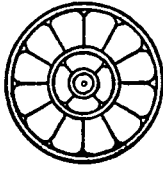


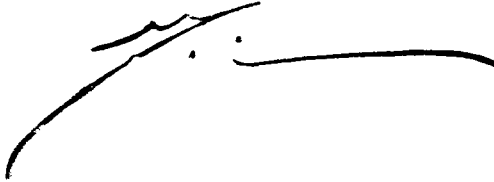
# MOTHER INDIA

FEBRUARY, 1960

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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

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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## THE DARSHAN OF FEBRUARY 21, THE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

THE best way for Darshan is to keep oneself very collected and quiet and open to receive whatever the Mother gives.

February 12, 1937

SRI AUROBINDO

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\*

There is one divine Force which acts in the universe and in the individual and is also beyond the individual and the universe. The Mother stands for all these, but she is working here in the body to bring down something not yet expressed in this material world so as to transform it...

SRI AUROBINDO

Her embodiment is a chance for the earth-consciousness to receive the Supramental into it and to undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible. Afterwards there will be a further transformation by the Supramental, but the whole earth will not be supramentalised—there will be first a new race representing the Supermind, as man represents the mind.

13-8-1933

SRI AUROBINDO

## TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

### SOME STATEMENTS BY THE MOTHER

*(February 29 of this year is the first recurrence—after four years—of the date on which took place the spiritual event for which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had luminously laboured for decades and for whose swifter advent Sri Aurobindo sacrificed his body in 1950. But, although this event marks a radical turn in world-history, it must take time to be effective and what is established works itself out progressively in the world's life. Nor can the progression be always smooth. It faces mighty obstacles, the entrenched obscurity and ignorance of ages. And its leader, the Mother, has to accept the difficulties of Man in general in order to accomplish a representative evolution that can carry the human collectivity a decisive step further. But between 1956 and 1960 various developments have occurred, preparing some momentous turn with the repetition of the same date, a new packed point in the revelatory rhythm.)*

*The spiritual event of February 29, 1956, was termed by the Mother the Manifestation of the Supermind. Some pointers to the Supermind's actual work during the period up to February 29, 1960, and to its preparation for the future can be gathered from all that the Mother has spoken or written in these four years. A general compressed collection of these pointers has been made below, together with a few others which date from an earlier time and serve as a brief introduction.)*

1930

Sri Aurobindo's work is a unique earth-transformation. Above the mind there are several levels of conscious being, among which the really divine world is what Sri Aurobindo has called the Supermind, the world of the Truth. ...It is the direct descent of the Supramental Consciousness and Power that alone can utterly re-create life in terms of the Spirit...

There is not a shadow of doubt as to the issue of the work we have in hand. It is no mere experiment but an inevitable manifestation of the Supramental....

## TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

When I first met Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry,<sup>1</sup> I was in deep concentration, seeing things in the Supermind, things that were to be but that were somehow not manifesting. I told Sri Aurobindo what I had seen and asked him if they would manifest. He simply said, "Yes." And immediately I saw that the Supermind had touched the earth and was beginning to be realised ! This was the first time I had witnessed the power to make real what is true.

1931

By slow degrees the Supramental is exerting its influence; now one part of the being and now another feels the embrace or the touch of its divinity; but when it comes in all its self-existent power, a supreme radical change will seize the whole nature. We are moving nearer and nearer the hour of its complete triumph....

One of the greatest victories...will be the transformation of Matter which is apparently the most undivine...The Supramental body which has to be brought into being here has four main attributes : lightness, adaptability, plasticity and luminosity. When the physical body is thoroughly divinised, it will feel as if it were always walking on air, there will be no heaviness or *tamas* or unconsciousness in it. There will also be no end to its power of adaptability : in whatever conditions it is placed it will immediately be equal to the demands made upon it because its full consciousness will drive out all that inertia and incapacity which usually make Matter a drag on the Spirit. Supramental plasticity will enable it to stand the attack of every hostile force which strives to pierce it : it will present no dull resistance to the attack but will be, on the contrary, so pliant as to nullify the force by giving way to it to pass off. Thus it will suffer no harmful consequences and the most deadly attacks will leave it unscathed. Lastly, it will be turned into the stuff of light, each cell will radiate the supramental glory. Not only those who are developed enough to have their subtle sight open but the ordinary man too will be able to perceive this luminosity. It will be an evident fact to each and all, a permanent proof of the transformation which will convince even the most sceptical.

December, 1950

The funeral of Sri Aurobindo has not taken place today.<sup>2</sup> His body is charged with such a concentration of supramental light that there is no sign

<sup>1</sup> March 29, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> December 6.



## MOTHER INDIA

of decomposition and the body will be kept lying on his bed so long as it remains intact.

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People do not know what a tremendous sacrifice Sri Aurobindo has made for the world. About a year ago, while I was discussing things, I remarked that I felt like leaving this body of mine. He spoke out in a very firm tone, "No, this can never be. If necessary for this transformation, I might go, you will have to fulfil our Yoga of supramental descent and transformation."

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\*

When I asked him to resuscitate he clearly answered : "I have left this body purposely. I will not take it back. I shall manifest again in the first supramental body built in the supramental way."

1953

Sri Aurobindo has given up his body in an act of supreme unselfishness, renouncing the realisation in his body to hasten the hour of the collective realisation. Surely if the earth were more responsive, this would not have been necessary.

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Even in 1938 I used to see the Supermind descending into Sri Aurobindo. What he could not do at that time was to fix it here.

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As soon as Sri Aurobindo withdrew from his body, what he had called the Mind of Light got realised here....

The Supermind had descended long ago—very long ago—in the mind and even in the vital : it was working in the physical also but indirectly through these intermediaries. The question now was about the direct action of the Supermind in the physical. Sri Aurobindo said it could be possible only if the physical mind received the supramental light : the physical mind was the instrument for direct action upon the most material. This physical mind receiving the supramental light Sri Aurobindo called the Mind of Light.

\*

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The transformation of the material body has not been done nor even attempted perhaps in the past. It can be done only if life is sufficiently prolonged, you do not leave the body unless you will it so and thus have the necessary time at your disposal to bring about the change. Sri Aurobindo once said—and he said it without the least hesitation—that it will take about three hundred years to do it, I can add, from the time when the last stage of union with the Divine is achieved.

Three hundred years is the minimum, I should say. You must realise what it means to transform the body. The body with all its organs and functionings works automatically without the intervention of your consciousness, and is built upon an animal plan. If your heart stops for the hundredth part of a second, your body goes off. You cannot do without a single of your organs and you must keep watch over their proper functioning. Transformation means the replacement of this purely material arrangement by a systematic concentration of forces. You must bring about an arrangement of forces, according to a certain kind of vibrations, replacing each organ by a centre of self-conscious energy which governs through the concentration of a higher force. There will no longer be a stomach, no more a heart even. These things will give place to a system of vibrations which represent what they really are. The material organs are symbols of energy centres; they are not the essential reality, they only give a form or figure to it under certain circumstances. The transformed body will function through its real energy centres, not through their representatives as developed in an animal body. For that you must first of all be conscious of these centres and their functionings; instead of an unconscious automatic movement there has to be a movement of conscious control. Thus one will have at his disposal not physical animal organs but the symbolic vibrations, the symbolic energies. This does not mean that there will not be any definite recognisable form. The form will be built up with qualities rather than with solid (dust) particles. It will be, so to say, a practical or pragmatic form: it will be supple and mobile, unlike the fixed grossly material shape. As the expression of your face changes with your feeling, impulsion, even so the body will change according to the need of the inner movement: have you never had this kind of experience in your dreams? You rise up in the air and you give as it were a push with your elbow in one direction and your body extends that way; you give a kick with your feet and you land somewhere else: you can be transparent at will and go easily through a solid wall! The transformed body will behave somewhat in the same way, it will be light, luminous, elastic. Lightness, luminosity, elasticity will be the very fundamental qualities of the body.

To prepare such a body 300 years is nothing; even a thousand years will

## MOTHER INDIA

not be too much. Naturally, I am speaking of the same body. If you change your body in between, it will no longer be the same body. At 50 the body already begins to wear out. But, on the contrary, if you have a body that goes on perfecting itself, if each passing year represents a step in progress, then you can continue indefinitely : for after all, you are immortal.

There is another difficulty one has to face in the work of transformation. A particular body cannot change unless there is some sort of a corresponding change in the surrounding bodies and in the surrounding generally also; for one lives and moves through mutual interchange in the midst of others. A collective change takes more time than individual change. So it is no longer an individual consciousness, but the collective consciousness that has to do the work.

December 31, 1954

I foresee that the coming year will be a difficult year. There will be much inner struggle and much outer struggle too....The difficulties may last perhaps more than the twelve months of the year, may extend to fourteen months.... They will be for all, for the world, for India, for the Ashram and individuals also, more or less equally. It is, I may say, the last hope of the hostile forces—to prevail against the Present Realisation.

February 29-March 29, 1956

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.

April 24, 1956

The manifestation of the Supramental upon earth is no more a promise but a living fact, a reality.

It is at work here, and one day will come when the most blind, the most unconscious, even the most unwilling shall be obliged to recognise it.

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The Supramental Light, Consciousness and Force have manifested. The Supramental Ananda has not come yet. When I say “manifested” rather

TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

than “descended”, I do not mean that the Supermind involved in Matter, in the Inconscient, has emerged. That emergence is for the future, but, of course, now it is merely a question of time : the process is natural and inevitable. The manifestation is the outbreak of the Supramental world proper into the subtle physical atmosphere of our universe.

May 2, 1956

People who are inwardly ready, who are open and in rapport with the higher forces, people who are in personal contact more or less directly with the Supramental Light and Consciousness are capable of feeling the difference in the terrestrial atmosphere....

But those who are not conscious even in the slightest degree of their inner being and who would be embarrassed to talk of what their soul is like, such people are surely not ready to perceive the difference in the earth's atmosphere. They have yet a long way to go for that, because for those whose consciousness is more or less exclusively centred in the outer being—mental, vital and physical—things have to appear preposterous and unexpected in order to be recognised, and then they call them miracles.

But the constant miracle of the intervention of forces, changing circumstances and characters and having a very general effect—this is not called a miracle because one sees only the appearance and it seems altogether natural.

May 5, 1956

What I call a descent takes place when one rises in an ascent and catches hold of the thing high up there and descends with it. That is an individual event.

When such an event takes place in a manner sufficient to create a possibility of a general order, what happens is not a descent, it is a manifestation.

What I call a descent is an individual movement, in an individual consciousness. And when it is a new world that manifests itself in an old one—as when the Mind was first diffused over the earth—I call it a manifestation. ..

You may call it what you will, it is all the same to me, but we must understand each other.

Ascending and descending are a way of speaking, they have no ultimate sense : there is really neither up nor down. We speak of ascending when we have the impression of raising ourselves towards something; and we say “descending” when, after seizing that thing, we make it descend within ourselves.

## MOTHER INDIA

But when the gates are thrown open and the flood takes place, you cannot call it a descent. It is a force that spread itself.

June 20, 1956

In *The Synthesis of Yoga* there is the description of what was to be done in order to come into contact with the Supermind and prepare the ground of its manifestation. But now that the Supermind has entered the earth's atmosphere, I do not see why one single fixed process should be imposed on its manifestation. If it wishes to illumine directly an instrument which it finds suitable, or ready and adapted, I see no reason why it should not do so.

And I repeat : who has said that it cannot ? Nobody. What Sri Aurobindo has described is something else and it is in effect what has happened. It was the necessary preparation for the manifestation to take place. But now why and on what basis should one particular process be imposed on the supramental action and that action not have the liberty to choose its own means ?...

The effect of the supramental action will be multiple, infinitely varied, not forced to follow one precise line and the same line for all. This is impossible, because it is contrary to the very nature of the supramental consciousness.

July 11, 1956

There are impatient people who tell me : "How is it that some sadhaks have found their difficulties increased ? You said once that all of us would know when the Supermind descended. Has the promise been kept ?"

Perhaps I expected more from humanity than it is capable of giving me. But how do you know that the difficulties have increased and not that you have only become more conscious ? All the difficulties may have been before and you may not have known of them. If you see more clearly and if you see things that are not pretty, it is not the fault of the Supermind, it is just your own fault. The Supermind gives you a light, a mirror in which you may see better than you have done so far, and you are annoyed because what is seen is not always pleasing....

The point is this : "Is it not that the Supramental Force acts here despite the obstacles set up by unregenerate human nature ?" Truly I hope it does. For otherwise there would be nothing to do, the world would never be regenerated. But things may seem more difficult to you because you are a little more aware and have caught sight of things in yourselves unseen till now.

There is yet another reason. It is that when the Force at work is stronger,

TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

insists further, naturally what resists starts resisting more in the same proportion. And if instead of being hypnotised by your little difficulties, your small inconveniences, your tiny discomforts, your big defects, you try to see the opposite side, at what point the Force is more powerful, the Grace more active, the help more tangible—in a word, if you are just a little less egoistic, less concentrated in yourselves and have a slightly larger vision in which you can include things which do not concern you personally, then perhaps your view of the problem will change.

September 5, 1956

Before the effects of the supramental manifestation become visible and tangible, perceptible to the whole world, thousands of years have perhaps to pass....For a developed consciousness, the Supermind is already realised somewhere in the domain of the subtle physical, it is already existent and visible and concrete, already expressing itself in forms and in activities. When one gets into rapport with that consciousness and lives in its vision, one has a very strong impression that it would suffice for condensing, so to speak, this world and make it visible to all....It could be that those who are conscious in their dreams would have dreams of a new kind which would connect them with the new world, for it is within reach of the subtle physical of all who have the corresponding organs in themselves. And inevitably there is a subtle influence of that physicality on external matter if one is ready to receive the impressions and admit them into one's consciousness.

October 3, 1956

I have been asked what difference the presence of the Supermind will make, in what way it will change the trend of events and how, since the Supramental manifestation, life has to be re-viewed....

It is evident that the modern scientific perception is much nearer to something that corresponds to the universal Reality than the perceptions, say, of the Stone Age; there is no shadow of a doubt about that. But even this will be completely transcended, surpassed and probably upset by the intrusion of something which was not in the universe and has not been studied so far.

This change, this sudden mutation in the universal elements will very certainly bring a kind of chaos in our perceptions, but out of it a new knowledge will arise. That, in a most general way, will be the result of the New Manifestation...

Indeed it is quite possible that things are happening now which people are not accustomed to meet with. But that is a question of interpretation. The

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only fact I am sure of is...that the quality, the quantity and the nature of the possible universal combinations are about to change to such an extent that it will stagger all those who deal with life. Let us wait and see...

The mind sets up rigid laws, and when it does that, you do not cut yourself off from the apparent surface existence, for the surface, in a very obliging manner, seems to satisfy these laws. But that is an appearance, and it does cut you off from the creative Power of the Spirit, cut you off from the true Power of Grace. You can understand that if, by your aspiration and your attitude, you bring down a higher element, a new element—which now we may call the Supramental—into the existing combinations, you can all on a sudden change their nature and then all these so-called necessary and inexorable laws become absurdities.

October 10, 1956

According to modern scientific discoveries, the mental manifestation has taken about a million years to evolve from a simian brain to the first human brain. And I told you, therefore, that one must not expect the supramental manifestation to be achieved within a few months or a few years; that will evidently take a little more time.

Now some people seem to have concluded from that that I had announced that there would be no superman in a million years. I want to correct this impression.

Sri Aurobindo says that as growth proceeds on a higher and higher scale of consciousness, the movement becomes quicker and when the Supramental or the Spirit mixes up with it, the thing may go very much quicker. So, we can hope that in a few centuries the first supramental race will appear.

But even that is disconcerting to some, for they believe that it is contradictory to what Sri Aurobindo has always promised, that the time is come when the supramental transformation is possible. But you must not confuse supramental transformation with the appearance of the new race. What Sri Aurobindo has promised and what evidently interests us who are here now is that the time has come when some chosen beings out of the present day humanity who fulfil the conditions of the necessary spiritualisation would be capable of transforming their body with the help of the Supramental Force, the Supramental Consciousness and the Supramental Light and would no longer be animal men but become supermen.

This promise he based on the knowledge he had that the Supramental Force was about to break upon earth. In point of fact, the Supramental Force had come down into him long ago. He knew it and he knew what were its results.

TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

Now that the Supramental has manifested in a general cosmic way, the certitude of the possibility of the transformation is naturally much greater. There is no doubt that those who fulfil and will fulfil the conditions are on the way towards this transformation.

The conditions, Sri Aurobindo gives in detail in the *Synthesis of Yoga* and in still more detail in his last articles on the *Supramental Manifestation*; now one has only to realise.

February 7, 1957

It is now nearly one year that we had on Wednesday the Manifestation of the Supramental Force. Since that moment the Power is working very actively, even if very few people are able to perceive it; and I think that the time has come now to help it as much as we can by making an effort towards collective receptivity. Of course, the Force is not only acting in the Ashram, it acts in the whole world and everywhere; wherever there is receptivity it is working; the Ashram has not the exclusive monopoly of receptivity in the world. But as we are all here, knowing more or less what has happened, we can collectively, —individually I hope everyone is doing his best to profit by the circumstances —facilitate its action by trying to unify the ground, produce a particularly fertile soil, so that the maximum of collective receptivity may be obtained and that there be the least possible wastage of time and energy.

October 2, 1957

For those who use their physical eyes alone, the victory will be apparent only when it is total, that is to say, physical.

January, 1958

...I identified myself with Nature, totally, I entered into her play. And this movement of identification called forth a response, a new kind of intimacy between Nature and myself, a long movement of drawing ever nearer until it found its culmination in an experience that came on the 8th November.

All on a sudden Nature understood. She understood that this new consciousness that has taken birth does not intend to reject her, but wishes to embrace her totally. She understood that the new spirituality did not shirk life, did not recoil before the formidable amplitude of her movement, but, on the contrary, wanted to integrate all her aspects. She understood that the supramental consciousness was there not to diminish but to complete her.



## MOTHER INDIA

Then, out of the supreme Reality came this order : "Awake, O Nature, to the joy of collaboration." And all Nature threw herself suddenly into an immense bouncing of joy, saying, "I accept, I collaborate." And at the same time there came a calm, an absolute tranquillity so that this receptacle of the body might receive and hold, without breaking, without losing anything, the mighty flood of this delight of Nature who has thrown herself as it were into a movement of gratefulness. She accepted, she saw with all the eternity before her that this supramental consciousness was going to fulfil her more perfectly, give a still greater force to her movement, a greater amplitude and further possibilities to her play.

And suddenly I heard as if coming from all the corners of the earth those great notes that one hears sometimes in the subtle physical, somewhat like those of the Concerto in Re of Beethoven, that come at the hour of great advancement, as if a hundred orchestras burst out all together, without a single false note, to announce the joy of this new communion between Nature and Spirit, of this meeting of old friends who find each other after having been separated for a long time.

Then came these words : "O Nature, Material Mother, thou hast said that thou wilt collaborate and there is no limit to the splendour of this collaboration." ..

Yet you must not make a mistake on the meaning of this experience and imagine that henceforth everything will happen without any difficulty and always in a way favourable to our personal desires....It is something deeper. Nature has admitted into the play of her forces the new force that has manifested, she has included it within her movements. And, as always, things of Nature, movements of Nature are on a scale that surpasses infinitely the human, that is not visible to the ordinary human consciousness. It is an inner, psychological possibility that has been born on earth rather than a spectacular change in earthly events.

I say this because you might be tempted to believe that fairy tales are going to be realised on earth. The moment is not yet....

February 3, 1958

...Between the supramental world and men there is almost the same separation as between men and animals... The experience that I had on the third February is a proof of this. Before, my contact with the supramental was individual, subjective, but on the third February I walked there in a concrete way, as concretely as I used to walk formerly in Paris, in a world existing in itself, apart from all subjectivity. This experience is like a bridge thrown between the two worlds.

The supramental world exists permanently and I am there permanently in a supramental body. I had the proof of this today when my earth consciousness went there and remained there consciously between 2 and 3 in the afternoon. Now I know that for the two worlds to meet in a constant and conscious relation what is missing is an intermediary zone between the physical world as it is and the supramental world as it is. It is this zone both in the individual consciousness and in the objective world that remains to be built and is being built. When I spoke before of the new world that is being created it is this intermediary zone that I meant. In the same way when I am on this side, that is to say, under the dominance of the physical consciousness, and as I see the supramental power, the supramental light and substance constantly penetrating the matter, it is the construction of this zone that I see and I take my part in it.

