busy enjoying the feast. What could I do ? I was much too old to run ! But it was my duty to save those men ! My hut was made

## THE MAGICIAN

of wood. I set fire to it. Oh, it was a great fire ! It embraced and devoured whatever it could, and I, before fainting in that terrible heat, could at last see that they, for whom I had made my sacrifice, were running towards the hill-top, thinking me to be in danger. Ah, with what comfort I closed my eyes !

*(He goes out slowly.)*

MAGICIAN : *(In a solemn voice)* You hear, Shankar ? Understand, Alok ? From life to life this diamond has progressed from form to form. Two lives after Hama-Guchi-Gohe, this very diamond has come and taken its birth again in India. Shankar, can you guess who has this diamond now ? It is Alok, our friend Alok who has it !

SHANKAR : *(Very astonished)* Good Lord !

ALOK : *(With folded hands)* Tell me, Magician, are you just joking ?

MAGICIAN : No, my friends. I am not joking. It is true ! It is true ! It is true ! And in this life you have received the blessings of a great Soul. That will make the diamond in you grow as great and as precious as the Sun itself. And you will meet the Sun, face to face !

ALOK : Good Lord !

SHANKAR : Good Lord !

MAGICIAN : Alok ! A new man is going to be born ! A new earth is being shaped, Shankar ! It is for this great moment that from life to life you've been roaming from one country to another. And it is to speak to you about this New Sun that I've been waiting for you for ages together ! Come, friends, let's pray together for this new life. Let's pray so that we may be ready to become playmates of God in this new game of his !

*(They pray in silence)*

## SCENE V

*(Alok is sleeping in his room. He suddenly gets up, while cocks crow and other birds sing.)*

ALOK : *(Rubbing his eyes)* What's this ! Where, where am I ? Magician ! Shankar ! Diamond ! Sun !...*(A pause)*...All in a dream ? Everything is false ? *(Sits up and goes on thinking. From somewhere comes the Magician's voice.)*

MOTHER INDIA

VOICE : No, my friend !...I'm not joking !...In this life you've received the blessings of a great Soul !...Your diamond will become as precious...as the Sun !...You'll meet the Sun, face to face !...

ALOK : (*Very happy*) True ? Everything is true ? Not a mere dream ?

VOICE : A new man is going to be born ! A new earth is being shaped !... To speak to you of the Sun...I've been waiting!...Let's praytogether ...to become the playmates of God in this new game of his !...

ALOK : (*Kneeling on the bed*) Magician ! I'll remember your story...God ! greatest of magicians ! May I be ready to become your playmate ! May the diamond in me grow as precious as the Sun ! Lord, may I become like you ! May this be my only prayer, O Lord, the only prayer of my life !...

(*Bows down.*)

C U R T A I N

PRITHWINDRA

## TALKS ON POETRY

*(These Talks were given to a group of students starting their University life. They have been prepared for publication from notes and memory, except in the few places where they have been expanded a little. As far as possible the actual turns of phrase used in the Class have been recovered—and, at the request of the students, even the digressions have been preserved. The Talks make, in this form, somewhat unconventional pieces, but the aim has been to retain not only their touch of literature and serious thought but also their touch of life and laughter).*

### TALK ONE

WE are here to study the marvel that is poetry. But a Poetry Class involves duties as well as beauties, and I wish to get over the most prosaic of all duties before we launch into our delightful work. You know that the whole lot of you is supposed to grace the benches of this room with regular attendance and I am expected to go through the horrible task of taking the roll-call. I want to avoid the horror. So let me express a hope. There is a famous riddle : in an accident what is better than presence of mind ? The answer is : absence of body. Well, I sincerely hope you will not regard me in the light of an accident and deal with me by absence of body. Let presence of body be always there—and, of course, let it not be accompanied by absence of mind. For otherwise we cannot achieve what is the first fundamental of success in a Poetry Class.

In a Poetry Class the primary thing the professor should say to his students is that they and he should try to rhyme : in other words, be in tune and have harmonious responses. We cannot quite be the same in metre. Metre, as you ought to be aware if Premanand has been happily at you in the lower Classes, is a system of rhythmic units composed of stressed or unstressed syllables and called feet. There are various kinds of feet—the most frequently used being iambs, trochees, spondees, pyrrhics, anapaests, dactyls. I shall not deal with all their details just now. I shall merely say that a spondee has two syllables that are equally stressed and an anapaest has three syllables the first two of which have no stress and are termed slacks while the third bears a stress. I pick out these metrical units because they are relevant to my remark that we cannot be quite the same in metre. The metre of all of you may be said to be



## MOTHER INDIA

spondaic : your feet fall with equal stress on the ground. Mine do not on account of a limp in one of them. And I use a stick to help me walk better. So my metre is two slacks and one stress : I am an anapaestic fellow. Yes, we have to differ in metrical movement. But there is no reason why a predominantly spondaic line should not rhyme with a predominantly anapaestic. I may give an illustration by adopting some phrases of Sri Aurobindo's poetry and adapting some others of it to make the sort of couplet we want :

Bláck fire | and white | fire búr|ning to one | Gód-blíss |-  
Light, mi|<sup>x</sup>racled light | from an In|<sup>x</sup>finite's blínd | abyss !