I found myself on a huge boat which is a symbolic representation of the place where this work was going on. This boat, as big as a city, was entirely organised and it had been certainly functioning for some time past, for the organisation was complete. It is the place for training people meant for the supramental life. These people, or at least a part of their being, had already undergone a supramental transformation because the boat itself, everything in it, was neither material nor subtle physical nor vital nor mental, it was a supramental stuff. The substance itself was of the most material supramental—the supramental substance closest to the physical world, the first that manifests. The light was of a mixture of gold and red which made a uniform orange luminous substance. All was like that—the light was like that, the people were like that—all had that colour, although with various shades which made things distinguishable from one another. The general feeling was of a world without shadows; shades were there, but not shadows. The atmosphere was full of joy, quiet, order; all moved on regularly and in silence. And still one could see all the details of an education, a training in all domains, by which the people in the boat were being prepared.

This immense ship had just arrived at the shore of the supramental world where the first batches of the people who were destined to be the future inhabitants of this supramental world were to get down....A group of beings of a very tall stature were posted on the wharf; they were not human beings and they had never been men. Neither were they permanent inhabitants of the supramental world; they were delegated from above and posted there to control and supervise the landing. I was in charge of the whole thing from the very beginning and during all the time. I had myself prepared all the batches of people. I was standing on the boat at the head of the gangway, calling the groups one by one and sending them down to the shore. The tall people who were posted there were passing in review, so to say, those who were to get down,

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allowing those who were ready and sending back those who were not yet ready and had to continue their training on board the ship....

The objects on the ship were not of the kind that is familiar on earth. For instance, the dress was not made of cloth. Whatever looked like clothes was not fabricated, it was part of their body and made of the same substance which took different forms. That had a kind of plasticity; when a change had to be made, it was done not by an artificial and external means but by an inner working, by a working of consciousness which gave form or appearance to the substance. Life created its own forms. There was only one substance in everything; it was changing the nature of its vibration according to the need or use.

Those who were sent back for further training were not of uniform colour; it was if they had in their body some patches opaque and greyish, of a kind of substance resembling the earthly substance; they were dull as if not entirely permeated by the light, not transformed....

The tall beings on the shore had not the same colour, at least not that shade of orange, they were paler, more transparent. Except for a part of their being, one could see only an outline of their shape. They were very tall and it looked as if they had nothing built or constructed inside (no skeleton), as if they could take a shape according to the need. Only from waist down there was a certain density. Their colour was much paler, with only a little red in it; it was more towards gold or even white. The parts of whitish light were translucent, not positively transparent but less dense, more subtle than the orange substance....

I was a combination of what these tall people and the people on the boat were. The top of myself, specially the head, was a mere silhouette, its content was whitish with an orange fringe. The more one went down towards the feet the more it became like the people in the boat, i.e. orange; the more one went towards the top the more it was translucent and white, and the red diminished. The silhouette of the head had at its centre a brilliant sun; rays of light came out of it, being the action of the will.

As regards the people I saw on board, I recognised them all. Some were of the Ashram here, some came from elsewhere although I knew them also... There were three or four faces very clearly visible and when I saw them I understood the feeling I had here on earth when looking into their eyes : there was such an extraordinary joy in them. The people were mostly young; children were very few, their age ranging from about 14 or 15, surely not below ten or twelve....Very old people were not there, with a few exceptions. The majority of those who were going down were of middle age, except a few....

....The point of view, the judgment was based exclusively on the substance of which the people were built, i.e. whether they belonged completely

## TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

to the supramental world, whether they were made of that substance which was so distinctive. The point of view adopted is not moral or psychological. Probably the substance of which their bodies were made was the outcome of some inner law or movement which at that time was not in question. At least it is very clear that the values are different.

When I came back, along with the remembrance of the experience...I had...the impression...that the relation of this world with the other brought a complete change in the point of view from which things are to be valued or appreciated. That point of view had nothing mental in it and it gave a strange inner feeling, that many things we consider good or bad were really not so... Our appreciation of what is divine and anti-divine is not correct....

When our world is looked at from the supramental consciousness, the dominant trait is a feeling of foreignness, of artificiality—an absurd world because it is artificial....

February 15, 1958

Last night I had a vision of what the supramental world would be like if the people were not sufficiently prepared. The confusion that now exists on earth is nothing in comparison with what may happen. Just imagine any strong will possessing the power to transform matter according to its liking ! If the sense of collective unity did not grow in proportion to the growth of the power, the resulting conflict would be yet more acute and chaotic than all our material conflicts.

August, 1958

It can be affirmed with certainty that between the mental and the supramental being there will be an intermediate specimen, a kind of superman who will have still the qualities and partially the nature of man, that is to say, will still belong, in his most external form, to the human being with an animal origin, but will have sufficiently transformed his consciousness as to belong, in his realisation and activity, to the new race, the race of supermen.

This species may be considered as a species of transition, because it will discover, as it is to be foreseen, the means of creating new beings without passing through the old animal method, and it is these beings, having truly a spiritual birth, that will form the elements of the new race, the supramental race.

One might thus name supermen those who still belong by their origin to the older method of generation, but who, by their achievement, are in conscious and active relation with the new world of supramental realisation.

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It appears, it is even certain that the very substance that will constitute this intermediate world which is being already developed is a substance richer, more powerful, more luminous, more resisting, with certain new qualities, more subtle and pervasive and a kind of innate capacity for universality, as if the degree of subtlety and refinement it has reached allows vibrations to be felt in a manner much more wide, if not altogether total and it takes away the sensation of division which one has with the older substance, the ordinary mental substance. There is a subtlety of vibration which makes the universal global vibration a natural and spontaneous thing. The sense of division, of separation disappears altogether naturally and spontaneously with that substance; and that substance is now almost everywhere spread in earth's atmosphere.

That can be felt in the waking state, simply by a little concentration and a kind of self-absorption of consciousness, if one retraces, retires from the usual exteriorisation that appears more and more artificial and false....

This new perception is affirming itself more and more, it is becoming more and more natural, and sometimes the old manner of being is difficult to seize again, as if it was disappearing into a misty past—something that is on the point of ceasing to exist.

One can conclude from this that since a body formed obviously according to the older animal method is capable of living this consciousness naturally, spontaneously, effortlessly, without coming out of itself, it proves that it is not an exceptional, a unique case, but simply it is the sign, forerunner of a realisation which even if it is not absolutely general, can in any case be shared by a number of individuals and these moreover as soon as they share the experience will lose the feeling that they are separate individuals and will become a living collectivity.

This new realisation is following its course with a thundering rapidity, so to say, for, if we consider time in the ordinary way, only two years have passed, a little more than two years, between the time when the supramental substance penetrated the earthly atmosphere and the time when this change has been brought about in earth's atmosphere.

If things continue to move at this speed, it is more than possible, it is almost evident that what Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter would be a prophetic announcement: "The supramental consciousness will enter into a phase of realising power in 1967."

November 5, 1958

At the very bottom of the inconscience most hard and rigid and narrow and stifling I struck upon an almighty spring that cast me up forthwith into

## TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

a formless limitless Vast vibrating with the seeds of a new world.

....It was not the original inconscient; it was, if one might say so, a mentalised inconscient...When the mind had not manifested, the inconscient was not like that : it was formless and it had the plasticity of formless things—that plasticity has disappeared.... Now it is an inconscience organised in its refusal to change ! So I wrote, “the most hard and rigid and narrow”—the idea is of something which presses you, presses you—most suffocating.

Then I wrote, “I struck upon an almighty spring.” That means exactly this : in the deepest depths of the inconscient, there is a supreme sovereign spring that enables us to touch the Supreme. Because at the very bottom of the inconscience there is the Supreme. It is the Supreme that enables us to touch the Supreme. That is the almighty spring.

It is always the same idea that the highest height touches the deepest depth. The universe is like a circle ; it is represented by a serpent that bites its own tail. That means that the supreme height touches the most material matter without any intermediary.

Finally I have said, “a formless limitless Vast vibrating with the seeds of a new world.” There is no question of the primary creation, but of the supramental creation. This experience does not correspond to a return into the Supreme, origin of all ; I had altogether the impression that I was projected into the origin of the supramental creation : something of the Supreme that has already been objectified in view of the supramental creation.

There was in fact all this impression of power, warmth and gold colour. It was not fluid, but like a pulverisation. And each one of these things (they cannot be called particles or fragments nor even points, unless point is taken in the mathematical sense, a point that does not occupy any place in space) was something like living gold, a scattering of warm gold....It could be said that they touched my eyes, my face...and with a tremendous force ! At the same time, there was the feeling of a plenitude, of an all-powerful peace—it was rich, it was full. It was movement at its maximum, infinitely more swift than anything that one can imagine and at the same time it was peace absolute, stillness perfect.

And this almighty spring was a perfect image of what happens, is bound to happen and will happen *for everybody* : all at once you leap up into the immensity.

November 13, 1958

...You are never freed from hostile forces unless you come out into the Light, for good, above the inferior hemisphere. There the phrase “hostile

## MOTHER INDIA

forces" loses its meaning ; only the forces of progress are there which compel you to progress. But you must come out of the lower hemisphere in order to see things in that way. For below they are very real in their opposition to the divine plan.

It used to be said in the older tradition that one could not live more than twenty days in that higher state without leaving the body and returning to the supreme origin. Now that is no longer true.

It is precisely this state of perfect harmony beyond all attacks that will become possible with the supramental realisation.... But it is just the link between the two worlds that has not yet been built, it is in the course of being built. That was the meaning of the experience of February 3, '58, namely, being to establish a link between the two worlds. For the two worlds are in fact there—not one above the other—one within the other, in two different dimensions, but there is no communication between the two. They cover each other without being joined together. In the experience of February 3, I saw some of the persons here and elsewhere belonging already to the supramental world in one part of their being, but there is no connection, no junction. Just the moment is now come in the history of the universe when that link can be established.

The experience of November 5 was a new step in the construction of the link between the two worlds. I was indeed projected into the very origin of the supramental creation : all that warm gold, that living tremendous power, the sovereign peace.

I saw once again that the values prevailing in the supramental world have nothing to do with our values here below, even our values of highest wisdom, even those that we consider most divine when living constantly in the divine Presence ; it is altogether different....

The quality or the kind of relation I had with the Supreme at that moment was quite different from that which we have here, and even the identification had a different quality. With regard to the lower movements one understands very well that they must be different. But that which is the summit of our experience here, that identification because of which the Supreme rules and lives—well, he rules and lives quite differently as we are in this lower hemisphere or in the supramental life. And at that moment (the experience of 13th November) what gave intensity to the experience was that I just came to perceive, vaguely, the two states of consciousness at the same time. It is almost as if the Supreme himself was different, that is to say, our experience of him. And yet in either case there was the contact with the Supreme. Probably what differs is what we perceive of him or the way in which we translate it ; the quality of the experience, however, is different.

There is in the other hemisphere an intensity and a fullness which is

## TOWARDS FEBRUARY 29, 1960

translated into quite a different power of him here... It is not something just higher than the peak to which we can rise here, it is not *one more* step : here we are at the end, at the summit.... It is the quality that is different, the quality, in the sense that there is a plenitude, a richness, a power—that is a translation in our way—but there is something that escapes us...it is truly a new reversal of consciousness.

When we begin to live the spiritual life, a reversal of consciousness happens which is for us the proof that we have entered the spiritual life ; well, another reversal of consciousness happens when one enters the supramental world....

November, 1959

...It was precisely the problem that was put before Sri Aurobindo here and before me in France : must one limit his path and reach the goal, then afterwards take up again all the rest and begin the work of integral transformation or must one go progressively, leaving nothing aside, eliminating nothing of the way, taking up all the possibilities at the same time and advancing at all the points at the same time ? In other words, must one withdraw from life and action until one has reached the goal—that is to say, become conscious of the Supramental and realise it in oneself—or must one embrace the whole creation and with the whole creation advance progressively towards the Supramental ?

It may be conceived that things move by stages : you advance, you take a step forward, then you make all the rest advance as a consequence ; then another step, you make the rest advance further and so on.

That gives the impression that you do not advance. But the whole advances in that way.



## THE DECLARATION OF A TRUE SLAVE OF GOD

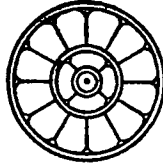
*“God’s servant is something;  
God’s slave is greater.”*

SRI AUROBINDO

I BELONG to no nation, no civilisation, no society, no race, but to the Divine.

I give obedience to no master, no ruler, no law, no social convention, but to the Divine.

To Him I have surrendered all, will, life and self; for Him I am ready to give all my blood, drop by drop, if such is His will, with complete joy; and nothing in His service can be sacrifice, for all is perfect delight.



## WORDS OF THE MOTHER

It is impossible to give a single answer for all cases. With each person and on each occasion, it will differ. But, at any rate, it can be said that whoever lives in a community must follow, as much as possible, the rules of that community. Moreover people have a right to go against collective rules only when all their actions are prompted exclusively by the Divine in them. If all they do, all they say is done and said as they would do and say in the presence of the Divine, then, but then only, they have the right to say, "I follow my own rule and no other."

28-1-1960

A handwritten signature or scribble consisting of several overlapping lines.

## THE MOTHER ON SRI AUROBINDO

*Q. It is said that Sri Aurobindo in a past life took an active part in the French Revolution. Is it true ?*

THE MOTHER : You can say that all through history Sri Aurobindo played an active part. Especially in the most important movements of history he was there—and playing the most important, the leading part. But he was not always visible.

23-1-1960

## THE DIVINE AND THE AVATAR

*Letters of Sri Aurobindo*

25-9-1935—25-7-1936

Q. What is an incarnation ? From what plane does it take place ?

SRI AUROBINDO : An incarnation is the Divine Consciousness and Being manifesting through the body. It is possible from any plane.

Q. Is not the incarnate Divine, the Avatar, conscious of union with the Divine above from the very beginning, even prior to initiation into Yoga ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There is not necessarily any union before the practice of Yoga. There is connection of the consciousness with the veiled Divinity and an action out of that, but this is not dependent on the practice of Yoga.

Q. We believe that both you and the Mother are Avatars. But is it only in this life that both of you have shown your divinity ? It is said that you and she have been on the earth constantly since its creation. What were you doing during the previous lives ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Carrying on the evolution.

Q. I find it difficult to understand so concise a statement. Can't you elaborate it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : That would mean writing the whole of human history. I can only say that as there are special descents to carry on the evolution to a farther stage, so also something of the Divine is always there to help through each stage itself in one direction or another.

Q. The common mass of mankind in the past may not have recognised your presence amongst them, especially when outwardly both of you may have

## MOTHER INDIA

had personalities like those of ordinary human beings. But how is it that even Sri Krishna, Buddha or Christ could not detect your presence in this world ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Presence where and in whom ? If they did not meet, they would not recognise, and even if they met there is no reason why the Mother and I should cast off the veil which hung over these personalities and reveal the Divine behind them. Those lives were not meant for any such purpose.

Q. If you were on the earth all the time it would mean that you were here when those great beings descended. Whatever your external present cloak, how could you hide your inner self—the true divinity—from them ? It could not have mattered whether you and any of them were born in the same country or not. They ought to have discovered by their own higher light that the Divine Consciousness from which they had descended was already here in a physical form.

SRI AUROBINDO : But why can't the inner self be hidden from all in such lives ? Your reasoning would only have some force if the presence on earth then were as the Avatar but not if it was only as a Vibhuti.

Q. You have asked, "Presence where and in whom ?" Why have you put those question-words ? What exactly is conveyed by them ?

SRI AUROBINDO : ...It is "presence" in or behind some body and behind some outer personality. Also "presence" in what part of the world ? If the Mother were in Rome in the time of Buddha, how could Buddha know as he did not even know the existence of Rome ?

Q. I did not mean that you or the Mother needed to cast off your veil. It is those Great Men who should have recognised you in spite of the veil.

SRI AUROBINDO : One can be a great man without knowing such things as that. Great Men or even great Vibhutis need not be omniscient or know things which it was not useful for them to know.

Q. You said, "But why can't the inner self be hidden from all in such lives ?" I fail to understand how any one could hide one's inner self from Avatars and Vibhutis.

SRI AUROBINDO : An Avatar or Vibhuti have the knowledge that is necessary for their work, they need not have more. There was absolutely no reason

why Buddha should know what was going on in Rome. An Avatar even does not manifest all the Divine omniscience and omnipotence; he has not come for any such unnecessary display; all that is behind him but not in the front of his consciousness. As for the Vibhuti, the Vibhuti need not even know that he is a power of the Divine. Some Vibhutis like Julius Caesar for instance have been atheists. Buddha himself did not believe in a personal God, only in some impersonal and indescribable Permanent.

Q. Still I can't understand one thing : even though you did not cast off your veil, how could people like Buddha or Christ not help casting off their veil (of ignorance) in order to recognise you ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Why should they ? The veil was there necessary for their work. Why should it be thrown off ? So if the Mother was present in the life of Christ, she was there not as the Divine Manifestation but as one altogether human. For her to be recognised as the Divine would have created a tremendous disorder and frustrated the work Christ came to do by breaking its proper limits.

Q. You must have heard that just before Christ was born some Rishis from India knew of the divine Descent and set out for Jerusalem merely by their intuition, though they had not known what and where Jerusalem was.

SRI AUROBINDO : I never heard of Rishis from India going there. There is a legend of some Magi getting an intuition that a divine Birth was there on earth and following a star that led them to the stable in which Christ was born. But this is a legend, not history.

Q. Since you and the Mother were on earth constantly from the beginning what was the need for Avatars coming down here one after another ?

SRI AUROBINDO : We were not on earth as Avatars.

Q. You say that you both were not on earth as Avatars. And yet you were carrying on the evolution. Since the Divine Himself was on the earth carrying on the evolution, what was the necessity for the coming down of the Avatars who are portions of Himself ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The Avatar is necessary when a special work is to be done and in crises of the evolution. The Avatar is a special manifestation while for the rest of the time it is the Divine working within the ordinary human limits as a Vibhuti.

## THE MOTHER ON EDUCATION

### I

*(On December 10, 1959, the Mother sent to the teachers of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, a message for the academic year opening on December 14. Its pointer to inner progress, however, is understood in full when accompanied by the message meant for the next year as a call to further progress. So both the messages are here put together.)*

1956-60

N'oubliez jamais que pour être un bon professeur, il faut abolir en soi-même tout égoïsme.

(Never forget that to be a good teacher one has to abolish in oneself all egoism.)

1960-61

Et pour être digne d'enseigner selon la vérité supramentale telle que Sri Aurobindo nous l'a donnée, il ne faut plus avoir d'ego.

(And to be worthy of teaching according to the supramental truth given us by Sri Aurobindo there should no longer be any ego.)

### II

*(It was suggested by some teachers that books dealing with subjects like crime, violence and licentiousness should not be made available to young people. When the Mother was consulted, she made the following comment.)*

Pour les livres.

Ce n'est pas tant une question de sujet mais de vulgarité d'esprit et d'étroitesse et d'égoïste bon sens dans la conception de la vie,

## THE MOTHER ON EDUCATION

exprimés dans une forme sans art, sans grandeur et sans raffinement qui doivent être soigneusement éliminés de la lecture des enfants petits et grands. Tout ce qui rabaisse et avilit la conscience doit être banni.

I.II.1959

(For the books.

The question is not so much of subject as of vulgarity of the mind and narrowness and egoistic common sense in the conception of life, expressed in an inartistic form, without grandeur and refinement. It is these that have to be carefully eliminated from the reading of children both big and small.

All that lowers and debases the consciousness must be excluded.

I.II.1959)

### III

*(This is the substance of what the Mother said in answer to an individual query shortly after the opening day of the Centre of Education. It was communicated, with her approval, to the teachers.)*

### QUERY

Pour éviter que les élèves du Cours supérieur aient trop de travail, sans pour cela abaisser le niveau des études, ceux qui se sentent surchargés pourraient être invités à abandonner quelques cours. Ils pourraient alors concentrer leur temps et leur énergie sur ceux qu'ils conserveraient. Cela vaudrait mieux que d'alléger les cours, qui perdraient alors leur valeur pour les autres élèves. A côté d'élèves bien doués, qui suivent facilement, il est normal que nous ayons des élèves moins doués ou plus lents, qui ne peuvent suivre aussi vite. Ceux-là pourraient laisser de côté certains cours, quitte à les reprendre plus tard en faisant une année supplémentaire. Est-ce là une bonne solution ?

(To avoid being overworked, students of the Higher Course may be allowed to give up some subjects. They could then concentrate their time and energy on the subjects they retain. This would be better than shortening or lightening the courses, which would reduce their value for the other students and bring down the standard of the class. Besides gifted students, who can follow easily, we normally have less gifted or slower ones who cannot do so.



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These could set aside certain subjects, even though they might take them up later in a supplementary year of study. Is this a good solution ?)

### ANSWER

Cela dépend. Ce n'est pas absolument général. Il y en a beaucoup à qui cela ne servirait pas à grand-chose. Ils n'ont pas le niveau suffisant pour savoir se concentrer davantage sur certains sujets, s'ils ont moins de sujets à étudier. Cela risquerait seulement de provoquer en eux un relâchement — tout le contraire d'une concentration ! — et d'aboutir à un gaspillage de temps.