You will see that the first line has three spondees out of five metrical units and the second has three anapaests out of the same number.

I may point out another feature that is appropriate and desirable. I expect something more than a rhyme-harmony between us. Our association should be not only a harmony on the whole by end-rhymes but also a harmony by internal details. One line may be Amal and the other may be Class Arts English, First Year, but in the Amal line, while anapaests predominate, there should be at least a single spondee and in the line that is Class Arts English, First Year, the Amalian movement should not be quite absent. The couplet I have presented accomplishes the needful. In the first line there is an anapaest which stands for my being included in you :

Black fire and white fire bur|<sup>x</sup>ning to óne | God-bliss—

and the second line has a spondee which stands for your being included in me :

Líght, mi|racled light from an Infinite's blind abyss !

This mutual inclusion would imply agreement by some kind of psychological interpenetration over and above agreement by a common purpose and general sympathy. Not from the surface, not from the outside, should we have reciprocal response : we should enter into one another's mind, as it were, to enjoy and understand poetry together.

Poetry is not a matter of surfaces, of outsides ; it is a matter of profundities, of insides, and the appreciation of it has to come by a response of the inner self, the inmost soul. I want to give you what I have felt most vividly of the poetic utterance, my stir to it in the recesses of my being and I want my words to get into your recesses so that you too may kindle up likewise. Then alone will poetry have been truly taught and truly learned.

## TALKS ON POETRY

Perhaps you will say : "You are a poet yourself, but we are not. How can we respond in the way you wish ?" But, while pleading guilty to the charge of being a poet, I say : "There is a poet in each of us, because each of us has in his composite personality a dreamer, an idealist, a beauty-lover, a seeker of concordances, and poetry is but these beings in us grown vocal, finding tongue. Now, there are two ways in which the vocalisation, the tongue-finding can take place. Either you burst into poetic speech or else you get so identified with the creative life-process of somebody else's poem that you feel as if the poem came out of your own soul. That is to say, when reading a poem, you experience as it were the actual writing of it. First, you draw away from common clamours and hold an attentive and receptive silence in yourself, for all poetry comes from beyond the ordinary noises of the world and of our own mind, from an in-world or an over-world whose native voice we can hear only when we turn to it with an intense hush. Not that poets always openly practise this hush by going into solitude or by shutting their ears to daily distractions. What happens very often is just an automatic inward switching off even while the outer self is engaged in common occupations or else two lines run side by side, an inner line of receptive attention catching the in-world's or the over-world's vibration and an outer line directed towards day-to-day affairs. But, in whatever form, essentially there is what I have called an intense hush. You too have to repeat in yourself the calm which precedes all creation. But the calm is extremely sensitive—it is nothing dull and apathetic. It is all alert, it is emotion and imagination held in a profound poise, ready to kindle up. You have to thrill to the significant turn of the word-sound, you have to glow with the imagery in which the thoughts and feelings move. Then the poem repeats in you the act of its creation and what has happened to the writer happens to the reader. This is a wonderful experience and by it you can feel as if you were Shakespeare, you were Shelley, you were even Sri Aurobindo !

Thus all of you can indirectly be poets. And who knows that even in the direct sense you may not poetically blossom forth if you intensely re-live the expression of other poets ? At least it was the experience of Keats that he awoke to his own poetic possibilities by intensely re-living the work of Spenser. And most poets draw a quickening spark from great poems when their own creative fire sinks a little. If I may indulge in a bit of symbol-reading I should declare that the description which this Class bears is a promise of a direct poetic flowering in many of you. This Class is called AE 1—and all of you must be aware that the name of a great English spiritual poet was AE. AE 1 may mean that there can be various grades of AE and you are the first grade, which may in turn mean either the lowest rung, the beginner's

level, or the top of the scale of excellence. If the top can be signified by the English usage, "Oh, it is A 1!", why should I not understand a similar shade of significance in the phrase, "Oh, you are AE 1!"?

Whatever the interpretation of that numeral, let us hold fast to the symbolic suggestion of the letters AE and let us remember that the AE in you, the direct or the indirect poet, is at once the most natural part of your being and the part most to be watched, most to be carefully kept alive. The poet is as old as history, he lies at the very roots of human life. Anthropology tells us that the mind of early man worked more in terms of poetry than in those of prose. Not that early man talked about everything in accomplished verses: surely he spoke prose about daily trivialities. But when he employed language not for mere utility, when he employed it for a satisfying self-expression and with an enjoyment in its use he spontaneously composed poetry. Present-day primitive races have a large fund of poetic utterance. Of course the utterance is itself primitive, but it shows how very naturally the poetic impulse comes to the mind and heart of man. Have you read the Australian blackfellow's hunt-cry? Listen:

The Kangaroo was very fast,  
 But I ran faster.  
 The Kangaroo was very fat;  
 I ate him.  
 Kangaroo! Kangaroo!