La solution n'est pas là. Ce qu'il faut faire, c'est apprendre aux enfants à s'intéresser à ce qu'ils font — ce n'est pas la même chose que d'intéresser les enfants ! Il faut éveiller en eux le désir de connaissance, de progrès. On peut s'intéresser à n'importe quoi — balayer une chambre, par exemple — si on le fait avec concentration, dans le but d'acquérir une expérience, de faire un progrès, de devenir plus conscient. Je le dis souvent aux élèves qui se plaignent d'avoir un mauvais professeur. Même s'ils n'aiment pas le professeur, même si celui-ci leur dit des choses inutiles ou n'est pas à la hauteur, ils peuvent toujours tirer parti de leur heure de classe, apprendre quelque chose de très intéressant et faire un progrès dans la conscience.

La plupart des professeurs cherchent à avoir de *bons élèves* : des élèves qui soient studieux, attentifs, qui comprennent et sachent beaucoup de choses, qui peuvent répondre — de bons élèves. Cela gâte tout. Les élèves se mettent à consulter les livres, à étudier, à apprendre. Ils n'ont plus confiance que dans les livres, dans ce que les autres disent ou écrivent, et perdent le contact avec cette partie supraconsciente qui reçoit la connaissance par intuition. Ce contact existe souvent chez le jeune enfant, mais il se perd pendant l'éducation.

- Pour que les élèves puissent progresser dans la bonne direction il faut évidemment que les professeurs aient compris cela et qu'ils aient modifié leur ancienne façon de voir et d'enseigner. Sans cela, je me trouve arrêtée dans le travail.

16-12-1959

(That depends, it cannot be a general rule. There are many to whom this will not be of much use. They are not developed enough to know how to concentrate more on certain subjects, when they have fewer subjects to study. This might lead to slackening—just

## THE DHARMA OF THE GITA

the opposite of concentration—and result in a waste of time. The solution does not lie there. What should be done is to teach the children how to take interest in whatever they do—that is not the same as interesting the children ! A desire for knowledge and for progress must be awakened in them. One can take interest in anything—for example, sweeping a room—if one does it with concentration, to gain an experience, to make a progress and become more conscious. This is what I often say to students who complain of having a poor teacher. Even if they do not like the teacher, even if he speaks of useless things or is not up to the mark, they can always make the best of the class hour, learn something of great interest, and progress in consciousness.

Most teachers try to have good pupils, pupils who are studious, attentive, who understand and know many things, who can answer well. This spoils everything. The students go to consult books, to study and to learn. They have confidence in books only, in what others say or write and they lose contact with the superconscient part of themselves which receives knowledge by intuition. This contact often exists in the child, but in the course of its education it loses it.

Evidently to make students progress in the right direction, the teachers should understand this and change their old way of looking at things and of teaching. Without that, I am at a standstill in my work.

16-12-1959)

## THE DHARMA OF THE GITA

SRI AUROBINDO

(Translated by Niranjan from the original Bengali in "Dharma O Jatyata")

THIS question may arise in the minds of those who have carefully studied the Gita, that though Sri Krishna has repeatedly used the word 'Yoga' and described the state of being in yoga, union, yet this is quite unlike what ordinary people understand as 'yoga'. Sri Krishna has at places praised asceticism and indicated too that the highest liberation can come through the adoration of the Impersonal Divine. But dismissing the subject in a few words, He has explained to Arjuna in the finest portions of the Gita the majesty of the inner renunciation and the various ways of attaining to the supreme state through faith and self-surrender to Vasudeva. There is a brief description of Raja-yoga in the sixth chapter but the Gita cannot be properly called a treatise on Raja-yoga. Equality, detachment, renunciation of the fruits of work, complete self-surrender to Krishna, desireless work, freedom from the bondage of the three essential modes of Nature and pursuit of one's own law of works : these are the fundamental truths of the Gita. The Lord has glorified these precepts as the highest knowledge and the most secret mystery.

It is our belief that the Gita will become the universally acknowledged Scripture of the future religion. But the real meaning of the Gita has not been understood by all. Even the great scholars and the most intelligent writers with the keenest minds are unable to seize its profound significance. On the one hand, the commentators with a leaning towards liberation have shown the grandeur of the Monism and the asceticism in the Gita; on the other hand, Bankimchandra, well-versed in Western philosophy, finding in the Gita the counsel to carry out heroically one's duty, tried to inculcate this meaning into the minds of youth. Asceticism is, no doubt, the best dharma but very few people can practise it. A religion to be universally acknowledged must have an ideal and precepts which everyone can realise in his own particular life and field of work, yet which if practised fully must lead him to the highest goal otherwise available only to a few. To carry out one's duty heroically is, of course, the highest dharma, but what is duty? There is such a controversy between religion and ethics regarding this complex problem. The Lord has said, *gahanā karmaṇo*

*gathih*, 'Thick and tangled is the way of works.' 'Even the wise are perplexed to decide what is duty, what is not duty, what is work, what is not work and what is wrong work, but I shall give you such a knowledge that you will have no difficulty in finding the path to follow,' in a word, the knowledge which will amply explain the aim of life and the law which has to be always observed. What is this Knowledge ? Where can we find this word of words ? We believe that, if we look for this rare and invaluable treasure, we shall find it in the last chapter of the Gita where the Lord promises to reveal to Arjuna His most secret and supreme Word.

What is that most secret and supreme Word ?

*Manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru  
Māmevaisyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyosi me  
Sarvadharmān paritjya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ braja  
Ahaṁ twāṁ sarvapapebhyo mokṣayisyāim mā śucaḥ*

(Become my-minded, my lover and adorer, a sacrificer to Me, bow thyself to Me, to Me thou shalt come, this is my pledge and promise to thee, for dear art thou to Me.

Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone.

I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve.)

In brief, the meaning of these two slokas is self-surrender. To the extent that one can make his surrender to Krishna, the Divine Force comes down into his body by the grace of the All-Merciful, delivering him from sin and conferring on him a divine nature. This self-surrender has been described in the first half of the sloka. One has to be *tanmanā*, *tadbhakta* and *tadyājī*. *Tanmanā* means to see Him in every being, to remember Him at all times, to remain in perfect felicity, being aware of the play of His power, knowledge and love in all works and events. *Tadbhakta* signifies union with Him founded on an entire faith and love. *Tadyājī* means offering of all works big and small as a sacrifice to Krishna and being engaged in doing rightly regulated action to that end, by giving up egoistic interests and the fruits of work.

It is difficult for a human being to make a complete self-surrender, but if he makes even a little effort then God Himself gives him assurance, becomes his Guru, protector and friend and leads him forward on the path of Yoga. *Svalpamapyasya dharmasya trāyāte mahato bhayāt*. Even a little of this dharma delivers one from the great fear. He has said that it is easy and delightful to practise this dharma. And in fact it is so, yet the result of the total consecration is an inexpressible joy, purity and acquisition of power. *Māmevaisyasi* (To Me

thou shalt come) means he will find Me, he will live with Me, he will acquire My nature. In these words the realisations of *sādrśya*, God-nature, *sālokya*, living with God and *sāyujya*, identification with God are mentioned.

One who is free from the bondage of the three essential modes of Nature has indeed acquired *sādrśya*, the nature of God. He has no attachment yet he works; delivered from all sin, he becomes an instrument of Mahashakti and delights in every action of that Power. *Salokya*, habitation with God, can be realised not only in the Brahmaloaka, abode of the Brahman, after the fall of the body but in this very body. When the embodied being plays with the Lord in his heart, when his mind is thrilled by the knowledge coming from Him, when the intellect constantly hears His words and is conscious of His impulsion in each of his thoughts, this indeed is living in a human body with the Lord. *Sāyujya*, the identification with the Lord, can also be achieved in this body. The Gita mentions 'living in the Lord'. When the realisation of the Divine in all beings becomes permanent, when the senses see, hear, smell, taste and touch Him only, when the being becomes accustomed to live in Him as a portion, then there can be the identification even in this body. But this consummation is entirely the result of an askesis (practice of discipline).

However, even a little practice of this dharma gives great power, unalloyed joy, complete happiness and purity. This dharma has not been created only for people with special qualities. The Lord has said that the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya, the Sudra, man, woman and all beings of inferior birth can come to Him by adhering to this dharma. Even the greatest sinner, if he takes refuge in Him, is quickly purified. Therefore, everyone ought to follow this dharma. In the temple of Jagannath no distinction is made on account of caste. Yet the crowning glory attained through this dharma is in no way less than the supreme state indicated in other religions.

# THE GRACE OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

## SOME REMINISCENCES

(Continued from the issue of December 5, 1959)

### I

FEBRUARY 21, the birthday of the Mother, is also the day on which *Mother India* was born. And the day of its birth, eleven years ago, had behind it a special outbreak of the Grace of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

This journal was in several senses a desperate venture. It was the idea of a businessman, K. R. Poddar, but conceived without any narrow concern for business : it sought to make current the gold of a spiritual light at any material expense, and there was no calculation made about the length of time it might take for that celestial coinage to be accepted. It was because Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had taken interest in the project and blessed it that the journal was launched in the form of a fortnightly in the midst of that very centre of frantic business, the commercial capital of India, Bombay, where the word "Spirit", if it meant anything at all, might connote simply what Prohibition puts out of the way of celebrating or relaxing businessmen. The desperateness of the publication and its sheer need of Grace from the Divine was well hit off by the message (dated January 29, 1949) received from Aldous Huxley for the first issue :

"I wish you all success in your venture. You will, of course, be a voice crying in the wilderness. But if a few individuals pay attention, something will have been accomplished."

A further point added to the apparent quixotism: *Mother India* had, as part of its aim, the object of plunging into political problems with a spiritual vision. It strove to look at national and international situations from the height of Sri Aurobindo's thought. In the hubbub of political slogans it brought a standard of judgment that was non-political. In general this standard may be summed up by saying that in every field of activity the aim was to criticise whatever militated against humanity's instinct of an evolving divinity within

## MOTHER INDIA

itself and to give the utmost constructive help to all that encouraged that instinct. Without flinching, *Mother India* spoke forth on many political subjects in direct contradiction of official or popular ideas. Those were the days when Stalin overshadowed, almost overawed the world, especially the Asian world. But *Mother India*, while never advocating stark individualism or boosting up rank capitalism, never hesitated to expose the sham of the Stalinist sociology and its rigid negation of the two beliefs or intuitions that are the authentic stamp of *homo sapiens* : the key-importance of the creative individual in the evolutionary process, the presence of a secret Godhead who can inspire and enlighten the consciousness of the individual. *Mother India* went all out in support of the American intervention in Korea, regarding as it did the attack of the communist North Koreans as inspired by Mao and Stalin and as the first step of communism towards conquest of all Asia, including our own country. *Mother India* refused to accept any right of Red China's to invade Tibet : the historical suzerainty of China over Tibet could only be accepted if at the same time the equally historical internal autonomy of Tibet were granted. Our uncompromising protest, argued out at great length, created a bit of stir in Indian parliamentary circles. Perhaps even more disturbing to current thought was the protest, voiced in three slashing editorials, against recognition of Red China—a protest based on an all-round survey of the situation. We also spotlighted the delusion that there could be real cultural bonds between India and any country wedded to totalitarianism, or that a China gone Red and furiously working for world-communism would have no aggressive intentions against India. In regard to Pakistan there was the same attempt on our part to look into the heart of the matter and judge issues from insight into the psychological and occult forces at work behind the scene of the immediate physical event. Our guide was the vast and impartial yet dynamically precise wisdom of Sri Aurobindo, and we cared not whether we found favour with persons or institutions, whether our circulation soared or slumped as a result of our unconventional views. Did we not have the blessings of the Mother to make us a success in the sense of being a force that made its mark ?

The blessings of the Mother : thereby hangs a tale, particular no less than general. But before we come to it a glance may be thrown at the peculiar case of the Editor of *Mother India*. He was in love with poetry and deeply attached to literary criticism; he was a fast friend of philosophy and on fairly intimate terms with science; he could even have a close relationship with history; but politics was his *bête noire*, politics gave him the shivers. So when the privilege of editorial appointment came his way, he stood at once delighted and dazed : it was an honour indeed to fight with the pen for the Aurobindonian ideal, but the foreignness of the field, the disagreeableness of the ground, on

which battle was to be waged, gave him pause. He was expected to write thousands of words on various political themes in a manner that would be clear, cogent, exact, penetrating, widely informed, easily authoritative. Here was a feat the poor fellow could not have performed even in his wildest dreams. But he had learnt from experience as well as observation that the Mother was no chaser of rainbows : if she put him in the Editor's Chair, it was surely to get solid results out of him in that position. Trusting in her wonderful practical flair, he unburdened his mind of fears to her. "Mother, I have to be an expert political thinker and writer. But I have no turn for, no touch on, politics." She smiled a cool sweet smile and answered : "Neither have I." I got a start. "Well, then what shall I do ?" Again the imperturbable sweetness and then the reply : "There is Sri Aurobindo. He will guide you in everything." A sudden flood of power swept over me. "Oh, yes," I said, "Sri Aurobindo will do the impossible." And he did. Out of absolute nothing he created a prolific commentator on political questions. Articles simply streamed forth and it was most amazing how their author was called up by people for views on this, that and the other burning topic, as if he were a political oracle ! And the wonder was that he successfully acquitted himself like one. His hearers thought that it was but natural he should talk with expertness and far-sightedness : he alone knew that the Grace of Sri Aurobindo did all the talking.

This grace, fashioning a new mind from poor or no materials, worked in many modes at its job which was like that of Napoleon who was said to have made generals of genius out of mud. Sri Aurobindo not only put from afar his mighty spiritual force to the task of "politicising" the Editor's grey cells. He also got every editorial, however lengthy, read out to him before publication and sent a telegram of approval or modification or rejection. Matter for *Mother India* received preferential treatment among the sundry calls on the precious time of the Avatar of Supermind. And his interest in it had a directly personal touch. On one occasion, when a sadhaka's sceptical attitude to the opinions expressed in the fortnightly was reported to him, he said : "Doesn't he know that *Mother India* is my paper ?" Here was Grace in abundance and without stint—initiating, fostering, shaping, supporting, championing.

## II

The presence of both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother was felt constantly in all the turns of the editorial activity in Bombay. In fact, there would have been no such activity at all if this presence had not openly taken charge of things. And here what I have called the particular tale of the Mother's blessings falls into place. Let us go to the period of preparation before the first issue



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saw the light. We were about to launch a fortnightly without any experience of the brass-tacks of such an adventure. When the office was set up we had only six or seven weeks to go before the date fixed for the opening number. We had no materials in reserve except for two or three issues. One day a veteran journalist dropped in and told us that we were heading for the rocks : unless we had six months' matter in hand it was foolhardy to start on February 21. We said that our opening number would be a brilliant one and it was a shame to suppress it. A warning finger was wagged in front of the novice Editor's nose: "It is better to lie quiet for some months than go up a rocket and come down a stick." We suggested that we would work frenziedly and keep going. "Impossible ! All journalistic experience is against you. Mass your forces sufficiently—six months' stuff in hand—and then make your entrance."

We were in a quandary. To commence and then flop—this was an unbearable thought. The Editor had at times the apparently irrational feeling that if hard pressed he could write the whole journal single-handed. But could one rely on such delusions of grandeur ? Not to be published according to the original plan was galling. Yet he could not involve everything in a rapturous risk. He thought it best to consult the Mother. So he sent her an urgent note : "All journalists advise us to postpone publication for some months. They say we are doomed otherwise. My own instinct is that of Foche at the Battle of the Marne. When he was asked by his superior at the headquarters for a report from the field, he sent the message : 'Mon centre cède, ma droite récule, situation excellente, j'attaque !'<sup>1</sup> But what do you say ?"

On January 27, 1949, I received the telegram : "Stick to the date. Live on faith. Blessings.—Mother." With a whoop we went into action—and our faith in the Mother's Grace has kept us in action up to now.

### III

Both the Editor and the Associate Editor, S. R. Alless, experienced again and again in their day-to-day movements in the office and at the press the blessing and guiding hand of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. Difficulties rose up of various kinds—psychological, physical, technical. But all got solved and never was *Mother India* late by even a few hours. Occasionally there was a sudden dearth of contributions. An appeal would go forth to the secret presence. Not only would the immediate need be answered but also "God's plenty" would pour in, making possible a sumptuous Special Number close on the heels of an ordinary issue that had seemed hard to fill. On some occasions

<sup>1</sup> 'My centre is giving way, my right wing is in retreat, situation excellent, I am attacking !'

the Editor would have a relapse into his old non-political self. A helplessness would settle like a cloud over him and he would be afraid that the deadline might find him unready. But a deep inner aspiration at night cried out to the Master, "After all, *Mother India* is your concern. I am only your instrument. You have to look after it and see that everything is in order. Please get an editorial written tomorrow morning." And the next dawn would break on the early-risen Editor thumping away on his typewriter in a gust of inspiration.

When matters other than political were treated—and there were a lot of them, since *Mother India* touched on politics as only one side of its multiple Aurobindonian work—the situation of stand-still in any sense was non-existent. For, there the Editorial Staff was in its own element. But here too the enlivening stream of inner help from Pondicherry was clearly felt. And, paradoxically, the most intense experience of it came after the Master had left his body ! I had flown to the Ashram on getting the heart-shattering news. As already recounted in the issue of last December 5, the Mother had assured the appalled disciple that nothing had really changed and that he would get as ever the fullest help possible from Sri Aurobindo. But now the greatest challenge was to be faced : what must be written about the mystifying event that had just taken place? All the readers of *Mother India* would be looking up to the Editor for enlightenment.

Before leaving Pondicherry I was granted an interview by the Mother. She said, "The whole event is quite clear to me. But I shan't tell you anything. You must write on it all by yourself." I meditated with the Mother for a while and then left the same night for Bombay. All through the railway journey to Madras and the flight from there to Bombay, I kept inwardly invoking Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to make me do well the job which seemed the greatest my life could confront me with—namely, the reading of at least some part of the spiritual secret that was behind what looked so mighty a tragedy, the secret which would reveal in this apparent tragedy a triumph in accord with all the earth-divinising Yoga taught and lived out by Sri Aurobindo.

Bombay held nothing of interest for me. I would hardly go even out of my room lest the concentration on the hidden light should flicker for a moment and my search fall short of its goal. I said to myself : "What use my whole career of writing if now I cannot bring forth words aglow with God's own truth ?" And the prayer rose up : "O Mother, O Sri Aurobindo, if I could now see into the heart of this mystery and draw out of its depth the speech of revelation, I should be content to drop the pen for ever. I do not care whether I write anything else after it ; but here let me not fail." Once again the old appeal took shape in my mind : "My Master, *Mother India* is your concern after all. Will you not save it from failure, from frustration ?"

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Slowly through the empty days and the hopeless nights a mass of light was felt invisibly moving towards expression. I had the urge to write. But something told me to control it. Not till I felt absolutely surcharged with that mass should I put pen to paper. I waited. Then at last came the feeling that now I should find utterance. For several days I went on writing—at times sitting at my typewriter hour after hour, producing nothing rather than let anything unworthy of the colossal theme take form. A long essay progressed towards its end—one of the longest, if not the most lengthy, editorial I had written. I had the sense that the Grace had worked, bearing me through my supreme trial as a writer.

I posted my composition to the Mother. It was entitled : “The Passing of Sri Aurobindo : Its Inner Significance and Consequence.” It was read out to her in two sittings. The Ashram Secretary sent me on December 27, 1950, the telegram : “Your Passing of Sri Aurobindo admirable. Fully approved by Mother. Nothing to change.—Nolini.” My Associate Editor who was still in Pondicherry wrote to me what the Mother had said to him on December 28. Her words were : “I have read Amal’s article. It is excellent. Tell him I am extremely satisfied. I would like to have it printed in booklet form. He can get it printed in Bombay, if he wants. Otherwise I shall have it printed here.” A little later she again spoke to the Associate Editor : “It is quite the best thing Amal has written. I would like to print 15,000 copies of it.”

Face to face with all this, I could only bow my head with inexpressible gratitude. *Mother India* had found its fulfilment through the Grace of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

K. D. SETHNA  
(AMAL KIRAN)

## GLIMPSES OF SRI AUROBINDO

### II

#### “EVENING TALKS”

A PRICELESS book entitled *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo*,<sup>1</sup> by Mr. A. B. Purani, one of the oldest disciples of the Master now living in the Ashram at Pondicherry, has just come out of the Ashram press. The title derives from the fact that most of the talks recorded in this volume—at least one other volume in the series may be expected in the near future—were given of evenings during the twenties and the early forties, when certain disciples who had the privilege of attending on the Master were allowed to ask him questions on all kinds of subjects which he would discuss with them almost on a footing of equality in a purely informal manner. The subjects ranged from politics to *Paradise Lost*, as a cursory glance at the Index would show, and they naturally included discussions on personalities and other matters of topical interest which were obviously not meant to be repeated at the moment. That explains in part why these conversations did not see the light of day for so long.