This will hardly strike you as the sort of poetry you would like to write. Nor would I specially recommend it. But we should not overlook its qualities. Take the opening two lines. Evidently they refer to the capture of the Kangaroo; yet they nowhere speak of it. What is spoken of is only the relative speeds of the animal and the man. Literally we may consider them indications of a race in which the man won. But the unspoken suggestion is of a race in which the life of the animal was at stake. Just by declaring that the man outstripped the animal the lines tell us of a successful hunt. Nor do we feel the competition to be all unequal. The Kangaroo by its exceptional speed set a challenge to the hunter and only by a rare burst of vital force did he get hold of it. We have the beginnings of an imaginative gusto here as well as of the intuitive manner of speech. The intuitive manner by its keen compactness and kindling contact of words needs to express no more than half of the matter: it is a manner that makes silence itself the most effective speech. Perhaps in the blackfellow's harping on the race there is also a touch of delicacy by the omission to speak of slaughter. The next two lines are much

## TALKS ON POETRY

cruder, yet even here the slaughter is only by a gross implication and even here we have a tinge of elementary intuitiveness. Not only the enjoyment of a substantial meal is conveyed. Also a conquest of quantity by quality is suggested—the comparatively smaller man getting the bigger animal inside him. Then the last two lines which are a sheer outlet of joy are not merely a magnified belch of satisfaction. A triumph-cry is raised in which we have, besides a sense of emotional completion, a sense of imaginative self-enhancement as if the living reality not only of one Kangaroo but of the entire Kangaroo-species had passed into the man and added to him an extra power of being. Mark too the double exclamation, one appropriate to the conquering of the animal and the other to the consumption of it: an instinct of artistic logic is at play. And the repetition of the word communicates also the singer's love of significant sound, his relish of the music of a rich-ringing important appellative.

In crude quintessence we have almost all the qualities of poetic creation. You will have noticed that I have dwelt considerably on the mode of utterance, the way things are put: in short, the form. Wherever there is poetry, be it primitive or highly progressed, the form is remarkable. The more highly progressed it is, the more remarkable the form. And it is the form that grips us or bespells us though we may know it not. I should like you to awake to the presence of the form in every poem you come across. You may have always been aware that poetry says wonderful things, but you must realise that the wonderfulness is bound up with the manner of saying: the words are such as draw attention to themselves either by their fineness or by their sensitive combination and the sounds are a direct power and both make a marked pattern exciting the eye and ear. When poets foregather, they rarely discuss the substance of their work: they are most interested in the "how" of the whole activity—the particular twist of the image, the special collocation of phrases, the chime or clash of rhythms. And it is because the poetic effect takes place by means of this twist, this collocation, this rhythmic play that after the initial uncritical happy surrender to a poem has been made for the sake of its general intuitive impact, the understanding appreciation of form is necessary if you are to be wholly intimate with the true nature of poetry.

Let me, however, hasten to say that by form I do not mean anything exclusively outward—the mere technique. It is always helpful for a poet to master the technical niceties of his job and the reader too will increase his pleasure in poetry by noting the inspired tricks of the poetic trade. But the fact that the tricks are inspired and not invented is never to be forgotten. Poetry takes the word-form it does, not only by externalising the substance, the theme, but also by externalising an internal manner, an internal form.

## MOTHER INDIA

The "how" of expression originates in the "how" of experience or, to be more accurate, in the "how" of vision and emotion. Not just the thing you inwardly see or inwardly thrill to, but the mode in which the imagination shapes, the manner in which the thrill modulates—these are the determinants of the word-form in which the substance, the theme, ultimately appears. There are a hundred ways of seeing and feeling, and the intuitive way is what creates poetry. An energy that shoots deep by a bright leap of vision and by a keen quiver of emotion is the poetic impulse and what renders a verbal image poetic is the particular shining slant with which the vision darted and the particular vibration with which the emotion was intense. You cannot turn an image revelatory or a word-movement significant in sound without these inner phenomena. No matter how much you manipulate your technique from the outside, you will never achieve the inevitable eye-opener, the impeccable ear-enchanter in your poem. Of course, a poet by shuffling his words about in various experimental shapes can at times strike on the right gesture and gait of language, but what recognises a gesture and a gait to be right is an inner sensitiveness which knows at once that the true visionary and rhythmic mode of experience has been reflected and echoed in the expression. The hidden life-glow of a thing as glimpsed through a certain break in the consciousness, the secret life-throb of a thing as caught by a certain shake of the consciousness—there you have the origin of the authentic word-arrangement conjuring up a penetrating picture and a felicitous rhythm. The form which the mind and heart take inside is the maker of the technical design outside. When, therefore, I insist on study of form as vital to poetic appreciation I do not mean anything superficial. I mean the recognition of the inspired excitement within through the verbal form without. But I mean also that a close alert response to the verbal form without is the sole path to the fullness of this recognition.

If I were asked to illustrate in brief what poetry is I should quote a few lines from Thomas Nashe and comment on their verbal form. Most probably you are familiar with the lines :

Beauty is but a flower  
Which wrinkles will devour :  
Brightness falls from the air ;  
Queens have died young and fair ;  
Dust hath closed Helen's eye...

Here we have two levels of inspiration. The first two lines give us the poetic *mot juste*, the appropriate poetic word. The next three give us the *mot inévitable*

*able* of poetry, poetry's perfect archetypal word. The whole temper and pitch of utterance undergo a decisive change towards an absolute enchantment.

The opening line is a good but none-too-original metaphor—the seeing of all beauty as a short-lived blossom. The second shows the poet stirring to the challenge of the metaphor and entering into the vivid details of flowery transience. The word “wrinkles” gives point to the metaphor: it immediately connects up with the human face ageing, but it applies also to the creasing and shrivelling to which a flower is subject when it is in decline. Already the imagination has started being penetrative. And when we come to the word “devour” we have it at an intenser pitch. This word hits off most effectively the ravage of time, time the devourer of all things, be they ever so beautiful, and the effectiveness of expression is not its sole function: it is its appropriateness to the wrinkling that makes the poetic climax of the two lines: wrinkling involves the shrinkage of the flower, its process towards disappearance, and the shrinkage is as if the wrinkles were eating up the surface of the flower with their lines like clenching mouths, until the petals dry up into insignificant lifelessness. A common occurrence in Nature is passed through a new vision which conveys the very bite of mortality and gathers all human fate into a symbol small yet packed with profound pathos.

But the imagination is still working in bondage, so to speak, to common facts, though it turns that bondage uncommonly vivid and wide in meaning. In the third line the imagination leaps clear away into a revelation lit up by a magic at once ineffably mournful and rapturous, mournful by the import of the imagery, rapturous by the words and the rhythm through which the imagery becomes intensely significant. Beyond the unavoidable tragedy of the beautiful growing aged and shrunken we move to the heart-shattering irony of beauty dropping from the height of its triumph, straight from its very resplendence. And the imagery, while exquisitely precise, has what I may term a universal vagueness that makes it not only multi-suggestive but the symbol of an unappeasable world-woe. What exactly is this “brightness” in the “air”? It may be a rose in all its tremulous uplifted glory. It may be a meteor swift and silvery on high. It may be the sun itself at the zenith of noon. Or it may be a human face aglow with both grace of feature and grace of fortune. We have a generality concrete with the living essence of the uncertainty of all earth-bliss. And the rhythm has an airy delicacy fused with a helpless falling movement. This extremely appropriate movement is due to the first two feet being a succession of trochees, the weak syllable coming after the strong in either foot—

Brightness | <sup>x</sup>falls from | <sup>x</sup>the air...

The airy delicacy is due to the texture of the verse, the *r* at the beginning and the middle and the end, the sibilance at the end of the first foot and in the middle of the second, the *f* combined with *l* and *m* in the middle foot. Note also that while the right types of consonants echo one another no vowel-sound is repeated, even "falls" and "from" have different nuances of vowelisation: thus the open sounds are a music without emphasis. All round, no more felicitously rhythmical pattern could be woven to support, strengthen and quicken the significance of the verse.

In the next line the poetic intuition, which has proceeded from the particular flower-vision and got a new meaning and grown universal, comes to focus again in a particular vision—that of "queens"—and there it acquires clarity with the words "young and fair" associated with the act of dying. The line in itself is not extraordinary: it is almost as if from a child's book of stories, but, even apart from its simple charm, what saves it from being hackneyed in sentiment and even endows it with positive freshness is its organic connection with the preceding line and the succeeding, which have extraordinary magic and evocativeness. Those lines and this are one tissue. And a subtle relation it keeps with them, as well as with what goes still before, by picking up the *f* of "flower" and "falls", the *k* of "wrinkles" and the *d* of "devour" and anticipating with the *k* and the *d* the "dust" and the "closed" of the next line.

The particularity and clarity of vision to which we arrive in the "Queens"-phrase become rich and intense in the poignancy of the next verse where we have on the one side the dark concreteness of blind dust and on the other the luminous concreteness of the life-kindled eye not only in general but with a special directness and fullness because the eye is of the most perfect face in human history, the face of Helen. Mark how effectively from the brightest of all faces the brightest feature is selected, concentrating beauty and thereby concentrating too the dullness of death. This dullness is communicated by the massed dentals in the three opening words—"Dust hath closed"—just as the loveliness extinguished is hinted by the *l*-chime in "closed" and "Helen". The *h* in "hath" and "Helen" suggests a repeated sigh, while the occurrence of the *s* three times, with slight variations of sound, orders a delicate hush in our being to match the silencing of a rare life's happy throb by death. But do not forget that the exquisiteness of the hush would be totally ruined if we were to read "has" instead of "hath". Just the difference in one consonant and the line would be not a deeply moving masterpiece of many sound-suggestions but a hissing horror. See it for yourself by saying, "Dust has closed Helen's eye." So much depends on so small a touch of mere sound.