Mr. Purani undertakes a delicate task in trying to reproduce the words of the Master. He does not claim that these are exact verbatim reports; for nobody seems to have thought of taking stenographic notes and no record exists of the Master's voice. These are excerpts from diaries and can at best claim to be as faithful a transcript as one might reasonably expect in a diary. Mr. Purani makes the position clear at the outset in a Note to the Reader, where he says : “Sri Aurobindo is not responsible for these records as he had no opportunity to see them. So it is not as if Sri Aurobindo said exactly these things but that I remember him to have said them. All I can say is that I have tried to be as faithful in recording them as I was humanly capable. That does not minimise my personal responsibility which I fully accept.”

The careful student of Sri Aurobindo will be able to verify the exact intention of many a passage by reference to the published volumes of his correspondence and other work which touch on the points discussed in these Talks. But the main interest of the book lies precisely in those topics which do not figure

<sup>1</sup> Recorded by A. B. Purani. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Price: Rs 8.00.

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in his published works. Mr. Purani deserves our thanks for letting us into secrets which would otherwise have remained the jealous possession of a few of the Master's closest associates. One will perhaps hear an occasional grumble that it was not altogether discreet to have brought out into the open a few things which were not quite meant for the public ear. But our author has always been known for his courage, and the slight indiscretions, if at all such there have been, will certainly be excused in the long end.

Taken all in all, Mr. Purani deserves to be congratulated for this arduous labour of love which will remain a valuable work of reference on Sri Aurobindo's life and thought. Except for certain obvious printing mistakes which will no doubt be corrected in the next edition, and a few important omissions (such as Grace, Hatha Yoga, Music, Tantra) in the otherwise excellent Index, the book is all that can be expected of a volume that is bound to remain a permanent addition to the library—rich in what it contains and attractive in its get-up.

Perhaps we could pay no better tribute than quoting for the benefit of our readers a few extracts from the book, which bring out some new or else less well-known aspects of the Master's early life and of his work for the freedom of India.

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Mr. Purani gives us some interesting glimpses of Sri Aurobindo's life in England and at Baroda.

“Up to the age of fifteen I was known as a very promising scholar at St. Paul's. After fifteen I lost that reputation. The teachers used to say that I was lazy and was deteriorating.”

“How was that” ?

“Because I was reading novels and poetry. Only at the time of the examination I used to prepare a little. When, now and then, I used to write Greek and Latin verse, my teachers used to lament that I was not utilising my remarkable gifts because of my laziness. When I went for scholarship at King's College, Cambridge, Oscar Browning remarked that he had not seen such remarkable papers before. So, you see, in spite of all the laziness I was not deteriorating...”<sup>1</sup>

“When did you begin to write poetry ?”

“When we three brothers were staying at Manchester. I began to write for the Fox Family Magazine. I was very young. It was an awful imitation of

<sup>1</sup> P. 246.

somebody I don't remember. Then I went to London where I began to write poetry. Some of the poems then written are published in *Songs to Myrtilla*."

"Did you learn metre at school?"

"They don't teach metre at school. I began to read and then write poetry by following the sound. I am not a prosodist like X... But I dare say my brother (Manomohan) stimulated me to write poetry..."<sup>1</sup>

"A man called Ferrar passed through Calcutta when the Alipore trial was going on. Was he known to you in England?"

"Yes, he was my classmate at Cambridge....It was he who gave me the clue to the hexameter verse in English. He read out a line from Homer\* which he thought was the best line and that gave me the swing of the metre..."<sup>2</sup>

Some of Sri Aurobindo's comments on one of his early biographers might be of interest in this connection :

"The general impression he creates is that I must have been a very serious prig, all along very pious and serious. I was nothing of the kind. He also states I must have been attracted by the Fabian Society started by Bernard Shaw and others . I was not, and I had no leaning to the labour party which in fact was not yet born....He is trying to give the picture of what a budding Yogi should be like. I was rather busy with myself and took interest in many things, whereas he tries to make out that I was interested in the Fabian Society and was very moral..."

"He creates an impression that I was seeking *satsang* (holy company) during my stay in Baroda. It is not true. It is true I was reading books, but on all subjects, not only religious books..."<sup>3</sup>

Here are some more details about his life in Baroda. They were mentioned in connection with another biography.

"I was not appointed in the Khasgi (private) Department at Baroda and I was not the private secretary though I acted as one in the absence of the secretary. It was only during the Kashmere tour that I was the private secretary

<sup>1</sup> P. 280.

\* "Homer" seems a slip by the recorder. A clue to the Hexameter in English would be got only from an English writer. The correct name is likely to be "Clough", and the line in question must be the one about which Sri Aurobindo, in his essay *On Quantitative Metre*, says that there Clough "suddenly discovers, though only once in a way and apparently without being conscious of his find, the rhythm of the true quantitative hexameter"—

He like a god came leaving his ample Olympian chamber.

<sup>2</sup> P. 279.    <sup>3</sup> Pp. 131-33.

to the Maharaja. But I had several tussles with him and he did not want to repeat the experiment. He states that I was invited to all the dinners and banquets—well, I never went to any State-dinner or banquet. Only I used to be called privately to dinner and I attended.”<sup>1</sup>

Referring to his work as professor, Sri Aurobindo once remarked :

“He (Manomohan) was very painstaking ; most of the professors don’t work hard. I saw that his books used to be interleaved and marked and full of notes....I was not so conscientious a professor.”

“But people who heard you in College and those who heard you afterwards in politics differ from you. They speak very highly of your lectures.”

“I never used to look at the notes and sometimes my explanations did not agree with them at all. I was professor of English and for some time of French. What was surprising to me was that the students used to take down everything verbatim and mug it up by heart. Such a thing would never have happened in England....You listen to the lectures, take notes if you like and then make what you can of them....I could never go into minute details. I read and left my mind to do what it could. That is why I could never become a scholar...”<sup>2</sup>

It was at Baroda that Sri Aurobindo began the practice of Pranayama. “When I was practising Pranayama at Baroda, I used to do it for about five hours in the day,—three hours in the morning and two in the evening. I found that the mind began to work with great illumination and power. I used to write poetry in those days. Before the Pranayama practice, usually I wrote five to eight lines per day ; and about two hundred lines in a month. After the practice I could write two hundred lines within half an hour. That was not the only result. Formerly my memory was dull. But after this practice I found that when the inspiration came I could remember all the lines in their order and write them down correctly at any time. Along with these enhanced functionings I could see an electrical activity all around the brain, and I could feel everything as the working of that substance...”<sup>3</sup>

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Some of the following references to Sri Aurobindo’s work for the freedom of India might also be of interest :

“...In a certain sense I can say that I never stopped doing work—even political work.”

<sup>1</sup> P. 141.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 244-46.

<sup>3</sup> P. 204.

“In a sense ! In what sense ? I want to have some idea about it.”

“It is not so difficult as you think ; one can put out his force to support certain movements and oppose others.”

“Is that work confined to India ?”

“It was confined to India in the beginning but now it is not confined to India. [This was in 1926.]

“At first I was not very successful,—very often it seemed to produce no result at all and I found that the work was done afterwards in quite another way than what I had expected or insisted on. The same result came but it arrived in another way. The reason probably was that I used to put too much vital force with the Power. Of course, the vital is quite essential, but now it is pure and subtle vital force.”

“You did it for what purpose—as something necessary, or as an exercise?”

“It was shown as something that was to be done....I simply was shown the thing that was to be done and I did it...”

“I find it always difficult to work in Indian politics. The difficulty is that the vessels don't hold the Power, they are so weak. If the amount of force that is spent on India were spent on a European nation you would find it full of creative activities of various kinds. But here in India, it is like sending a current of electricity through a sleeping man. He suddenly starts up, begins jerking and throwing his arms and feet about and then drops down again. He is not fully awake.”

“What is it due to ?”

“Due to tremendous Tamas. Don't you feel it all around, that Tamas ? It is that which frustrates all efforts.”

“What has brought it about ?”

“It is the result of various causes. It was already settling—I mean, the forces of disintegration and inertia, before the British came. And after their coming the whole Tamas has settled like a solid block. There must be some awakening before something substantial can be done. Otherwise, India has got very good men ; you had Tilak, Das, Vivekananda—none of them an ordinary man and yet you see the Tamas there...”<sup>1</sup>

Earlier, in 1920, Sri Aurobindo had remarked to Sarala Devi in an interview :

“India must want freedom because of herself, because of her own Spirit. I would very much like India to find her own Swaraj and then, like Ireland, to work out her salvation even with violence—preferably without violence. Our basis must be broader than that of mere opposition to the British government. All the time our eyes are turned to the British and their actions. We

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 182-85.



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must look to ourselves irrespectively of them and having found our own nationhood make it free.”<sup>1</sup>

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This reminds one of Mr. Purani’s account of the first interview he had with Sri Aurobindo in December 1918 and the assurance he was given about the freedom of India :

Sri Aurobindo was sitting in a wooden chair behind a small table covered with an indigo-blue cloth in the verandah upstairs when I went up to meet him. I felt a spiritual light surrounding his face. His look was penetrating. He had known me by my correspondence. I reminded him about my brother having met him at Baroda ; he had not forgotten him. Then I informed him that our group was now ready to start revolutionary activity. It had taken us about eleven years to get organised...

“Perhaps it may not be necessary to resort to revolutionary activity to free India,” he said. “If India can be free without revolutionary activity, why should you execute the plan ?...India has already decided to win freedom and so there will certainly be found leaders and men to work for that goal. But all are not called to yoga. When you have the call, is it not better to concentrate upon it ?”

“...But the concentration of my whole being turns towards India’s freedom. It is difficult for me to sleep till that is secured.”

“Suppose an assurance is given to you that India will be free ?”

“Who can give such an assurance ?”

Again he remained silent for three or four minutes. Then he looked at me and added : “Suppose I give the assurance ?” I paused for a moment... and said, “If you give the assurance, I can accept it.”

“Then I give you the assurance that India will be free,” he said in a serious tone...

It was time for me to leave. The question of Indian freedom again arose in my mind, and at the time of taking leave, after I had got up to depart, I could not repress the question, “Are you quite sure that India will be free ?” I did not, at that time, realise the full import of my query....Sri Aurobindo became very serious....His gaze was fixed at the sky that could be seen beyond the window, Then he looked at me and, putting his fist on the table, he said, “You can take it from me, it is as certain as the rising of tomorrow’s sun. The decree has already gone forth, it may not be long in coming.”

I bowed down to him. That day I was able to sleep soundly in the train, after more than two years. And in my mind was fixed for ever the picture of

<sup>1</sup> P. 30.

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that scene : two of us standing near the small table, my earnest question, that upward gaze, and that quiet and firm voice with power in it to shake the world, that firm fist planted on the table—the symbol of self-confidence of the divine Truth...<sup>1</sup>

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With this picture of Mr. Purani taking temporary leave of Sri Aurobindo, we may force ourselves to take leave of Mr. Purani's fascinating book for the present, until the next volume in the series appears.

SANAT K. BANERJI

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 19-23.

GURU GOBIND SINGH'S  
ADORATION OF THE DIVINE MOTHER

*(Some extracts, adapted by Har Krishan Singh in quantitative Hexameters,  
from the Punjabi "Chandi di Var")*

BOWINGS to Thee, O Beauty and Terror, O Mother Eternal,  
Master of Work and of Worship, Fosterer, God-Union's Yoker !  
Rider on the Furies of the Lion, Killer of the foes of the war-field.  
O Lightning and Flaming Fire, of Thee ever hymn all the Vedas.  
Manifest Thou art, unblemished in the world's and life's all changes.  
Thou, the Preserver of Universe, Thou the Light of the World-scape.  
Thou art indeed the diffuser of the Splendour of Time and the Timeless.  
Thrones with Thee Victory, ever of the present, the past and the future.  
Thou art the manyness spreading Thou may'st in a moment abolish.  
None has shattered its shroudings, and none has its mystery ravished.  
Flinging my all unto breezes, my clinging is but to Thy shelter.  
Thou art the sword and the spear, the scimitar Thou and the arrow !  
Thou art the bearer of conch-shell, the lotus, the cudgel, the discus !  
Queen of the moments eternal, O Body and Form of the Pure One.  
Thou art almighty, the Mother, Thou art all Nature, Bhavani,  
Thy Light of a Truth supernal fills all the bodies and vessels.  
By Thee are the demons and devils seized and subjected and bonfired.  
O make men mindful of nought that is senseless and born to be faded,  
But of the Name Immortal, the termless Permanent Person.  
'Triumph be ours !' is my begging ! Bestow on us boon and blessing !  
End for ever the fray and the feud of Muslim and Hindu,  
Pass me Thy word to crush the enemies out of the homeland.  
Rouse men to issue full-throated, veracious voices of triumph.  
Thou art the trees and the flowers, and Thou the Kindler of life-flame.  
Everywhere spread the devotion, the deepening love of the Brahman !  
Conquering the Asuras I bugle the Victory Divine of the Dharma.

## AMID NIGHT'S FLICKERING MIRTH

AMID night's flickering mirth a sky-winged Thought  
Dreams of the gold citadel of the Sun;  
Infinity holds like a fiery dot  
The beauty of its world-dominion.

Spark upon spark lighting the eternal way  
Leaps from the horizon of a secret Deep;  
While Heavenward moments of earth's mortal day  
Fly from the clutches of time's dragon sleep.

The spaces are besieged with diamond trails;  
Across a solitude of mystic night,  
A poignant cry of spirit-fire assails  
The high impregnable dome of the Infinite.

NIRODBARAN

## PSYCHOLOGICAL PERFECTION

THIS flower, with its five petals,  
Reminds me of five attitudes.

Faith in the power and presence of God,  
Faith in one's own spiritual destiny,  
Faith in the potentiality of development within one,  
Faith in the possibility of supramental realisation in this life,  
Faith in the care and protection of the Mother, and that she loves us.

Aspiration like a flame, burning in the heart,  
Aspiration like a flame to consume all obscurity, ignorance and darkness,  
Aspiration to change, to grow into an awakened consciousness,  
Aspiration to open oneself to the transforming action of the Mother's  
force,

Aspiration like a steady upward intention of the will.

Devotion to the Divine in the person of the Mother,  
Devotion in thought and speech,  
Devotion in action,  
Devotion in the heart-centre,  
Devotion as loyalty, as love and as remembrance.

Sincerity, meaning without self-deception,  
Sincerity meaning openness without reservations,  
Sincerity meaning unashamed approach,  
Sincerity meaning not hiding the unconvinced persons within one,  
Sincerity meaning the integration of one's nature around its central  
being.

## PSYCHLLOGICAL PERFECTION

Surrender to the Divine alone,  
Surrender unconditionally, without bargaining,  
Surrender as a continually repeated self-offering,  
Surrender means realising the Divine as Being and Doing.  
Surrender is giving up one's life to the Divine.

Persistence—(this is the flower's centre)—day in and night through,  
Persistence without regard to subjective feelings,  
Persistence in spite of external conditions,  
Persistence with endurance, patience and trust.  
Having done all, persist.

DICKYBATSTONE

## SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM—A SYMBOL OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

PRANAM

*(Continued from the issue of January, 1960)*

There are two ways of the Mother's giving. "Through the eyes it is to the psychic, through the hand to the material." So many of us used to see the Mother in different ways in visions, in dreams etc. Once someone wrote: "Last night I saw in a dream that from the Mother's body light was coming into my body and transforming it. Both the bodies were longer than the physical bodies and were of a shadowy colour like that of stones. What does this signify?"

In reply the Master wrote: "Good, it is the opening of the physical consciousness to the Mother. It was probably the subconscious physical that you saw—that would explain the shadowy character—the stone indicates the material nature."

Another question was: "Why does the Mother appear different at different times—at Pranam or in the Prosperity Room or while giving the interview? Sometimes even anatomical differences are visible. What is the reason of these differences in her appearances? Does it depend on the extent to which she turns outwards?"

The Master replied: "It is rather, I think, dependent on the personality that manifests in front—as she has many personalities and the body is plastic enough to express something of each when it comes forward."

Regarding the Mother's aura, the Master wrote in 1933: "What people see around the Mother is first her aura, as it is called nowadays and, secondly, the forces of Light that pour out from her when she concentrates, as she always does on the roof for instance. (Everybody has an aura—but in most it is weak and not very luminous; in the Mother's aura there is the full play of light and powers.) People do not see it usually because it is a subtle physical and not a gross material phenomenon. They can see only in two conditions, first if they develop sufficient subtle sight, secondly if the aura itself begins to become so strong that it affects the sheath of gross Matter which conceals it. The Mother has certainly no idea of making people see it—it is of themselves that one after another, some 20 or 30 in the Ashram, I believe, have come to see. It is certainly one of the signs that the Higher Force (call it Supramental or not) is beginning to influence Matter."

After 1938 there happened a change in the Ashram programme. We may say in a way that pranam was stopped. The old method did not revive in the same form. The Mother would appear on the steps of the staircase and would meditate for a time along with us. After a time the morning meditation also stopped and the evening meditation started. The Mother would come out on a lower terrace, above what is now Dyuman's room. For lack of place many had to remain standing. For the convenience of the people, the rooms that were there between the courtyard under this terrace and that of the adjoining houses were demolished and sitting arrangement was made there. Now there was no need to allot a place to each. One would take a seat anywhere. Once a question was put to the Master : "Recently I notice that before the Mother comes down from the terrace in the evening she stands there for a long time. I feel that at that time she gives us something specially, so I concentrate to receive and feel what she gives. But this evening suddenly I saw (when I was concentrating by looking at her) that her physical body disappeared—there was no sign of her body, as if she were not there. Then after a few seconds her figure reappeared. I felt at that moment that she mixed with the ether and became one with all things. Why did I see like this ?"

Sri Aurobindo answered : "The Mother makes an invocation or aspiration and stands till the movement is over. Yesterday she passed for some time beyond the sense of the body and it is perhaps this that made you see in that way."

At the top of the staircase leading to the previous Meditation Hall there is a small room where a few sadhaks would go to offer flowers to the Mother. The Mother began to come and accept their offerings there and bless them by putting her hand on their heads. Slowly the number began to increase tenfold. Thus the pranam on the staircase started and lasted for a fairly long time. Sadhaks were greatly benefited by this system of pranam. For now each had the opportunity to talk with the Mother and speak to her direct about his difficulties and receive an answer. For hours together the Mother would remain standing and hear all that we had to say. During the previous mode of pranam which lasted till 1938 no one could talk. What one had to say one could write to the Mother or Sri Aurobindo and receive an answer in writing. Afterwards one could talk to the Mother but offering pranam and touching her Feet as before became rare and practically disappeared. But the advantage of talking to her was no less a blessing.

By this time the number of the sadhaks had increased so much that, though the pranam on the staircase would last for hours, still many were left out. For them the Mother would come on the terrace after the pranam was over. Only one sadhika Chinmayi by name would accompany her. She was given the



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name Chinmayi by the Master. Time not permitting, this was stopped and the pranam on the staircase too had to be discontinued. In the beginning this used to start by 8 a.m. and would continue till 11 a.m. After that the Mother would come on the terrace. For those who could not come for pranam in the morning due to work, the Mother used to open the staircase door at 12. Thus from the morning till 1 p.m. she had to spend her time in giving blessings. How eager the sadhaks were for the blessings one can imagine from the fact that they would keep sitting on the steps of the staircase for hours together, awaiting their turn. The Mother's blessings, her Touch, her Force, her Pleasure are the only treasures of the sadhaks. The significance of a flower given by the Mother is : "Seeking all support in the Divine alone", and this is what the sadhaks seemed to put into practice here. She alone is the Light of their life and she alone will one day illumine the dark chambers of their being : this only is their hope and aspiration.

The Evening Meditation lasted for several years. Instead of standing on the terrace again the Mother began to come to the Pranam Hall. At times she would come at 12 p.m. ! Still people would remain sitting downstairs. After the meditation, flower-distribution would commence. Sometimes she used to be in Samadhi while giving flowers. In those days it was a sight to see the Mother in Samadhi. Whenever she would fall into Samadhi, putting her blessing hand on the head of a sadhak, his joy would know no bounds. Not to speak of night, even in day-time, while talking she would go into Samadhi in response to the call of some need in us. Of course she could always remain in Samadhi if she wanted : that condition is not something she had to labour to attain : she stays in the outer consciousness in order to come down to our level and to lift us up. Even in the outer consciousness she keeps the spiritual light and she withdraws only for some special work.