In passing, I may remark that in the last line "dust" throws our atten-

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tion back not only to the third line's "brightness" but also to its "air"—the throw-back serving to emphasise the magnitude and the depth of the fall: the creature or object whose natural element is a high rarity, an ethereal continuity, descends suddenly to the lowest level of being and the most common, the most crumbled state. Again, the long *o* of "closed" strikes a note of profound finality and perpetuity, and the note is clinched, so to speak, by the packing of two consonants on either side: the doom of closure is all-pressing, all-blocking.

Lastly, I should like to point out a certain rounding-off in the imaginative process of the whole passage. Nashe started by identifying beauty with a flower: he concludes on a phrase that brings up a picture once more of that identification—Helen of legendary loveliness summed up in the most flower-like feature of her body, the small colourful softness that was her eye.

Now I shall return to a point made earlier: the poet, though the most natural part of your being, is yet the part most to be watched, most to be carefully kept alive. Poetry as an art is older than prose because the emotional and the imaginative in man is older than the intellectual, and the moment the more deeply established part of us is stirred the impulse to poetry is there. But mere expression of emotion and imagination is not poetry: shudders and screams, fantasies and nightmares do not immediately make art. The aesthetic instinct and the intuitive sense have to work, at once intensifying and chastening emotion and imagination. Nor can we, who are not primitives, not Australian blackfellows, bypass the intellect: we have to be both finer and subtler with its aspirations and acutenesses, even while avoiding its dry breath of abstraction. Otherwise we shall let loose only a barbaric cleverness and perpetrate modernist poetry. I for one prefer the Kangaroo-cry to much of this kind of verse which is trivially violent and effectively queer. How necessary it is to be vigilant over the poetic impulse can be realised if we look at the outburst that comes natural to many modernist poets. Let me offer you a specimen to carry home with you as a warning:

I can take my shirt and tear it  
And so make a ripping razzly noise,  
And the people will say,  
"Look at him tear his shirt!"

AMAL KIRAN



## “THE INNER SOVEREIGN”\*

(A CRITICAL APPRECIATION)

THIS sonnet of Sri Aurobindo’s is modelled on the form set in vogue by Shakespeare. The Shakespearean form consists of three quatrains with alternate rhymes, and a closing couplet. Usually in this type, the first two lines are devoted to the enunciation of the theme and then the poet amplifies it, throwing the light of his imagination on its different aspects or the different feelings aroused by it. The couplet at the end rounds it off in an epigrammatic way and makes it a complete whole. Thus the beginning and the end form two gateways to an enclosure.

Sri Aurobindo’s sonnet, in the first two lines, gives us in very pregnant words the progressive movement of the Yoga :

Now more and more the Epiphany within  
Affirms on Nature’s soil His sovereign rights.

What is the nature of the Epiphany within, and what was the state of His territory before He started exercising His rights, and what changes have been wrought on Nature by this affirmation, are the questions that the first two lines raise. It is obvious that a body politic whose ruler gives it its head will form a perfect picture of a pandemonium. So is the triple nature of man as long as the Divinity within keeps itself aloof and disinterested in its affairs. This triple nature comprises mind, life and the body. The character of the disorder is known to every human being because all of us have elements that are jostling roughly with one another. This turmoil springs from the fact that each one wants to dominate over others and also defies the authority of the others. Now, every ruler when, he brings about order in his territory, also stamps it with the image of his own personality. The ancient Roman Empire bore the stamp of such rulers as Augustus, modern Germany that of men like the Kaiser and Hitler, and France of Louis XIV and then of Napoleon.

The Epiphany within does not superimpose itself on its subjects but by its Divine Love, Light and Power liberates each member from its servitude

\* This is a summary of the lecture on the sonnet (*Last Poems*, p. 26) given in the tenth class.

## “THE INNER SOVEREIGN”

to the powers of darkness and death. The mind of man is like a bird that can fly high but is cooped in the brain and therefore cannot turn his gaze upwards. It is like a man shut in a prison-camp. The word ‘prison-camp’ has for us the associations of men of high calibre and powerful intellectual capacities, who refused to follow slavishly the caprices of a political despot infatuated with power. How many of them were not permanently demented ! But there were some who brought a new light also and inundated the country with it. Similarly the mind of man is not identical with his physical cerebro-spinal system but is only its prisoner. The Epiphany within has unbarred the gates of the prison-camp and set it free to fly back to the heavens of Light. The mind has now regained its true character—namely, a sea of consciousness far above the physical being, pouring down a light whose origin is the Spirit.

My mind has left its prison-camp of brain,  
It pours a luminous sea from spirit-heights.

The second result of the Inner Sovereign’s effective control will be to curb and canalise the animal energy of man. The vital part of man is far more intractable than the Arab steed on which Mazeppa was tied. It is restless, constantly champing the bit and struggling to bound off spurred by its blind desires. But we must take care not to starve it and drain off its stormy energy. Its wildness, its impetuous rush of energy has in it a splendour and manifests beauty in power, and is it not as sinful to enervate it as to crumple a half-blossomed rose ? It was rebellious because its old rider was no match for its lightning speed; the new rider wields the magic power which has tranquillised it. It was not inherently ungovernable but it wanted some aristocrat of the spirit to mount it and gallop it as fast as it could. Now it has become a hippogriff—a creature with a horse’s body but with the head and wings of an eagle—so that it can prance as well as soar. It is perfectly broken in and the gods of the empyrean ride on it.

A tranquil splendour, waits my Force of Life  
Couched in my heart, to do what He shall bid,  
Poising wide wings like a great hippogriff  
On which the gods of the empyrean ride.

The prime prominent place given to the words “couched in my heart” in the second line serves to stress the change by which the regenerated vital is now an instrument of the Divine Soul. It is held ready in the heart which is the emotional being of man where the Life-force and the Mind meet and blend. The

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open and long vowels in the words 'poising' and 'wide' give us a sense of the wide sweep of the wings spoken of, just as the repetition of the 'gr' sound in 'great' and 'griff' gives the sense of a vibrant and potent energy held in leash. The smooth flow of rhythm in the fourth line of the quatrain conveys most vividly the passage of its flight through etheric vasts.

The third radical change transforms our sense-experience. Our senses that delude us by specious appearances and lure us into fatal traps have been turned into luminous doorways of Ananda. Their liberation from the grosser pleasures—their transmutation, as it were, from dross into gold—has filled the poet with an intense rapture. So long they were inert to the Divine Light and content to be so : now they are thrilled by it and answer to it. The scales have fallen and, with the true vision restored, the complacent darkness vibrates responsive to the call of the Supreme Reality.

My senses change into gold gates of bliss;  
An ecstasy thrills through touch and sound and sight  
Flooding the blind material sheath's dull ease :  
My darkness answers to His call of light.

The predominance of sibilants and the fricative alliteration in 'thrill' and 'through' in the second line wonderfully convey the feeling of the rush of joy.

All the implications of the opening two lines have been vividly presented in ten succeeding ones; now only a neat summing up is needed and that is most effectively done in the solemn close of the couplet :

Nature in me one day like Him shall sit  
Victorious, calm, immortal, infinite.

The pauses in the last line bring into clear relief the four characteristics of Nature when it is governed by the Inner Sovereign who not only governs it but transforms it. This will be the stamp of the Inner Being when it will set about its task of designing the 'wonder of its plan', chanted in Sri Aurobindo's poem *The Rose of God*,

Image of Immortality, outbreak of the godhead in man.

RAVINDRA KHANNA

## BOON

I ASK not of Thee all treasures of earth  
Nor kin nor home nor heavenly mirth  
Nor arts nor letters, no body fine,  
But only one boon: O let me be Thine.

Make seer or fool or king or beggar,  
Give songlike life or still with a dagger,  
But only in heart let Thy love shine,  
And only one boon: O let me be Thine.

If silk Thou givest, I that would wear,  
If torn rags, that with joy I bear—  
On wheat or meat, on all I can dine,  
But only one boon: O let me be Thine.

Footpath or house with light and air,  
Give floor or mat or cot or chair,  
Give water of tank or sparkling wine,  
But only one boon: O let me be Thine.

Let all love me or let all leave,  
Careless of all to Thy feet I'll cleave—  
One word, one need, one prayer is mine,  
Grant only this boon: O let me be Thine.

DEVAKINANDAN

## THE UNFOLDING

With the "I" in me dead and buried,  
• And mourned for some time by the "Me",  
There gradually unfolded an inner light,  
When I found my true self in "THEE"

Fixing my gaze on the "THEE" in me,  
Like a moth to its Light Divine I turn,  
With devotion to feed its sacred flame,  
Joyfully in it my whole being I burn.

My thoughts, my words, my actions,  
Are not my own any more,  
They stand guarding a most precious wealth,  
A Diamond that now in me I store.

Standing in a flood of Thy Diamond Light,  
I am conscious of a ray of Blue;  
Together they help my soul to rise  
Towards a radiance of Golden Hue.

Gratefully content with "THEE" in my heart,  
Envy or malice I bear towards none,  
With my life enriched in Thy abundant Grace,  
May ever in me Thy Will be done.