Who can guess the value of her sacrifice for us ? A day will come when these things will be remembered with gratitude.

After the passing of the Master all activities of the Ashram remained still for 12 days. Such a thing had never happened during the life-time of the Ashram. It was feared the Mother also would go into seclusion. But just as children seek their mother so also the mother seeks her children. For various reasons pranam remained suspended but somehow again it started.

Since 1950 a new order or chapter in the Ashram life has been in progress. The first phase of the Ashram life was from 1926 to 1938. The second closed in 1950. From 1950, the Mother stopped coming down daily but would come four days a week for an hour and a half. At that time some of us would talk with her for a minute or two. Offering of pranams became a thing of the past, except for those who had their birthdays. Only for particular reasons she would

bless a few, placing her palm on their heads. She would give a flower to each of us. To some she would give some special flowers or a red-rose over and above the usual ones. To a few she would fix the rose in their button-holes, overwhelming them with a flood of her sweetness. The selection of flowers was not a formality. It had a symbolic meaning in it. In the twinkling of an eye the Mother would pass into our being and choose flowers according to our needs. To some she would give several flowers, putting one upon the other in such a way that their significances would make a whole sentence.

After 1950, pranam at the staircase was stopped altogether but how long can one resist the urge of individually receiving the joy of her gracious touch and of confiding to her one's personal problems and having her solution on the spot ? Some began to go up the staircase to her and slowly their number began to swell. Thus again the pranam at the staircase started and lasted till August 1954.

In 1954, the number of permanent sadhaks rose to 875 . A hundred or so more would always be there temporarily. To all of us she would give on some days fried groundnuts, on other days Ashram-made toffees. Besides herself carrying the burden of the whole Ashram, she continued for four years the giving of morning blessings in the Ashram and in the evening distributing Prasad in the playground. At last one of them had to be dropped. The distribution of Prasad in the playground never stopped even for a day till 1957. One difference in the process was that previously we used to stand in a line and the Mother herself passed from person to person distributing Prasad to each. Afterwards she was persuaded to take her seat along the southern side of the playground in a chair and all of us would pass by, one after another, taking from her Prasad put in a small cloth bag. Even after return from the Playground, she would receive a number of sadhaks and sadhikas upstairs. It would last up to 1 or 2 a.m. Then she would retire and her attendant would also come down. Often it would happen that day and night would become one. The night being over, the morning routine work would commence. But the wonder of it was that even her attendants did not feel affected by sleepless nights. Far from feeling tired or worried about sleep they were ever fresh.

Throwing one's mind back over the years, when one recalls these details of the Mother's working, one can easily envisage how intensely she has laboured for us, sparing neither health nor comfort. Even in her retirement she is working tirelessly for us and the world. She has no Sunday, no holiday, even now in her life of retirement.

In 1957, another change took place. Prasad distribution was retained for only one day, the 15th of every month . Two days in a week, the Mother would take a French class. On Wednesdays she would give readings in French,

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mostly of Sri Aurobindo's writings and some of her own and answer questions put to her. On Fridays she would read fine passages from French literature for the benefit of the young ones. On other days of the week there would be meditation in place of distribution.

The peace and silence that prevailed throughout the meditation or distribution time was marvellous. Besides this basic state the more receptive among the sadhaks had various spiritual experiences. Here one is reminded of the story of a king in distress who wanted to meet the Buddha. Even when he reached the place where Buddha was seated he asked the guide how far still was the Lord. Obviously he had no previous experience of how vast a number of people could be in a place without even the least whisper. To return to the point : it was a silence born of the pressure that the sadhaks would feel with the commencement of the meditation. Even the young boys of the school would sit like statues till the light was again switched on to indicate the end of the meditation. Silence and discipline are the natural traits of the Ashramites. Not to talk of meditation, such silence was maintained throughout, even when the pranam or distribution would go on, that no one could imagine what was going on within. Just on the Mother's taking the seat the atmosphere became so charged that even a new comer could feel it and automatically react to it. From 7th December 1958, the Mother has practically stopped going to the Playground. Since February 1959, she has given blessings only on special occasions such as Durga Puja, Deepawali etc. Out of the old routine only the distribution of flowers on the 1st of every month, called Prosperity Day, is retained.

NARAYANPRASAD

## WHICH WAY TO PEACE?

Watching the drift of world-events towards disaster and the fumbling way our statesmen are handling them in order to bring peace and harmony, a layman may well ask, "What is peace when attempts at peace are driving out peace?" Peace is a term which is as old as creation itself. It is man's eternal desire to have harmony within himself in his solitude and in all of his life-situations, but never yet has he been able to win this heavenly bride.

The world has seen the development of principles and theories, political, economic, religious and moral. There are monumental designs and many Himalayan ideas and considerable progress of material developments. The politician has given us the constitution so that we may build our state's finest structure, the economist the best system for a just and equitable distribution of our resources, the religionist the best principles to fathom the infinite, the moralist the ideal code of conduct; then there beckon our vast spiritual resources—the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Bible, the Koran and so on. There are the accumulated treasures of scriptures, the examples and precepts of sages and seers and prophets. Nevertheless, the world stands on the brink of a precipice, on the crest of a live volcano. And none of our aforesaid achievements are coming to the rescue of depressed humanity—a humanity that passes the night in terrible fear and walks through the day with despair and deep sighs in the breast.

Peace is far off, and seems beyond our reach; and the means so far adopted are inadequate, not because they are intrinsically impotent and ineffective, or do not meet the demands, but because they are not lived. They cannot be made effective either by reading, speech, or other devices, like regimentations, conversions, sentimental recognition, intellectual acceptance and moral endorsement and forcible means. Truth is not merely a matter of word but a matter of practice—it has to be lived—be it political, religious or spiritual. We have tried political, economic and religious methods, but now we have to explore the spiritual realm as the former have so far proved inadequate. If spirituality is the answer, then we have got to live up to it; man must live up to the Truth he has so far conceived, and apply it to the practical business of life, his society and nation.

The following quotations from Sri Aurobindo will clarify further my point :—

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“...spirituality is in its very nature a thing subjective and not mechanical ; it is nothing if it is not lived inwardly and if the outward life does not flow out of this inward living. Symbols, types, conventions, ideas are not sufficient. A spiritual symbol is only a meaningless ticket, unless the thing symbolised is realised in the spirit. A spiritual convention may lose or expel its spirit and become a falsehood. A spiritual type may be a temporary mould into which spiritual living may flow, but it is also a limitation and may become a prison in which it fossilises and perishes. A spiritual idea is a power, but only when it is both inwardly and outwardly creative. Here we have to enlarge and to deepen the pragmatic principle that truth is what we create, and in this sense first, that it is what we create within us, in other words, what we become. Undoubtedly spiritual truth exists eternally beyond and independent of us in the heavens of the spirit ; but it is of no avail for humanity here, it does not become truth of earth, truth of life until it is lived. The divine perfection is always there above us ; but for man to become divine in consciousness and act and to live inwardly and outwardly the divine life is what is meant by spirituality ; all lesser meanings given to the word are inadequate fumbings or impostures.”<sup>1</sup>

In spite of our dazzling achievements, scientific or otherwise, we have not found the “Man” of our expectations, Man the elevator, the regenerator, the dynamo of the divine, a vessel to receive the flow of delight and consciousness and Truth, and radiate them into his situation—Man the possessor and inheritor of all heavenly virtues remains yet an unconscious Divine, a half-lit mental being.

Since the dawn of history man has been a spiritual being. The Divine Consciousness, immanent in all creatures and things as the stream of life itself, is trying to manifest whether we are conscious of it or not. The essential constituent of man is a spark of consciousness that precedes the body and out-lives it ; whose very nature dictates a certain specific mode of self-expression which is the basis of all ethics. It is the chief spiritual element in man, which functions according to its own laws, and has the power to rule even those forces which alone are recognized by materialism. One can, for the time, starve, neglect, ignore or suppress this powerful energy, but it refuses to be bottled up for ever. There is an urge in it to run the full race. It is big with the destiny of man. If there were no eternal element in the constitution of man, no conscious core that transcends the body, if all that exists were matter, and consciousness nothing but a by-product evolved in the long course of matter’s mutations—there could be no such thing as transcendent values, no

<sup>1</sup> *The Human Cycle.*

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progressive Self-expression dictated by the very nature of man, his *swabhāva*. There is a potential danger in this conception of dialectical materialism. There may be attempts to thwart the Truth of oneness, torture into uniformity in order to reduce the earth to a termite colony ; but they are doomed to defeat. An utterly material substance cannot change or evolve by itself. Unless there is something involved nothing can evolve. Only consciousness can evolve, and march onward to a greater manifestation through matter and life and mind. Life is a part of consciousness ; therefore man is not a mere particle of matter. In fact, the whole creation is a vibration of Truth, Consciousness and Delight, and only man can reach the hidden source of these vibrations and become an effective means of eliminating the dark forces of life. We have thus far neglected, at our peril, the vast potential element of peace, and tried in vain to establish peace through institutional and material means.

“A society that lives not by its men but by its institutions, is not a collective soul, but a machine ; its life becomes a mechanical product and ceases to be a living growth. Therefore the coming of a spiritual age must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing number of individuals who are no longer satisfied with the normal intellectual, vital and physical existence of man, but perceive that a greater evolution is the real goal of humanity and attempt to effect it in themselves, to lead others to it and to make it the recognised goal of the race. In proportion as they succeed and to the degree to which they carry this evolution, the yet unrealised potentiality which they represent will become an actual possibility of the future”.<sup>1</sup>

This is the crisis of the age. Another important point to consider is that a vast gulf has been created between profession and practice. There is no sincerity in our action. Man is still identified with his lower impulses. He has cut himself off from the unifying centre, and is lost in the unceasing cross-currents of outer life. He has no rest, no harbour ; he is intoxicated with the fruits of his scientific, materialistic, rationalistic civilisation. But what makes the situation so very dangerous is that the lower forces of Nature have possessed the minds of a considerable number of men, whom circumstances have placed in positions of power and influence, and perverted them to their sinister ends. And the natural result of this perversion is the growing chaos and misery in the world, and an almost total shipwreck of all higher values. We find, therefore, in the words of Sri Aurobindo,

<sup>1</sup> *The Human Cycle*.

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“...goodness a rare orchid in the button-hole of the vital man, and reason become the magnificent servant of Life and Matter. The titanic development of the vital Life which followed is ending as the Titans always end ; it lit its own funeral pyre in the conflagration of world-war, its natural upshot, a struggle between the most ‘efficient’ and ‘civilised’ nations for the possession and enjoyment of the world, of its wealth, its markets, its available spaces, an inflated and plethoric commercial expansion, largeness of imperial size and rule. For that is what the great war signified and was in its real origin, because that was the secret or the open intention of all pre-war diplomacy and international politics ; and if a nobler idea was awakened at least for a time, it was only under the scourge of Death and before the terrifying spectre of a gigantic mutual destruction.”

Here is a note of warning from the Divine Mother:

“One thing appears evident that humanity has arrived at a certain state of general tension—tension in effort, tension in action, tension even in everyday life—and at an overactivity so excessive, a restlessness so widespread that the whole human race seems to have reached a point where either it has to break through a resistance and rise into a higher consciousness or fall back into an abyss of obscurity and inertia.”

Our endeavour to attain peace and harmony lacks a deep understanding of life and the present situation, of the secret that governs and shapes human life and its destiny. As Leconte de Nouys in his *Human Destiny* pointed out, “If civilised nations want peace they must understand that the problem must be approached basically. The old scaffolding, willed to us by past generations, cracks on every side. It must be consolidated by makeshifts, by bits of string, by pots of glue and treaties signed by highly dignified gentlemen. Moreover, consolidating does not suffice. Peace must be established by transforming man from the *interior* and not by creating external structure.”

Absence of war is not peace. War is the explosion of an accumulation of physical, vital and mental fission forces such as love of power and supremacy, lust and greed and raging passions, which spring from our lower nature. These eruptions influence the individual, his family, society and nation and, by an inevitable chain reaction, involve the whole of humanity. They operate in various guises through us, individuals, who constitute the nations and we then precipitate ourselves into aggressive modes of plunder and possession, by all manner of foul and violent means. On a closer analysis we find that every one of us, more or less, sows the seeds of war when he insists on the satisfaction

## WHICH WAY TO PEACE ?

of his selfish interests whether be it in his family, his society, his club, his party, his Government or his nation, and creates forces which ultimately lead to war between nation and nation. Therefore, peace cannot come by merely compromise of warring powers or an adjustment of outer interest. It cannot come by detailing of horrors of Hiroshima or by a patchwork of International Laws or even by disarmament as widely hoped today. Peace is a dynamic potential and an all-pervading force, a governing power of life and existence: *yā devī sarvabhūteṣu śānti rūpeṇa samasthītā*. “The first thing to do in the sadhana is to get a settled peace and silence in the mind.” “Whatever else is aspired for and gained, this (calm) must be kept. Even knowledge, power, Ananda, if they come and do not find this foundation are unable to remain and have to withdraw until the Divine purity and peace of the Sat-Purusha are permanently there.” “It is in the peace behind that you must learn to live and feel it to be yourself.” “To feel the peace above and about your head is a first step ; you have to get connected with it and it must descend into you and fill your life and body and surround you, so that you live in it, for this peace is the one sign of the Divine’s Presence with you.”<sup>1</sup> This is the Indian conception of peace. It is a positive force, a force that determines every step of our upward march of evolution. Its existence shall be made felt only by creating the right condition within man himself. Peace is Divine Force, and it has to be brought down through a long, persistent, devoted and sincere individual effort. Mere absence of disquiet is the negative aspect of peace—its positive aspect is symbolised by Shiva upon whom the universal dance of Mahakali creates and destroys the world.

The way to attain peace is to remould and transform the entire structure of life itself. The way to avert war is to start the positive process of eliminating the causes of war, which lie dormant and hidden within our very nature. It means the elimination from the inner atmosphere of man the vibration of discord and disharmony freeing him from the influence of his lower nature. It means the ascent of man from his animal self to his divine self. It means his union with God, his union with spiritual consciousness, and the transformation of the entire fabric of his being. Objectively the environment, the external conditions must also be made conducive and favourable for the individual to grow into perfection. The whole process is a progressive unfoldment of the Soul of man and his flight towards light and bliss, towards his own integral fulfilment. If we accept this standpoint that peace can be established only through individual unfoldment, its foundation can only be laid through the

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo, *Bases of Yoga*.



awakening in all and the manifestation by all of the inner divinity, which is *one*. The foundation of human unity, freedom, society and life must therefore stand on the bedrock of oneness of all creation, and the essential unity of all mankind which arrives from that oneness. The external life must be moulded in accordance with this Truth. The individual, who is the base and nucleus of society, nation and the world, should necessarily be the starting-point, the pivot. The realisation of the Spirit within him, and his unity in substance with the Divine, endows the individual with a tremendous positive Force, which he can release and radiate. A group of such individuals in each country or nation can effectively eliminate from the atmosphere all evil vibrations, all forces of disorder and distress that reign over the material world today and breed ruthless dictators, ideological overlords and, through them, global wars.

The way is "the founding of all life and consciousness in the Divine; so also love and affection, human relations, must be rooted in the Divine and a spiritual and psychic oneness in the Divine must be their foundation. Its very base would have to be spiritual and psychic and not vital. Its organisation must be the image of the Spirit and founded on Spirit." To attain peace, which is our problem, is to discover our self, our self-existent imperishable being and infuse its peace and purity into society and humanity. "The life of an individual is complete in the life of his fellow-men." The individual is a part of the universal, he is a particular representation of it. In fact, the three terms together, the individual, the universal and the transcendent, give our existence its meaning and significance according to Sri Aurobindo. The individual is the unique particularity, the universe the wide field of applicability, and the Transcendent the yet undiscovered goal of evolution, latent in both the individual and the universal. The concept of individual peace in this context gets indissolubly bound up with that of the peace of the society, the nation and the world. Thus arises the concept of *Integral Peace*.

Evolving moral principles and passing pious resolutions will never carry us nearer to peace, so long as we nurse anger, hatred, selfishness and greed within us. It will not save humanity from the quagmire of bewildered fear and suffering in which it has sunk to-day. Even amidst this encircling gloom a new horizon beckons to us, "a new light has dawned upon the earth". It is high time that we opened to it, united ourselves and faced life's responsibility with hope and courage and with faith—the kind of faith that moves mountains and helps to jump across oceans. We must create conditions for peace to descend into the individuals and spread to the whole of humanity. Let us pause and ponder awhile, step back from the present whirlpool, observe the rise and fall of events and decide whether we shall march in the light of the New Dawn.

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Should we suffer the present trend, the perilous drift, to continue, and remain tossing in the dark waves of the forces of evil or, strong in our faith in God, rise to the occasion and meet the dire challenge of the Asura with the omnipotence of the Spirit ?

ANIL BHATTACHARYA

## RABINDRANATH, TRAVELLER OF THE INFINITE

IN Rabindranath, in his life as well as in his art,—especially in his poetry—the thing that has taken shape is what we call aspiration—an upward urge and longing of the inner soul. In common parlance it is a seeking for the Divine, in philosophical terms it is a spiritual quest. But Rabindranath is a poet, and he is a modern poet. He cannot be wholly included in the older category, fixed in a mould of clear definition. To be sure, the special characteristic of his consciousness is to keep as far as possible the aim, the ideal, the goal and the Deity of the worship undivided and inexplicable. To make something definite and clear is to limit and make it gross and material. Therefore to name the Deity whom he loves, adores and worships he has used words that are expansive, general and vague—infinite, boundless, formless and non-manifest. If the Deity appears in a manifested form the worship of the worshipper ends. The Deity also will no longer be a Deity of the worship. But it does not mean that the Deity of Rabindranath is ‘the One beyond sound, touch, form and change’ of the Upanishad. His aspiration is for another realisation of the Upanishad :

“One who has taken this form, that form and all the forms.”

Or :

“He being bodiless dwells in the forms and non-forms as well.”

That supreme truth cannot be called formless simply because it has no special form. He is formless since His form has no limit. He is not exclusively bound by any special form. He is not merely infinite and boundless but also delightful and ambrosial. He is endearing and with His endearing form He dwells behind all forms. It cannot be said definitely whether He is seen or not through forms—in this way He attracts the soul of man perpetually towards Him.

Rabindranath has not seen his Beloved with his eyes open. He has not sensed Him with unblinking eyes, nor even has he wished to do so. His delight and achievement consist in making Him mysterious and nebulous by keeping Him aloof, and veiling Him in innumerable names, forms, colours, rhythms,

hints, gestures, ways and means. That object is infinite and boundless ; it is more so, because it is unknown and unfamiliar or almost so.

Far yet near,  
Near yet far.

So it is, as it were, a damsel unfamiliar, remote and fond of mirth and play. It is a constant separation from the Beloved—though it is an object of deep love—that has made this love intense, sweet and poignant, moving and overflowing. Such a longing for the far-off Beloved made Shelley restless. His 'Skylark' is the living idol of this longing. Shelley's object of love also is a Deity dwelling in a distant world :

The desire of the moth for the Star  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar—  
From the sphere of our sorrow.

This is the quintessence of Tagore's message. For this reason people brought up in European culture used to call Rabindranath the Shelley of Bengal. There is a close knship between the two in this upward urge.

This spiritual aspiration was called quest in the scriptures of the West. The quest of the Knights for the Holy Grail inflamed the heart of Europe to a great extent for a time. Its art and literature bear abundant indication of this. I bring in the West here, for the poetic consciousness of Rabindranath is no less full of the West than of the Upanishads. In many cases we see that as the Vedanta is in his inner Being, in the marrow of his bones, so there is Europe in his poetic consciousness, in flesh and blood. Rabindranath is a unique blending of these two.

However, due to the unique quality of the aspiration, curiosity and seeking which we have mentioned as being in his heart, two qualities are perceptible in his poetical style. First, the style, the speed, the swing of rhyme and rhythm and the cadence of tune. Starting from 'Nirjharer Swapana Bhanga', the awakening of the fountain, 'My heart dances to-day', and 'Lo, he comes, he comes with rapture', to 'the restless, irresistible flutterings of the wings', of 'Balaka', the same style shows itself in a fast and almost merry stepping. A restlessness for an uninterrupted forward march of the soul and the inner consciousness to proceed ever still more, still further, still higher is the nature of the divine flame residing in the heart. So the delight of journeying incessantly, without a halt anywhere in any shelter, journeying for the sake of journeying—this

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becomes the aim and ideal of man's life. The Vedic Mantra—'Charai-bete', 'move, move on'—was therefore so dear to Tagore. Is there such a thing as a definite and fixed ideal? We surpass the aim of today and another appears on the horizon. Today's high precipice is left behind as a foothill. A higher precipice looms ahead, and behind it rears one still higher, thus an unending range. There is no stopping, never say there is 'no further'.

The message of the poet's heart runs :

To every one Thou hast given a home,  
Me only the road to press on.

Or :

O there is no home for you,  
No bed of flowers,  
Only two wings and the vast courtyard  
Of the sky.

★

★

O Soul, O Bird of my heart !  
Close not, O blind one, your wings.

Further :

O Charioteer of my life's journey !  
I am a pilgrim on the eternal road,  
I bow to Thee on my wayfaring.

This sense of ever progressive movement is very evident in Rabindranath. Several critics have compared Bergson with him in this connection. There is much similarity between the two; but I think, their difference also is vital and fundamental. The progression of Bergson is the final, ultimate, sole and primeval truth. It is mere progressiveness without any cause. It is doubtful if it has any other quality. A line of evolution may be noticed there but that is a secondary sign of this progression. There is no purpose behind it. If there be any, then this movement loses its natural, spontaneous rhythm. But Tagore is a child of the Orient. However enamoured he might be of progressiveness, there is somewhere behind him "the static poise in home" of the

nishads. However great might be his advance for the sake of advance, he knows after all that there is :

Peace boundless where comes a mighty halt...

Quiet, sublime, deep and silent Glory.

The movement in Rabindranath is not for itself, neither aimless nor eyeless. It is open to the light, it is luminous.

Each star of the sky invites the human soul.  
The invitation to him is from all the worlds,  
To the horizon of the East in teeming light.

Again,

Let thy deathless flower bloom towards the light  
In the world and the worlds beyond, ever anew.

We have said that this movement is fundamentally a spiritual aspiration, a longing for the Divine — this aspiration and this longing are sweet, deep and penetrating and at once refined and transparent. The *élan vital* of Bergson is mainly a movement of nature and the life-force, however he might have tried to put on it towards the end a veneer of spirituality, of Christian religiosity.

Indeed this dynamism has given a unique stamp to Tagore's mode of expression. The peace and silence about which he speaks often dwell in the consciousness hidden at the core as a refuge or as a hope and anticipation, an intimation from beyond — even as there is a pause in the heart of rhythm or as the end of a bar of tune there is a stillness. Cadence in Tagore represents the movement of progression in life and consciousness. The natural echo of time-flow and sound and melody and motion we find in the following lines :

Whoever moves goes on singing  
To the land of abundance.

Or,

Farther and farther  
The road goes on ringing with a thin, poignant,  
Lengthening note.

Dance and music almost run abreast. From the viewpoint of spiritual realisation we find that aspiration and invocation have the same origin. The

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spontaneous utterance of the heart is but the mounting self-revelation and self declaration of the aspiration.

All that I have not attained,  
All that I have not struck  
Are vibrating on the chords  
Of thy Lyre.

Let us recollect in this connection Shelley's

And singing still dost soar and soaring ever singest

Tagore is known to us as music incarnate. The simple, natural form of his poetic soul has expressed itself solely through songs and lyrics.

Let us now deal with the second quality that derives from a free, unbarred movement and proceeds towards the indefinable at its best. According to many a critic it is a great flaw. To some it means nothing but ambiguity, while to others it is, to say the least, lack of objectivity. Let us examine it. Listen, for example,

The teeming clouds rumble  
With heavy showers.  
Alone I sit on the rim of the rill  
Empty of hope.  
Sheaves of sickled paddy are collected in heaps;  
The fleeting current of the river, full to the brim,  
Is chill to the touch.  
Rains interrupt the harvest-work.

'Sonar Tari.'

Our mind and heart are carried away by the seductive charm of beautiful language, fine rhythm and an enchanting picture. But our physical eyes fail to seize a meaningful substance or a direct and clear experience behind the words. No doubt, evidently there is an effort to formulate some realisation, but nothing solid has been achieved. Everything is fluid and thin and tenuous, about to vanish like vapour. That is why critics of the classical school accused Tagore of obscurity and enigmatic vagueness — all a play of whims, caprices and fancies — the clear, direct and positive certainty of the truth-seer is lacking there — Rabindranath cannot sing in unison with the Vedic sages, *Jyok cha Suryan drishe* — "May we behold the Sun with open and undazed eyes."

To some extent, perhaps, it is true that if we compare Tagore with those who stand on the peaks in world-literature we find in their creation an utmost, flawless harmony and synthesis between speech and substance, while in Tagore we find on the whole speech carrying more weight than substance and this is why his poetic genius, as it were, somewhat falls short of perfect perfection — except in a few instances. But that, it may be answered, would be demanding something from Tagore which is not germane to his nature and genius; it would be, as it were, to measure him by a standard different from his own. To be sure, substance does not mean mere wealth of clear intellectual thoughts or solidity of subject matter. Substance means the real essence, the very core, the thing in itself, a delight-truth gleaned in consciousness, made vibrant with life. And it may be said that even this is the law of a particular formula of creation — but Rabindranath has followed another law. We may take here an example. As a sculptor Michael Angelo had no parallel among the artists. One special trait of his carving was this that he hardly ever completed a figure to a final finish; he left it unfinished to a certain extent; the unfinished portion in its rawness was suggestive of things unsaid. Probably he would indicate in this way that the statue as a statue has not an independent value of its own but is part of nature's own beauty around a statue — it was not a model according to the Greek ideal — a creation flawless, exquisite and perfect in every feature, complete and sufficient in itself — but quite separate from other creations. In our country the practice of carving out some portion of a whole hill and shaping out of it some idol or cave temple was in vogue. The inner sense of that practice was perhaps to prove the unity and indivisibility of art and nature and how they harmonise and commune with each other. A similar excuse may be put forward on behalf of Tagore. A lightness and sinuosity, turns and returns in the movement, weave out the essential theme, because of the pressure, the necessity, the very law of the consciousness. And that also has characterised the impetus of the upward drive of aspiration—a thirst for attaining a farther and farther progression — the ever burning and increasing flame of the psychic Being, the everspreading rays of the immortal light. This unending, ceaseless, free and absolute aspiration, this voyage to the Unknown —

Behold

The boundless main in the West,  
 The flickering light like hope  
 Quivers in the water—

or,

Not here, elsewhere, elsewhere, in some other clime.



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The poet did not put a limit to his quest—the uniqueness of his own nature implanted itself perceptible and living in his style and manner. Realisation signifies union; the poet was not after union—but the yearning for union :

Where is light, O where is light !  
Kindle it with the fire of separation.

Saint Augustine in one of his sayings describes the state in which he did not love but loved to love. The heart of Tagore was dyed with something of this holy Augustinian tint.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

*(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali in "Rabindranath".)*

## THUS SANG MY SOUL

(23)

### VI. AGONY OF SEPARATION

*(concluded)*

#### 46. IF FARNES DAY AND NIGHT BE GROWING

How can I think for me Thy Light and Love be lacking  
In even the least degree ?  
How canst Thou quietly watch my aspirations cracking  
When I am given to Thee ?  
Despite soul-breaking efforts if my cries be failing,  
O what a tragedy !  
Under Thy very shelter of sky if nought be availing,  
In world what worse can be ?  
If love to winds and wails to wilderness be going  
In spite of me and Thee,  
If such be fate, our farness day and night be growing,  
O death this life of me !

#### 47. I DIE OR COME

No more I can withstand Thy separation,  
So close to look, yet far away Thou stayeth;  
Do I betray myself or Thou betrayeth  
Pitch ignorance in me, Evasive Compassion ?  
Enough, enough with tactics of Thy game !  
O rend my dark, unveil Thy form divine  
And let me glimpse Thy very blissful shine,  
Flare up my secret spark to be Thy flame !  
Not all Thy lovers are oppressed by pangs  
Of farness, but poor me, what fate is mine  
That all world's sorrows over me incline;  
Thy love unwon, undone my life yet hangs.  
Failed efforts, prayers gone waste, no happy hum,  
Hope-lost, strength broken, to winds I leave my fate,  
Now dumb to all world-cry, before Thy gate,  
Without a word of plaint, I die—or come !

*(To be continued)*

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## SOMETIME

SOMETIME, when all life's lessons have been learned,  
And sun and stars forevermore have set,  
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned  
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,  
Will flash before us, out of life's dark night,  
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;  
And we shall see how Mother's plans are right,  
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

But not today. Then be content, poor heart.  
Her plans, like lilies pure and white unfold;  
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,  
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.  
And if through patient toil, we reach the land  
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,  
Where we shall clearly see and understand,  
I think that we will say, "Mother knew best."

SUDHANGSHU BHUSAN PAL CHOUDHURY

# NEW ROADS

## BOOK IX

### THE INTERMEDIATE WORLDS

#### II

DAWN and the Dragon declared their dependency;  
Art and all Science were made to agree—  
Rigorous laws understood a plasticity;  
Statement and fact were no longer bound.  
Colour and Sound recognised an identity—  
Through the same art-form a rapture was born,  
Lifting the consciousness high beyond ape-sense,  
Finding new levels of infinite Mind.  
Beauty declared herself inner not outer,  
Formed her new values from out of the past—  
Fashioned a marvel of future experiences,  
Built of its movements new occult laws.  
Laws that stood on the edge of an ecstasy,  
Demon-defying and conquering Death.

Down through the ages the values and qualities  
Measured by standards of sense and desire,  
Satisfied man while the brute was yet strong in him,  
Sated his longing for heavens unknown.  
Daily his prayers were the fire or the offering,  
Yearning for union with the Unborn.  
Daily he measured his wish with the Wonderful,  
Thinking that God would be some otherwhere.  
Worshipping Woden or Thor and his thunderings,  
Feeding on superstition and fear;  
Cowed by Zeus, his mortal Olympians;  
Bowed to unknown Powers of dread.  
Man was the Father to all the long line of them :  
The rigid Adwaitin, the Nihilist in Time,

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The world of the Buddha, the Shankara Maya;  
The world of the darkness invented by men.  
Powers and Principals, Devas and Deities  
Drawn to this ultimate moment of Time :  
Surge of the spirit of Manifestation,  
Crest of Creation, Midnight of Dreams;  
Earth in her slumber turns to the heart of things—  
Sleeps the Red Rose in her Garden of Bliss.  
Out of the occult worlds is born again  
Name of the Nameless echoing Fate.  
Man stands alone the chooser of Destiny,  
Man the Link between Future and Past;  
That which is truly progressive, immortal,  
Lives, in his being and moves to its end.  
Man, the means for the Godhead to manifest,  
Man, the bliss of embodied Mind,  
Man, the joy in the form of the Formless,  
Man, the Spectator of the Dawn.

There, on the edge of new worlds of becoming  
Action and rest did assent to agree;  
Forces ever seeking the Centre,  
Centripetal powers of Light  
Moved to an 'ultimate' turn of the Spiral—  
Centrifugal frequencies  
Flying off to unknown spaces  
Otherwhen, beyond the stars.

Man moved on to new complexities,  
Eyes uplifted to the skies;  
Ego fell from off his shoulders  
As the heavy cloak of Time  
Falls from the waking body of a god.  
Power descended into the mortal  
Where it found 'White Purity'.  
Silence, as a Guest invited,  
Entered in the waking centres.  
One by one the lotus petals  
Opened to the Bliss of Light,  
Opened to the whisper of the Dawn.

NORMAN DOWSETT

## LINES FROM ASHGAR

MANY a frenzied hour my hands  
Have felt thee yielding in their grasp,  
But waking I discerned my own  
Mind's lurid phantom warmed my clasp.

What zest for that serenity  
Which cloy the bosom of the shore  
Has life ? Aye, from eternity's dawn  
It has but rolled in the flood's uproar.

Lo now the high effulgent sun  
Begins to pour its mercies warm,  
And in the dewdrop's being is stirred  
Again the tumult of a storm.

My words and my expressions are  
A veil, and in one veil is sealed  
My life itself, and yet through all  
The veils the Veiled One lies revealed.

Being in all, Thou art removed  
Beyond my reach—my hopes, adieu !  
O does Thy infinite nearness cast  
A veil that clouds Thee from my view ?

The sea lies gathered in one drop,  
The desert in one speck of sand :  
These visions flash on Love—before them  
Reason doth ever dizzy stand.

Behold, it's Love that on the Day  
Of Judgment such wide rapture knows  
That drunken, reckless, gathering Heaven  
And Hell to himself, he onward goes

*Translated from the Urdu by Naresh Bahadur*

## A DIVE INTO DR. RUNES' *A BOOK OF CONTEMPLATION*

A NOTE of apology at the very outset, please ! For the one who has taken this dive is not fully equipped for the feat. It is not an easy task to express a view on a book of this kind unless one has had the opportunity of knowing the author through his other more comprehensive works. And the present work ought not to be taken as a comprehensive one since it appears from its very face to be a gathering of thoughts, ideas or opinions that have occurred at various periods, during many a contemplative mood.

At the very first sight, it was the moody title of the book that struck me. A suggestion then came forth to review it. But after one reading I saw many an interesting idea quietly seeking its way into my brain's silence. And I found, to my increasing surprise, that my mind was not contented with a morsel of a review into which only a few ideas could be packed. It thus took the turn of an unexpected but full plunge into the fascinating world of ideas of Dagobert D. Runes.

The book pointedly reveals Dr. Runes as a most vigorous thinker. His contemplations, though some of them refer to God and certain religious practices and also contain certain elements which are in themselves spiritual, centre essentially round humanity and its various activities : scientific and philosophical, social and political, historical and educational, ethical and cultural.

Dr. Runes is a very strong believer in God, stresses His importance in life and shows a great interest in Him. But it all sounds more like an intellectual conviction : God does not seem to have become the centre of his life : He does not seem to grip him so much as humanity grips and overwhelms him.

However, Dr. Runes' ideas are stimulating ones and we do not come out without a gain from a dive into them. For, as a whole, they are born of nature-contemplation, wisdom sometimes leaping into them. The ironies and paradoxes to which he gives vent sparkle with an intelligence and wit pointing to truths. Here are some of the sparks from his anvil.

"A smile is still the best make-up for a face."

"Fear means nursing a problem instead of facing it. It is a self-pity ignoring the inevitable. It takes courage to brush aside broodings of temerity. Our sages say that the courageous die by the blade, the timid by a thousand strokes of their fears."

"Cleverness will set the mind ajar wisdom will set it at rest."

"What some refer to as unity is often a bond of common hatreds and prejudices."

"Whatever you love you are its master. Whatever you hate you are its slave."

"People will apologize for stepping on each other's toes, but not for crushing each other's hearts".

"Fools are not those who know a little but rather those who know too much of what just isn't so".

It is interesting to see that Dr. Runes has a love for a wisdom that is both ancient and modern. He is modern but refuses to be carried away by the whims of modernism. He says well :

"The devotion of classicism is given to most great men. It is their felt urge to strengthen themselves on the ancient eras of heroism, virtue and faith."

That is wisdom. For in this respect the modern world has nothing to offer as it chants generally, except in rare cases, the burdened song of despair and uncertainty, having gone bankrupt of soul force, the one basis of everlasting peace and real contentment.

"Confession of an old sin neither improves nor elevates man ; the task lies in facing honestly your present failings and ego-centricism."

Truly, to shake off the illusion that is ego and its sticky enfettering paraphernalia and somehow become fastened to the one saving reality that is God is the first duty of man.

"Adversity is God's helpmate and hand-maiden."

"Faith is belief in the invisible. It would be a dull world, indeed, if only the visible were reality."

Not only 'dull' but the whole world would die of the monotonous boredom of uniformity. For the very basis and the sole cause of all the variety of change, the perpetual sign of life, is the one invisible super-conscient Force shaping all from behind the veil.

And again, in fact, there is faith and only faith<sup>1</sup> at every step and at every moment, be it conscious or unconscious. For without this silent unseen force

<sup>1</sup> In the sense that even he who goes under the category of being rational and openly claims himself to be a thorough rationalist (though an exclusive rationalist or an exclusive faithist remains in fact an impossibility for either one or the other would be more or less dominant or equally present in all, too) must have faith in his rationalism. Otherwise his claim makes no sense at all. On the other hand, though the strength and force of our thought and action depends on the measure of faith we put into them, it is the pure reason that has to step in to analyse and sift the process of faith and arrange in an order its changeable or unchangeable convictions.



behind all our action we fail to proceed even an inch in our day to day life, not to mention its uttermost importance in our adventurous journey to the Eternal.

“People show more ease in choosing a repair man for their car than one for their soul.”

Because modern man takes a pleasure and pride in being a slave to the comforts that the machine has brought him he thus lazily chooses to remain a soul-less fellow. That is why he misunderstands God and His divine Lila. Dr. Runes puts it sharply in a paradox rimmed with subtle humour :

“If modern man understands the ways of the Lord, then the Master is in a bad way.”

And it may be added, for that reason God has become a remote intangibility in the modern's life and thought. The net result is : the latter has made himself an ape of bewilderment. Finding not how to be friendly with his own self and knowing not what is to be done, he explodes on others with all the rubbish that he has within him.

And Dr. Runes is admirably right, when he says, “We see nothing clearer in others than our own weaknesses.” It evidently follows that we should perfect ourselves first. For in succumbing to the deadly habit of digging at others' defects and dilating upon them we have done nothing but erected a wall in the path of our progress. Indeed “It takes a lot of knowledge to understand how little we know,” especially of our own selves. A full realisation of this is in fact the true beginning of growing in wisdom.

Dr. Runes believes, “Those who bow to the man above will always step on the man below.” That is why all the more man should learn to bow to God who is above all. For he who bows to God with his heart and soul steps on none. Under His Light and Love and supreme guidance man naturally and spontaneously humbles himself at the feet of the Lord who dwells equally in all. It is time that man should realise this and unlearn to kneel before insolent might.

Dr. Runes is outright in denouncing the dark disease of racial prejudices still prevalent among the Western nations. And he bursts forth on the Christian world :

“The fantastic situation lies in the utter indifference of the Christian world to the obvious contradictions existing between the teachings of Christ about the equality of man and the prevalent enslavement of serfs, bondsmen, and kidnapped blacks by Christians.”

It shows that the West has yet to learn or relearn many things from the

divine life and teachings of the Son of God. However, now there seems to be comparatively less race-*cum*-colour complex than there used to be.

Again, he is at pulling off the cloak of the Marxist and Socialist as well. He declares rightly socialism to be

"The shame-faced cousin of communism, losing virtue by kinship rather than misdeed."

Surely the alternative for man does not lie between Socialism and Communism or any other politicalism but between the liberating Truth of spirituality on one side and the deafening clamour of all isms on the other.

About Marxism he writes:

"Marxism created dictatorship over the proletariat, not by the proletariat."

Owing to this perhaps, a Marxist or Communist is habitually contented to be shut up within the limits of an iron curtain which he perhaps vainly thinks he has safely erected around himself. The infinite freedom that God is ever-ready to bestow upon all equally is something that does not find entrance into his blocked head. Yet, it must be noted, that he too is preparing for it, with some opening here and there, though the course he has taken up is a trifle meandering one. Who knows what Nature has in store for each ! Nature's intention is too vast to yield to the whimsical fancies or the too limited unplastic mathematical calculations of the human brain. She, being Infinite, possesses, and freely and spontaneously chooses, endless ways and means to manifest and fulfil the infinite Truth in and through man's life. No human imagination can prevail against this mighty divine Intention of hers !

A serious concern overwhelms Dr. Runes over man's mad advance in Science at the cost of inner culture and self-control. With regard to the competitive race in space-travel among nations he asks pointedly :

"We are morally in no better position attempting to visit other planets than the murderous gold-hunters Cortez and Pizarro. We are a nefarious lot with a record of twenty million killings in the last few decades alone. What have we to offer ? A globe that has not learned in a million years to govern itself and still feels ready to strike out for new territory."

"Perhaps science has harnessed enough of the powers of nature; let us now harness the powers of science."

But what harm is there if man continues to advance in science ? Only he should learn well not to misuse the discoveries but use them for the utmost benefit of his race. And why not ? The scientist, with this noble intention, should carry on his quest ceaselessly till perhaps at last he

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discovers that the one Force moving behind all that we apparently see is not merely a dynamic Force that is miserably blind but a supreme all-creative dynamic Force, a Consciousness-Force, a Force that is at once Consciousness. Discovering that, he would declare unhesitatingly in a voice vibrant with infinite joy and confidence the golden maxim of the ancient Sages : "Matter is Brahman!" Then the age-long painful antagonism existing between the two will have vanished and Matter and Spirit will have united in one blissful embrace and have become for ever a single harmonious whole. Then one divine Idea will have come to guide us all for the good of the whole world, Lokasamgraha !