TIM

# THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO AS A CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

(A synopsis of two special lectures delivered at the Mysore University last August)

## I. THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO AND ITS PRINCIPAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

INDIAN Culture as a whole is basically psychological in its attitude as well as character. The *adhikarbheda*, the distinctive status, the peculiar state of growth and development, is essentially a psychological concept and it has been a determining motivation of Indian life, in its schemes of the four Varnas and the four Ashramas. The same determines its tolerance and variability of forms. Psychology has been, therefore, a strong tradition in Indian Culture, and Yoga seems to have been the Indian counterpart of modern psychology, being the discipline directly and primarily concerned with human personality. Yoga figures in the history of Indian thought and life as a separate discipline as also in combination with philosophical systems and is characterised by a special approach to personality, namely, that of seeking to develop it to its highest possible status.

Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is a contemporary development of this Indian psychological tradition and is marked by an avowed comprehensiveness or integrality of outlook. It affirms the activities of Knowing, Feeling and Willing or Jnana, Karma and Bhakti as simultaneously valid, in fact as indispensable means to effectuate a full integration in personality. Similarly are the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious the three necessary dimensions of human nature, which must duly be recognised as the component forces of personality.

Transformation of man's animal nature, which is the real problem of education and culture, is the focal concept of the Integral Yoga. Sublimation as mere recanalisation of energy is no change of nature. The Integral Yoga offers a complete process and technique as to how human personality can be transformed, *i.e.* substantially changed.

Other important concepts are those of integral knowledge and the condi-

tions of its achievement, self-existent delight, self-effectuating will and a completed integrated personality.

## II. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THIS DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY TO MODERN SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY

Modern scientific psychology is essentially a systematisation of the reactions of personality to the environment. It is even avowedly a "study of the activities of the individual in relation to the environment." But the activities are the activities of the personality. Hence it is extremely relevant to know what personality by itself, or essentially, is. Carl Jung complains that our various explanations of personality remain "caught in mere externalities" and Gardner Murphy says that "nobody knows anything much about the nature of man." For Indian Psychology, on the other hand, the avowed purpose has been to know the true secret of personality and discover the ways of its perfection. Evidently Indian psychology has played the complementary role to modern scientific psychology.

The integral standpoint of Sri Aurobindo's psychological system confidently affirms what personality as a whole is and as such provides a comprehensive basis to reconcile the divergence of the so-called contemporary schools of psychology. It also shows, particularly through its technique and experience of transformation, that conflict, sex and the other polarities of consciousness are not final to human nature.

All this is capable of giving a new orientation to all our modern psychological knowledge. And this modern knowledge of the mind and behaviour, on the other hand, can be a rich acquisition for the Indian psychological tradition.

To synthesise these two is the most promising pursuit of psychology today.

INDRA SEN

## ARISTOTLE'S *POETICS*

### AN EXPOSITION AND AN INTERPRETATION

#### [J.] FINAL DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY

ARISTOTLE's final definition of Tragedy in the sixth chapter of the *Poetics* is a masterpiece of compression. It runs as follows :-

"A Tragedy, then, is the Mimesis of an action that is serious, and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its Katharsis of such emotions. Here by 'language with pleasurable accessories' I mean that with rhythm and harmony or song superadded; and by 'kinds separately' I mean that some portions are worked out with verse only, and others in turn with song."

This is a definition not of all Tragedy in general, but of Greek Tragedy in particular. Tragedy essentially is Mimesis, that is, creative representation of actions of men. Mimesis is not the copy or representation of some supersensible world of perfection. On the contrary, it is the imaginative recreation of the world of men in action. In the modern sense, 'All the world is a stage' and the stage is all the world. Aristotle negates Plato's view that art is several degrees removed from Truth. Drama is concerned with the creative representation of man's mind, his acts, his emotions, his sufferings. Tragedy is not concerned with the Metaphysics of Perfection. It deals with human stuff in the human environment. The particular form of Mimesis of the Drama involves Plot, Character, Peripeteia, Discovery, Pathos, Tragic situation, and Katharsis.

Tragic situation deals with the Serious. This distinguishes it from Comedy which is concerned with the ludicrous and the ugly. Aristotle does not contemplate the fusion of Tragedy and Comedy as attempted by Euripides in *Alcestis*. His innate conservatism forbids him to formulate the principles of Drama including elements of Tragedy, Comedy, Melodrama in the manner of Euripides or the writers of the New Comedy. His ideal is the Sophoclean play which maintains dignity by seriousness and height by tragic diction. In his view Comedy reverses the tragic role. He did not visualise the possibility of comic relief in the midst of tragic scenes such as is justified by Shakespeare in the knocking of the gate at the point of the murder of Duncan.



Tragedy must have a certain magnitude. This distinguishes it from the Epic. Tragedy is subject more strictly to the law of dramatic coherence. It must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. It cannot have an indefinite magnitude. It requires the central action of a tragic Character. Greek Tragedy in particular was bound to the laws of unity of Time and Place. Homer could deal with a number of incidents as in the *Odyssey* side by side. The movement of the Epic is broader and it may admit of almost indefinite magnitude.