*(To be continued)*

POORNA

## THE SUKTA 10-95 OF URVASI AND PURURAVAS IN THE "RIGVEDA" AND THEIR LEGEND IN OTHER WRITINGS

THE first written record of this legend of Urvasi and Pururavas is in the *Rigveda* and its subsequent record is in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and then in the Puranas and other writings like *Vikramorvasi* of Kalidasa. In about 1893 Sri Aurobindo wrote the poem *Urvasi* and in about 1903 he translated *Vikramorvasi*, both of which are included in his *Collected Poems and Plays*. The versions of the legend as given in the various writings differ greatly from one another in details and the meaning of the Sukta 10-95 in the *Rigveda* concerning this legend differs from translator to translator and interpreter to interpreter. So it has become difficult for a student to reconcile these differences and know the real significance of the whole occurrence. This article is, however an attempt to do so.

Let us take first the drama of Kalidasa. Pururavas is the first king of the Lunar Dynasty of Kings who have played as great a part as the kings of the Solar Dynasty in the history of Indian culture. He is the son of Ila and Budha. Ila is the daughter of Vaivasvata Manu and the grand-daughter of Vivasvat, the Sun-god. Budha is the son of Soma, the Moon-god, the god of the Sense-mind. In one of the great battles between gods and demons Pururavas fights against the demons and defeats them. While returning to earth in his chariot he saves Urvasi, an Apsara of Indra's court, from the demon king. When she recovers from the unconsciousness into which she has fallen and when they first see each other they fall in love. But they return to their respective places without speaking anything of it. Indra is pleased with Pururavas for his valour in the fight and also for the rescue of Urvasi. Later, in one of the dancing performances in Indra's court, Urvasi being engrossed in the thought of Pururavas commits a mistake in the performance on account of which she is cursed to go and live on earth as the wife of Pururavas and come back to heaven as soon as Pururavas sees his son born to Urvasi. So she goes and marries Pururavas and begets a son, by name Ayus.

The child is entrusted by Urvasi to Syavan a Rishi, through Satyavati, a lady belonging to that Rishi's ashram. When the child becomes a grown-up boy, Satyavati takes him to Pururavas and hands him over to the parents. Then Urvasi remembers Indra's command about her returning to his court and, with the pang of departure, she weeps. Asked for the cause of her weeping, she speaks

out. Pururavas, hearing this, falls into a swoon but soon recovers. While complaining of Indra's decision about Urvasi he however tells her that she need not disobey the gods and may return to Indra's court. But he himself takes a vow then and there that crowning Ayus as the king he will leave his kingdom and seek Urvasi wherever she is even if it means crossing the ends of the earth. Then Ayus who is witnessing the whole thing says that he himself is too young to bear the burden of ruling over a kingdom and requests his parents not to leave him so early. They both console him and yet stick to their own decisions. Urvasi asks Pururavas not to leave his kingdom and take to this kind of roaming life for the sake of a woman; she enjoins him to obey the dictates of the gods and follow the sacrificial path of the spiritual evolution of mankind, which is that of the Aryan spiritual culture. Pururavas says that Ayus is there to continue the line of Aryan kings and establish the Aryan path of spiritual culture and that he will stick to his word. At this stage Narada appears on the scene with a message from Indra that Pururavas can live on earth with Urvasi till the end of his life and continue to follow the sacrificial path of Aryan culture. After his death they both go to the Gandharva loka.

The legend as given by the Vishnu Purana is that Urvasi, cursed by Varuna and Mitra, descends to earth and while descending meets Pururavas. They both love each other and before marriage two conditions are laid upon Pururavas. One is that he must protect from being stolen the two rams of Urvasi which she had brought from the other world; the second is that he should not allow himself to be seen naked by her, and that as soon as he breaks these two conditions she will become invisible and go away from him. When they were living happily for a long time, Urvasi forgetting altogether her own world, the Gandharvas plan to get her back to it. When Pururavas and Urvasi were in bed at night the Gandharvas steal her two rams. She appeals to Pururavas to save them. He is naked in the darkness, but thinking that he will not be seen by her, he takes a bow and pursues them. The Gandharvas create a flash of lightning and Urvasi sees him naked and immediately she becomes invisible and gets away. She is pregnant at this time but that does not matter for her. Pururavas goes almost mad and wanders naked in quest of her. He meets her with four other Apsaras while bathing in a tank in the land of the North Kurus. The Vishnu Purana says that it is at this meeting of his with her, that he utters the first Mantra of 10-95. But the whole of the conversation contained in 10-95 is not a physical conversation taking place at a physical time and at a physical place. The conversation may be said to be psychological and to cover all the important psychological changes in the psychological phenomena of Pururavas and Urvasi during their life on earth. So when he meets her and asks her to accompany him to his place she tells him

## THE SUKTA 10-95 OF URVASI AND PURURAVAS IN THE "RIGVEDA"

to go back alone and return after a year when she will hand him over the child Ayus and stay with him for another night. He obeys her and returns after a year. He stays a night with her, takes Ayus with him and also the Sacrificial Fire that he may worship the gods with it. Five more sons are born to him by Urvasi and, on account of a boon that he asks and gets sanctioned from the Gandharvas, he goes and lives with Urvasi in the subtle world.

Now before trying to know the R̥gvedic version of it we may learn of the method by which the Rishi deals with an occurrence through his Sukta. He does not narrate the facts of an occurrence in the manner of an intellectual who narrates them consecutively as they have happened in physical time and space. The Rishi is concerned more with psychological phenomena, gets identified with the powers that have descended from other worlds to cause that occurrence, and brings them down again through the Mantra and makes them available to one who opens himself so as to cause in him the psychological perfection that is involved in it. For this particular Sukta 10-95, the Anukramaikara who have prepared the lists of Rishis and gods for all the Suktas in the *R̥gveda* say that the addressor of a Mantra in this Sukta is the Rishi, and the one addressed in that Mantra is the god of that Mantra and that there is no other Rishi and no other god apart from the addressor and the addressed. Since from the contents of this Sukta itself we see that it is an occurrence which has taken place a long time before the composition of this Sukta, we can say that there was a Rishi for this Sukta too, who acted as a medium for Pururavas and Urvasi to converse through him about themselves and who brought down the Rays of Knowledge from the worlds of Pururavas and Urvasi into his own mind first and then through himself made it available to other minds. If his name is not given it may be because he represented merely Pururavas and Urvasi in the Sukta and did not represent anything of himself or his individuality in it.

*(To be continued)*

NARAYANA C. REDDY

# Students' Section

## RÉPONSES—ANSWERS

*Q. Douce Mère, quelle est la différence entre: changement psychique et changement spirituel? (La Vie Divine, p. 73)*

*Q. Sweet Mother, what is the difference between the psychic change and the spiritual change? (The Life Divine, p. 73)*

R. Le changement psychique est celui qui vous met en rapport avec le Divin immanent, le Divin qui est au centre de chaque être et dont l'être psychique est le revêtement et l'expression. Par le changement psychique on passe du Divin individuel au Divin universel et finalement au Transcendant.

Le changement spirituel vous met directement en contact avec le Suprême.

A. The psychic change is that which brings you into communication with the immanent Divine, the Divine who is at the centre of each being and of whom the psychic being is the vesture and the expression. By the psychic change one passes from the individual Divine to the universal Divine and finally to the Transcendent.

The spiritual change puts you directly into contact with the Supreme.

9-9-1959

THE MOTHER

*Q. Douce Mère, comment tirer de l'énergie en soi du dehors?*

*Q. Sweet Mother, how does one draw energy into oneself from outside?*

R. Cela dépend du genre d'énergie que l'on veut absorber, car à chaque région de l'être, correspond un genre d'énergie. Si c'est l'énergie physique c'est principalement par la respiration que nous l'absorbons et tout ce qui facilite et améliore la respiration augmente en même temps l'absorption de l'énergie physique.

Mais il y a beaucoup d'autres genres d'énergies ou plutôt beaucoup d'autres formes de l'Énergie qui est *une* et universelle.

## RÉPONSES-ANSWERS

Et c'est par les divers exercices yogiques de respiration, de méditation, de *jappa* et de concentration que l'on se met en rapport avec ces formes diverses de l'Énergie.

*A.* That depends on the kind of energy which one wants to absorb, for to each region of the being corresponds a kind of energy. If it is the physical energy it is principally by respiration that we absorb it and all that facilitates and improves respiration increases at the same time the absorption of the physical energy.

But there are many other kinds of energy or rather many other forms of the Energy which is *one* and universal.

And it is by the various yogic exercises of breathing, of meditation, of *japa* and of concentration that one puts oneself into communication with these diverse forms of Energy.

10-9-1959

THE MOTHER

*Q.* Douce Mère, quelles sont ces autres formes de l'énergie et comment est-ce-  
qu'elles nous aident dans notre *sadhana* ?

*Q.* Sweet Mother, what are the other forms of energy and how do they help  
us in our *sadhana* ?

*R.* Chaque région de l'être et chaque activité a ses énergies. On peut les classer de façon générale en énergies vitales, énergies mentales, énergies spirituelles. La science moderne nous dit que la matière n'est, en dernière analyse, que de l'énergie condensée.

Notre yoga étant intégral, toutes ces diverses formes ou espèces d'énergie sont indispensables à notre réalisation.

*A.* Each region of the being and each activity has its energies. One may classify them in a general way into vital energies, mental energies, spiritual energies. Modern science tells us that matter is, in the final analysis, only energy condensed.

Our yoga being integral, all these diverse forms or kinds of energy are indispensable to our realisation.

12-9-1959

THE MOTHER

*Q.* Douce Mère, comment est-ce-qu'on peut grandir notre personnalité  
psychique ?

*Q.* Sweet Mother, how does one make one's psychic personality grow ?



## MOTHER INDIA

R. C'est à travers toutes les expériences de la vie, que la personnalité psychique se forme, grandit, se développe et finalement devient un être complet, conscient et libre.

Ce processus de développement se continue inlassablement à travers des vies innombrables et si l'on n'en est pas conscient, c'est parce qu'on n'est pas conscient de son être psychique. Car c'est cela le point de départ indispensable. Par intériorisation et concentration on doit entrer en rapport conscient avec son être psychique. Cet être psychique a toujours une influence sur l'être extérieur, mais presque toujours cette influence est occulte, ni vue, ni perçue, ni sentie, excepté dans des occasions tout à fait exceptionnelles

Pour fortifier le contact et aider si possible au développement de la personnalité psychique consciente, il faut, en se concentrant, se tourner vers elle, aspirer à la connaître et à la sentir, s'ouvrir pour recevoir son influence et prendre grand soin, chaque fois qu'on reçoit d'elle une indication, de la suivre très scrupuleusement et très sincèrement. Vivre dans une grande aspiration, prendre soin de devenir calme intérieurement et de la rester toujours autant que possible, et cultiver une sincérité parfaite dans toutes les activités de son être—voilà les conditions essentielles pour la croissance de l'être psychique.

A. It is through all the experiences of life that the psychic personality forms, grows, develops and finally becomes a complete, conscious and free being.

This process of development continues tirelessly through innumerable lives and, if one is not conscious of it, it is because one is not conscious of one's psychic being. For, that is the indispensable starting point. By interiorisation and concentration one should enter into conscious contact with one's psychic being. This psychic being has always an influence on the outer being, but almost always the influence is occult, neither seen nor perceived nor felt, except on quite exceptional occasions.

In order to strengthen the contact and help if possible the development of the conscious psychic personality, it is necessary, while concentrating within oneself, to turn towards it, aspire to know it and to feel it, open oneself to receive its influence, and take great care, each time one receives an indication from it, to follow it very scrupulously and very sincerely. To live in a great aspiration, take care to become inwardly calm and remain so always as much as possible, and cultivate a perfect sincerity in all the activities of one's being—there you have the essential conditions for the growth of the psychic being.

10-9-1959

THE MOTHER

## 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. Here and there the material is slightly rearranged in the interests of unity of theme. 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 THIRTEEN

LAST time I spoke of falsetto, something forced in sound-expression, something that is not the natural body of a keen musical feeling. Falsetto in poetry can come not only when a poet indulges in polysyllables that have an imposing air. It can come even when he is monosyllabic and apparently unpretentious. Monosyllables and polysyllables can both be at fault and can both serve as a legitimate means.

We have several times mentioned them. Let us now ask : What functions in general do they perform ? Some special functions we have already touched upon. But in general we may say that their functions are according to the nature of the language they derive from. Polysyllables in English poetry derive mostly from Latin and Greek which have resonance and weight. The work they do, therefore, is to vivify things in their aspect of stability and wideness and splendour. Monosyllables in English poetry derive mostly from Anglo-Saxon which has an intimate ring and a lightness about it. The work they do, therefore, is to vivify things in their aspect of mobility and particularness and poignancy. Of course Anglo-Saxon speech is not exclusively monosyllabic, it is dissyllabic too and can even produce polysyllables; but it does so, very frequently, by combining a couple of words, either monosyllabic or dissyllabic. Thus in the Watson line already quoted,

The everlasting taciturnity,

“everlasting” is an Anglo-Saxon derivative while “taciturnity” is a Latin one.

The former falls only one syllable short of the latter—it has four syllables as against the other's five—but evidently two words, "ever" and "lasting", go to the making of it—the first a true dissyllable, the second such by forming a present participle from the monosyllabic verb "last". And we see, in the effect which the Anglo-Saxon adjective and the Latin noun produce together, part of the typical functions of Anglo-Saxonisms and Latinisms. "Taciturnity" provides the weight and the durableness and the amplitude of the night-sky's indifference and it does this with a suggestion of the inscrutable, the unseizable, because Latin words have an abstract atmosphere in English, something we cannot catch and examine with the outer mind. "Everlasting", with its greater nearness to our understanding, renders the taciturnity intimate to us so that, strangely enough, we come intimately to know how very indifferent to us the night-sky is ! If, instead of an Anglo-Saxonism, a Latinism long in its singleness or by a combination of two words had been used to convey the same meaning, we might have had a touch of ponderosity, an overdone and artificial effect. See how a wholly Latinised version of Watson's phrase would work :

The sempiternal taciturnity.

It is too stony. The taciturnity, instead of being a remote living presence, grows an aloof deadness, and we feel oppressed rather than awed. The pairing of an Anglo-Saxon word with a Latin gives Watson's original version its true grandeur. Some of the best English lines depend on this kind of pairing for their excellence. Shakespeare often uses for even the same sense two words, one Anglo-Saxon, the other Latin—as in: "the head and front of my offence."

There have been enthusiasts of Latinity and there have been extremists of Anglo-Saxonry. Leigh Hunt has written a condemnation of Latin derivatives in English and a recommendation for the employment of the Anglo-Saxon element alone. But the brief passage in which he has done so contains no less than thirty-five words of Latin extraction, making about one-half of the passage ! This shows how impossible at present it is to sift the language of either the one element or the other. Barnes, carrying the Anglo-Saxon mania to its climax, believes that we should do the sifting at all costs. He rejects the Latin term "adjective" for a word showing the quality of a thing and suggests the Anglo-Saxonism : "markword of suchness." Degrees of comparison he would like to rechristen "pitchmarks", and quite seriously he tells us that "pitchmarks offmark sundry things by their sundry suchnesses." He also offers Anglo-Saxon alternatives to several words. "Carnivorous" must become "flesh-eatsome"; "butler" change to "cellar-thane"; "electricity" convert into "fire-ghost"; "criticism" be purified into "deemsterhood". "Syllogism" also is

## TALKS NO POETRY

taken up for transformation. You know what a syllogism is. It is a logical process consisting of three steps—the first is called the Major Premise, the second the Minor Premise and the third the Conclusion. Example:

A peacock has two legs.  
A poet has two legs.  
Therefore a poet is a peacock.

Of course this is a fallacy, but the form can be illustrated by it just as well as by a correct argument: besides, the conclusion though logically fallacious is not psychologically quite absurd. Now Barnes replaces “syllogism” by “a redeshup of three thought-puttings”.

The English language does not appear to gain much by this kind of round-about awkwardness. But the pairing of a Latin with an Anglo-Saxon word is not the only happy result of the two elements. Sometimes a number of Latin words more or less in succession can constitute an especially expressive unit if this unit is succeeded by another in which Anglo-Saxon words make the whole sum or at least predominate. I have already cited the Hamlet-line,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

a line which gives us an actual difficulty in breathing by its packed stresses and consonants. This line is preceded by a predominantly Latinised verse which again comes after an Anglo-Saxonised one. The entire speech addressed to Hamlet's bosom-friend Horatio is :

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity a while  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain  
To tell my story...

The first line is direct and touching. The second has a serious sonority matched with a splendid smoothness and brings home to us by its temper and tone and texture the sense of the serene beatitude from which Horatio is asked to stay away for a short duration as well as the sense of the calm dignified Stoical resolve by which the staying away is to be accomplished. But the actual state of staying away, the sorrow which is the consequence of Horatio's refraining from the self-slaughter which would make him follow Hamlet out of the world—these things are not driven into us : they come in the next line with an intimate acuteness which is the special power of well-chosen Anglo-Saxon speech.

In the fourth semi-line we have an Anglo-Saxon verb with a Latin noun as its object. This verb has a directness, that noun has a dignity. Both are appropriate. What Halmet has done in his lifetime is no small or trivial matter : it deserves to be called a story and not a tale : "to tell my tale" sounds somewhat ridiculous if not quite like "to pull my tail" ! But this story must be given to mankind in all its living glow and gloom, so that their hearts may be moved to understanding and not only their minds interested to examine the significance. The Anglo-Saxon "tell" has a straightforward heart-to-heart emphasis which could not be bettered.

I may quote an instance in which the word "tale" rather than "story" is the inevitable expression. In *Macbeth* Shakespeare has some lines etching out a desperate pessimism. Towards the close of the passage Macbeth says about life :

it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury  
Signifying nothing.

"Story" would have been quite in the wrong taste and spoiled the passionate contemptuous immediacy of the utterance. It would also have made a semi-rhyme with "fury" and brought in a sort of jingle entirely out of place in that moment of Macbeth's desperation. But the Latinism "Signifying" in the final two-word phrase is in the correct taste, particularly in conjunction with the Anglo-Saxonism "nothing". The long and impressive "Signifying" suggests the fullness that is spoken of in the previous line : of course sound and fury constitute life's tale, but there is a lot of them and the tale is long-drawn-out with empty noise intensely made, and this fullness without any point in it is hit off by combining the impressiveness of the long-drawn-out present participle with the blunt homeliness of the noun that is its object—the Anglo-Saxon noun "nothing" which serves as a fit anti-climax to the expectation raised by "Signifying". Reverse the places of the Latinism and the Anglo-Saxonism and see what a poor effect you get. If the verb were short and Anglo-Saxon and the noun lengthy and Latin, the intense and moving "Signifying nothing" would be replaced by the flat and almost facetious "Meaning a nullity".

I shall now point your attention to some other modes of kindling to the poetic wonder. Coventry Patmore—who perhaps has not received the praise which he deserves and which perhaps his very name shows him as desiring ("Pat more")—distinguishes the poetic phrase under three heads : piquancy, felicity, magnificence. And he remarks that the supreme phrase of poetry mingles all these qualities in various measures. Let us briefly define these

terms. Piquancy in poetry is an agreeable sharpness, a pleasantly disturbing irritant, a sort of fine paradoxicality. "Felicity" is a term very often used for all kinds of appropriate poetic expressions. In a special sense distinct from what the other two terms connote, felicity in poetry is a strikingly apt delightfulness which does not stimulate as piquancy does but which, even when ingeniousness is present, causes a deep satisfaction with the keen beauty-part of the utterance. Magnificence is a power widening and enrichening the vision : it has an overwhelming rather than a stimulating or a delighting loveliness, it is a bold lavishness though what is lavished is yet well-organised.

Piquancy operates its fine paradoxicality most often by a transference of function between two things, achieved either in a simple manner or by a complex vision. Most directly it takes the form of an epigram with a puzzling point to which it comes from a certain depth of significance. A well-known case is Wordsworth's

The Child is father of the Man,

telling us that the psychological developments in our life have their origin in the nature of the temperament and the mode of inner response we had in our early years. It is a case of true poetic piquancy, for it is not there just to amuse or even dazzle : it sums up in a sharp statement a lifetime's continuity of Nature-love at once happy and reverential, a Nature-love vivified for us at the very beginning of the short poem where that continuity is put before us :

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky.

The epigram is poetically piquant also because it is not involved in an elaborate cleverness overdoing the effect. An elaborate cleverness is not in itself reprehensible : the seventeenth-century poet John Donne succeeds often by a curiously worked-out wit which is still poetry by being charged with a fine feeling. But I may here illustrate what piquancy should avoid being. I shall offer an example in which it runs riot, almost goes mad.

Sidgwick has imagined what Swinburne with his complicated and musically repetitive style would have made of Wordsworth's straightforward paradox. Swinburne would have excitedly produced a sort of rapturously ridiculous riddle :

The manner of man by the boy begotten  
Is son to the child that his sire begets  
And sire to the child of his father's son.