Tragedy must be complete. The parts must be coordinated. The inter-connecting links of action must not snap. It must be a coherent whole. Where the parts break, Tragic action collapses.

Tragedy must possess Language with the pleasurable accessories Rhythm, Harmony or Song, that is Dance, Music, and Verse. This refers to the special features of Greek Tragedy, the function of the chorus. This has no application to Modern Tragedy which may be written in prose and in which singing and dancing have become parts of the separate arts of the Ballet and the Opera.

Tragic action is two-fold—action of the dialogue upon the stage and the action of song and dance upon the Orchestra. These parts of dramatic action must be coordinated. Action on the stage proceeding separately from action on the Orchestra is not approved. The Law of Coherence applies to the dialogue upon the stage as well as to the dance and song upon the Orchestra. Also detached choruses as interval of relief in Drama are not encouraged by Aristotle. This disturbs the unfolding unity of dramatic action.

Tragedy is dramatic and not narrative in form. This differentiates it from the Epic which is narrative and not dramatic in form. Tragedy speaks through the agency of Characters. The Epic may employ some of the rules of the Drama : Peripeteia, Discovery, and Pathos. It may observe some of the rules of coherence. It may relate incidents step by step. It may have climaxes of Characters. Yet it is not dramatic in form. It does not unfold events through its characters. Its sequences are in narration. It is free of the restriction of the dramatic technique.

Tragedy must have incidents arousing pity and fear. Aristotle does not consider that any tragic action is possible in the absence of the emotions of pity and fear. This view is based upon the practice of the Greek Masters of the Tragic Art, Aeschylus and Sophocles, and possibly upon the strict notions of dramatic coherence. If defect of character must mature into action, and action rise into the climax of Peripeteia, then Peripeteia must produce pity and fear. Pity and fear also in turn produce Katharsis of the passions. If pity and fear are not aroused, there is no Katharsis and therefore no Tragedy. This argument assumes that Tragedy cannot be combined with Comedy and Melodrama. With the extension of the dramatic field in the writings of Euripides and modern

composers, pity and fear, although the essential ingredients of Greek Tragedy, become the incidents rather than the object of Drama. Tragedy covers only a part of the dramatic field. In the enlargement of the Drama, pity and fear become unessentials. In Melodramas such as *A Midsummer's Night's Dream* or the *Tempest*, there is no pity or fear. Nevertheless strict Tragedy must arouse pity and fear.

Katharsis is not defined by Aristotle in the first part of the *Poetics*. It would seem that it was reserved for discussion in the second part which has been lost. Very wide ranges of meaning have been given by scholars to this word. It would not be safe therefore to give to it any specific significance upon the basis of the text of the *Poetics*. In a general sense it may be said to be the reaction of character and audience to the drama as a whole. The nature of this reaction cannot be defined. That is an individual matter. It may be a reaction moral, intellectual, aesthetic, or sensuous. It may be an outlook of a detached spectator. It may be only a pleasurable emotion, a spiritual purification of the passions or a release of some repression. Whatever may be the sense to be attached to the word, it would seem that Aristotle is justifying the existence of drama as the necessary expression of the human faculty of creative representation. Drama, Dance, and Song are natural tendencies of the human soul. The innate potencies of the soul are not to be crushed. Rather they are to be released. To suppress them is to invite them to appear in a cruder and worse manifestation. In the nobler creations of art, they at least emerge as the natural aesthetic flowering of the human faculties. In this sense, Tragedy is a purgation, that is, an overflowing of the higher potencies of the human Spirit.

#### (K) CONCLUSION

Aristotle's *Poetics* does not purport to lay down the general principles of Drama. It is centred upon Greek Tragedy. Frequently it touches upon the universal laws of Drama as in the statement of the laws of dramatic coherence. The *Poetics* is conditioned by the Greek Theatre. The laws of Peripeteia, Discovery, Pathos, Construction of Plots simple or complex, are drawn from the practice of the Greek Tragedians. Directions as to the part to be played appertains to the Greek stage. The idea that Tragedy must combine verse, dance, and song is also Greek. The rules as to unity of Time and Place, instructions as to the making of Character, restrictions as to tragic situations, are all subject to the limitations of the Greek stage. The exceedingly practical character of the *Poetics* makes it impractical as the final statement of the principles of Drama. This does not mar the work as a whole. The *Poetics* opens up the whole branch of aesthetic theory of the Drama. It is the foundation of all

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future developements of the subject. It was the first treatise which set the demarcations of the field of the Drama. It was the first to insist upon Drama as the expression of the natural faculties of the soul. It was the first book to deal systematically with Plot, Character, Tragic Situation, Dramatic Coherence, and dramatics in general. It contains the seeds of the universal principles of the technique of the Drama. No theory of aesthetics, modern or ancient, can ignore the *Poetics*. In all ages, there has been a resurgence or elucidation of the *Poetics* whether in Arabia by the Saracens, or in Europe by Mediaeval or Modern Scholarship.

(Concluded)

SYED MEHDI IMAM