## MOTHER INDIA

At first look I got quite bewildered when I struck upon this. Working out family-relations is always a hard job for a mere man. Women are experts at it and I had to consult my wife in order to get the right hang of the branches in Swinburne's family-tree. It seems one can find one's way through the tangles if one fastens on the meaning of two expressions : "his sire" in the second line and "his father's son" in the third. The former signifies the man's father : the child that the man's father begets is the man himself in his childhood. The latter expression signifies the man himself : he is said to be the father or sire to his own child. Untwisted, the Swinburnian statement amounts to this : the kind of man whose father is the child that he himself once was is the son whose father is that very child of some years ago and this man is also the father of his own child. In other words, while physically a man is the child of his own father and the father of his own child, psychologically the child that he himself was is the father of the man that he now is. I hope I am not making the confusion worse confounded. It is much easier explaining what piquancy is than illustrating it *à la* Swinburne.

AMAL KIRAN  
(K. D. SETHNA)

# SRI AUROBINDO'S *VASAVADUTTA*

## A COMMENTARY

### IV

THE psychicised vital personality is an altogether new type which has not yet become a part of the human race-consciousness. Its self-law and self-being, Swabhava and Swadharmā, are not in tune with those of the well-established and well-recognised mental personality completely dominated by one of the three modes of Nature's working—tamas or inertia, rajas or kinesis, and sattwa or poise. No wonder then that the other characters in the play look upon this Child with a strange fascination and perplexed or blindly cocksure gaze. It is only when the surface mental being falls quiet and gives a chance for the deeper insight or intuition to send its intimations that any understanding of him is possible and if this habit of mental silence and openness to the depths of one's being is not sustained, the light of understanding may pass into the light or darkness of common day.

Rebha's tamasic physical mind which feels it has no right to use his brain, save for the swift way to fulfil the proud and absolute mandate of his master does not bother to know Vuthsa at all. Roomunwath's rajasic physical mind does not believe in Yougundharayan's belief in Vuthsa's potentialities and it asks the minister to 'Nourish not such large hopes'. It can say of Vuthsa's conduct with Gopalaca at the same time :

Vuthsa is ensnared

As with a sudden charm.

and

Yet was this nobly done on Vuthsa's part.

It can only wonder if Vuthsa's message and command, that no war should sound without his leave because he will rescue himself, was madness or careless levity.

Vicurna's noble vital-physical mind cannot focus on any other aspect of Vuthsa's personality except that of a soldier in the battlefield and is impatient that he should be released in order that he might be subdued in proud war.

The impure externalising vital mind of impulsive and stern Mahasegu is indulging in dreams of vast empires and arrogant domination and therefore



## MOTHER INDIA

could look upon Vuthsa only as a luxurious boy, a sensual enjoying aesthete :

Once here ! his senses are enamoured slaves  
To the touch of every beautiful thing. O, there  
No hero, but a tender soul at play,  
A soft-eyed, mirthful and luxurious youth  
Whom all sweet sounds and all sweet sights compel  
To careless ecstasy. Wine, music, flowers  
And a girl's dawning smile can weave him chains  
Of vernal softness stronger than bonds can give  
Of unyielding iron. Two lips shall seal his strength,  
Two eyes of all his acts be tyrant stars.

Vuthsa's speech which tells him that there is a kingship which exceeds the king only evokes this revealing reply :

Thou speakest like the unripe boy thou seemst,  
With thoughts high-winged ; grown minds keep to earth's  
More humble sureness and prefer to touch.  
I am content to have thy gracious body here,  
This earth of kingship ; for with that I deal  
And not with any high and formless thought.

Mahasegu continues, grandiosely dreaming :

But now I will make all my royal days  
A high continual solemn sacrifice of kingship.  
Thee, who art Bharuth's heir, a high-throned son  
Of emperors and my equal in the world,  
All thy long time I will superbly keep  
Ornament and emblem of my arrogant greatness,  
A royal serf of my proud house.

Vuthsa is only 'a charming boy, who vaunts and yields'.

To Alurca's artistic imagination

This boy between  
Like a girl's cherished puppet stroked and dandled,  
Chud and prescribed the postures it must keep,  
Moves like a rhythmic picture of delight  
And with his sunny smile he does it all.  
Now in our little kingdom with its law  
Of beauty and music this high silence comes  
And seizes on him.

SRI AUROBINDO'S "VASAVADUTTA"

The contrast between this fragile boy and his heroic ancestors is so glaring to his perception :

Yet consider this.  
Look back upon the endless godlike line.  
Think of Parikshit, Janmejoya, think  
Of Sathaneka, then on our Vuthsa gaze,  
Glacier and rock and all Himaloy piled !  
What eagle peaks ! Now this soft valley blooms ;  
The cuckoo cries from branches of delight,  
The bee sails murmuring its low-winged desires.

He cannot understand the love beyond possessiveness and so complains to Vuthsa :

Thou takest all hearts and givest thine to none,  
Udayan. Yet is this prince Gopalaca,  
This breed from Titans and from Mahasegu,  
Hard, stern, reserved. Does he repay thy friendship  
As we do ?

Gopalaca, the clever intellectual, young but developing fast in the arts of diplomacy and becoming a master of Simulation and Dissimulation by assiduous practice, thinks that he can exploit Vuthsa's generous heart only to find that he, however willingly, has to play into his hands. He does not see any possible sign of growth in greatness or sustained heroism in Vuthsa.

cf.,

The greatness in him cannot grow to man.  
Excused from effort and propped on difficult ascent  
Birds that are brilliant-winged fly near to earth.  
His hero hours are rare forgetful flights.  
Wine, song and dance winging his peaceful days  
Throng round his careless soul, it cannot find  
The noble leisure to grow great.

Yougundharayan's pure intellect is gifted with occasional insights into Vuthsa's character which he cherishes and acts upon—compare his belief in the hidden potentialities in Vuthsa :

## MOTHER INDIA

I see his strength lie covered sleeping in his years  
Yet is a greatness hidden in his years.

and

Well, play thy time. Thou art a royal child,  
And though young Nature in thee dalies long,  
I trust her dumb and wiser brain that sees  
What our loud thoughts can never reason out,  
Not thinking life. She has her secret calls  
And works divinely behind play and sleep,  
Shaping her infant powers.

But his is not a mind which is intuitivised or always and attentively open to insight. His surface mind is that of a mature statesman, a truly scientific and cultured mind and an idealistic temper but considerably seasoned by the hard realities of the world and the harder realities of human temperament with its hideous subconscious and animal roots :

Nature must flower into art  
And science, or else wherefore are we men ?  
Man out of Nature wakes to God's complexities,  
Takes her crude simple stuff and by his skill  
Turns things impossible into daily miracles.

When he is in the thick of active life this mind of caution reacts first and even when he receives intuitions from within in the form of guesses, this mind of prudence asserts itself.

cf.,

Hope not to hear truth often in royal courts.  
Truth ! Seldom with her bright and burning wand  
She touches the unwilling lips of men  
Who lust and hope and fear. The gods alone  
Possess her. Even our profoundest thoughts  
Are crooked to avoid her and from her touch  
Crawl hurt into their twilight, often hating her  
Too bright for them as for our eyes the sun.  
If she dwells here, it is with souls apart.

and

He throws himself into his foeman's lair  
Alone and scorning every aid. I guess

SRI AUROBINDO'S "VASAVADUTTA"

His purpose, but it's rash, it's rash. What if  
He failed ? This boy and iron Mahasegu !  
And yet we must obey.

And he will do his duty by his king by keeping ready the army and sending spies into Avunthie.

It will be vain. At least my spies shall pierce  
Their inmost chambers, even in his prison  
My help be near.

Though the prudent intellect is the groundswell in his actions he is not a stranger to the tunes of Insight and Intuition.

Vasuntha is the satirist with the philosophical mind, a mind which has nourished itself in intuitive and spiritual philosophies though he canalises these insights for his satirical bent of mind. He receives intuitions or at least focusses on the right inner perceptions though he does not make proper use of them in his understanding of Vuthsa. His own surmise of Vuthsa's wisdom—'Because he seeks each thing in its own way, He enjoys'—he does not remember or make use of. Hence his shock at Vuthsa's behaviour with Gopalaca. Or perhaps this pretence of non-understanding is part of the strategy of the philosophical satirist. Anyway Vuthsa enjoys his intellectual companionship thoroughly well.

But Munjoolica with her pure vital mind and Ungarica with her occult vision understand Vuthsa almost completely and even anticipate his feelings, thoughts and plans and assist him. Ungarica says this about herself :

No, I obey and watch.  
It is enough for me in your strange world.  
For by your light I cannot guide myself.  
Man is a creature, blinded by the sun,  
Who errs by vision; but the world to you  
That's darkness, they who walk there, they have sight.  
Such am I; for the shades have reared my soul.

She is the daughter of a Titan of the Underworld and Mahasegu dragged her alarmed out of the dim world into our sun and azure skies by force. Hence she could see what is behind and preparing itself for manifestation in the outer world. The occult or the subliminal is nearer the psychic and so she could recognise Vuthsa as the first man of the age, Vasavadutta as the Wave which

## MOTHER INDIA

shall overflow this lily of a Vuthsa. She could foresee the passionate vital-physical communion in love of Vuthsa and Vasavadutta and so could console her daughter ; she could counsel patience to Vicurna to await the hour when Vuthsa shall demand his aid. She knows that Vuthsa has kept the Aryan law and that no host on earth can prevail against Vuthsa and Vicurna. Her complete understanding of Vuthsa makes her contradict her husband's blind and boastful observations and ambitious dreams and therefore remain the "loved sceptic of his house," but the prayerful well-wisher of its members :

May those who drink be one  
In heart and great and loving all their days  
Favoured by Shiva and by Luxmie blest  
Until the end and far beyond.

## V

Real understanding is seeing another in one's consciousness and if one's consciousness is not wide enough to receive, take in and include that other but is rigidly organised to the extent of becoming a wall of separation between the subject and the object there will only be a refraction or even dispersion of the seen, a highly coloured and dangerously distorted version of the original. The nature of this rigid fixation does not seem to matter at all—a fixation in mental ignorance like that of Mahasegu or the fixation in mental knowledge of ratiocination like that of the surface formation in the personality of Yougundharayan. With the result that all the characters with such an orientation find it difficult not only to understand the Psychic personality but even the other mental personalities belonging to their world. Mahasegu is the worst sufferer, for he is practically shut up in the prison of his dreaming vital self so that he feels at the end that almost everybody has turned against his honour and interest and Gopalaca 'too has his leisure'. But even Yougundharayan is no exception, for his very rationalism prevents him from understanding the occult personality of Ungarica. Action in this harsh world therefore seems to have its basis not on mutual understanding but mutual imperfect understanding and misunderstanding or at best on fixed mental rules of conduct or a theory of ideas. But 'Grey is all Theory ; Green grows the Tree of Life'. And if we are to believe Yougundharayan and Ungarica, the golden age is past and there are only rare manifestations of unselfishness and nobility in the real world :

SRI AUROBINDO'S "VASAVADUTTA"

Sweet virtue now is mother of defeat  
And baser, fiercer souls inherit earth.

.....

This too is well

And most that the proud chivalries of old  
Are not yet dead in all men's hearts. O God  
Shiva, thou mak'st me fortunate in my sons.

Mahasegu's frank confession to his son Gopalaca but with a determination to pursue his way is proof of the setting of the iron age :

I have a way

Not noble like the sounding paths of war.

No wonder Vuthsa feels that the schemings of the politicians 'have made God's world an office and a mart'. The Psychic way is lost and the Sattwic moral foundations of society are crumbling to pieces and disharmony is looming large everywhere.

But it is the hour of the divine Child Vuthsa and the dower of the Giver of Light, Vasavadutta. In them at least the ancient feud between the Spirit and Matter has ceased and the one has become a fit and noble material out of which the other weaves its garb. Their bodies are so plastic to the touch of the inner being that the inward beauty is reflected in the golden exterior. He is 'a golden marvellous boy' and she is 'Avunthie's golden princess'. They have 'the harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the thoughts and feelings, harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement, harmony and beauty of the life and surroundings'. They have 'the affinity to the rhythms of the secret world-bliss and response to the call of the All-Beautiful'. They become the centre of radiation of Love and Beauty. Vuthsa unifies the hearts of all in Cowsambie as Vasavadutta does those of all in Avunthie and with the growth of their personalities and union the two countries are unified. The play begins in disharmony but ends in harmony and the presiding Goddess of this world is Mother Luxmie whose earthly emanation and instrument is Vasavadutta. That is what all the characters feel and the divine Child has the last word in the play :

Ride thou, Alurca, near us ; let thy harp  
Speak of love's anthems and her golden life  
To Vasavadutta. Love, the storm is past,  
The peril o'er. Now we shall glide, my queen,  
Through green-gold woods and between golden fields  
To float for ever in a golden dream,  
O earth's gold Luxmie, till the shining gates  
Eternal open to us thy heavenly home.

M. V. SEETARAMAN.

## TO THE CHILDREN OF THE " GREEN GROUP "

(DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM)

DEAR SWEET CHILDREN,

You are our hope, you are our future. You will actualise what we are dreaming, you will see the fulfilment for which we are struggling, you will walk on the path that we are building against so many odds and such tremendous resistance.

You are born to participate in a great work. You have come here to fulfil a great mission. Like a thousand suns, you will radiate light, remove darkness and confusion from every corner of this earth and build up the world of tomorrow. The whole world eagerly waits to see how you become all-luminous and all-powerful and how you help to pull it up from its morass of misery and darkness.

For a great work like this you need, naturally, a vast preparation. Your soul must be fully awakened and must guide the rest of your being at every step. Your mind must be sufficiently developed and organised. You must be full of well-controlled life-energy. Your body must be strong, healthy and beautiful.

The Mother has made all possible arrangements for your full growth and development and you have only to make use of the opportunities. Known or unknown to you, She is working all the time, within your hearts, so that you may get conscious of your soul, the truth of your being, and thus become aware of your mission on this earth. With the growth of this consciousness you begin to feel the powerful aspiration of the soul within your heart which goes on burning like a big flame, presses the rest of the being to grow in tune with it and guides you all the time in your march towards progress and perfection. In the school all arrangements have been made so that your mind may get sufficiently developed, powerful and organised in order to receive and express the Divine Knowledge that seeks to manifest through you. Your programme of physical education, through all kinds of games, sports and physical exercises, aims to give you a strong, healthy and beautiful body. The healthy state of the mind and body thus achieved, together with the inner and outer discipline that you are encouraged to practise here in the Ashram, will generate, accumulate and preserve within you a tremendous store of power

TO THE CHILDREN OF THE "GREEN GROUP"

and energy. Its successful application in any branch of endeavour, under the guidance of your soul and in collaboration with the other parts of your being, will enable you to make the impossible a possible.

But you must not forget that whatever you do, you have to do it with your body and if it is healthy and strong it will be able to do its work most efficiently. To keep the body in good condition you have to take great care of it. You must keep it clean, give it proper food at regular intervals, give it sufficient sleep and rest, give it proper work and exercise, and you must remain happy and cheerful all the time.

The teachers of your school, the captains of your groups are working hard for you. If you fully collaborate with them the progress will be much more fast. Keep it always in your mind that you have a great mission to fulfil and you are passing through a stage of preparation for that work. You must properly utilise each moment of your time. Your work is to eat well, to sleep and rest well, to prepare your lessons well, to play and exercise well and, if you can, do some useful work for the Mother. Keep too your inside as clean as possible, remain happy and cheerful, keep full confidence in the Mother's workings and She will do everything else for you.

7-I-60

PRANAB BHATTACHARYA



## THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PHILOSOPHY

*(A summary of the Presidential Address at the Akhil Bharatiya Darshan Parishad—5th Annual Conference, November 1959.)*

PHILOSOPHY has been called in India 'Darshan', a seeing, a direct happy perception and experience of Truth and Reality. Intellectual quest too was given its own legitimate place. Mind has its own seeking and it must be allowed a full play. But in India, as it were, it recognised that the culmination and the fulfilment of its activity consisted in an intuitive perception of the Ultimate, the Supreme, the One in all, the True and the Real.

This approach and basic position yielded here a rich reward in cultural life. Intellect recognised a higher instrumentation of knowledge than itself and, therefore, did not get lost in its own discursive activity. And this higher instrumentation, the intuitive perception of the One, the Whole, the Ultimate behind all appearances seemed to Indian life and knowledge a continuing inspiration and guidance of unity.

In the West today, the greatest catastrophe is the absence of unity in life and knowledge. An intellect, taking itself to be the highest, has carried on its discursive activity endlessly and the result is an enormous ramification of ideas, which we have become accustomed to call knowledge. But, in truth, how can a system of ideas constitute knowledge without a sense of unity and proportion? All our modern scientific knowledge is avowedly a knowledge of the relative or rather a relative knowledge of the relative. But the Indian philosophical perception has affirmed: how can we know the relative unless we know the absolute or know the empirical unless we know the Ultimate? Is the modern crisis of life and knowledge not essentially due to the failure of this philosophical insight? Do we not today need more than anything else a sense of unity and oneness in life as well as knowledge?

India is today seeking to rebuild herself and great aspirations and inspirations seem to be secretly and overtly moving her. But can this task of reconstruction be handled in a superficial sort of way? Will it satisfy the soul of India? The Indian temperament is essentially a fundamentalist temperament. It seeks to go to the root of a matter. And, therefore, all our problems—and these are numerous—of unity and national integration, of many languages, of lesser loyalties, of the individual and society, of a democratic secular state, of many communities and the nation, of India and the world, of religious

## THE TRUE SPIRIT OF PHILOSOPHY

traditions and modern life, etc., need to be considered calmly and deeply, with full account taken of the fundamental urges of our life and the ultimate satisfactions which they seek.

A deep spirit of philosophy inspired India in the best creative periods of her history. And that is how such wonderful foundations of undying cultural life could be laid. If India really wants to recreate herself today then our first need is the reawakening of our true spirit of philosophy, our deepest perceptions of life and existence. In the light of these, we shall have to consider our problems, and the solutions thus found could alone have a chance of satisfying us. India is determined by her temperament and she can never be happy if she seeks to manage her life in a superficial, short-sighted, imitative way.

In India religion and philosophy have had a unique harmony. Philosophy enlightened religion and religion invigorated philosophy. But when life became traditional, philosophical thinking decayed and religion became blind faith and mechanical routine. Today when the nation seeks the fullest life it has ever enjoyed, evidently the philosophical spirit gone dry in religion must come to its own. Then alone will the deepest springs of action and life begin to throb again in the hearts of the Indian people.

Akhil Bharatiya Darshan Parishad has evidently a great task before it. It is that of awakening the true spirit of philosophy in India, of energising the essential temperament of our people.

Since the time of Ram Mohan Roy, leaders of Indian thought and life have striven to recreate the new India. In most cases the principal motive was social reform or political liberation. Sri Aurobindo primarily proceeded from a basic perception of truth and reality. Here was avowedly a deeper philosophical approach to the problem of the regeneration of Indian life. In fact, those basic perceptions of truth and reality constitute our contemporary contribution to the world. And they consist principally of these concepts, the concept of integral knowledge, integral personality, integral culture of man and integral experience of the Divine. These convey to the modern divided world and life a message of essential unity and oneness.

In the rebirth of the true spirit of philosophy in India, Sri Aurobindo is obviously a great moment. He accepts our past philosophical traditions, thinks out of those premises, and recreates them in full awareness of the contemporary situation of India and the world. He makes traditional Indian philosophy a living force, ready and confident to guide life once again.

This example is our great help in the upsurge of life in the country, which we want to assist through the rebirth of the true spirit of philosophy.

INDRA SEN

## PLATO

(Continued from the January issue)

### THE THEORY OF THE GOOD

THE concept of the Good is the culmination of Plato's philosophy. There is, according to Plato, a distinction between reality and appearance. The former is the universal and the permanent, the latter particular and transient; the former is the object of true knowledge, the latter the object of either imagination or opinion. The world as we perceive, according to Plato, is relative and therefore incapable of being known absolutely and therefore truly. Particulars, according to him, possess contradictory qualities; a thing which we might call beautiful has some element of ugliness too; it is not pure and ideal and unmixed Beauty; what is smaller as compared to one thing is bigger as compared to another; it is therefore at once smaller and bigger; it is relative. Finally, particulars are constantly in the flux and therefore constantly change their nature; they are therefore being-non-being.

Particulars are, according to Plato, the objects of perception, and perception, he contends, is not knowledge. In his dialogue *Theaetetus*, he points out that comparison, knowledge of existence and understanding of number are essential to knowledge but they cannot be perceived by senses. We speak, for instance, of two things being unequal, but this presupposes an idea of equality which is not derived from perception, since there are no two things exactly equal to each other. We know, for instance, that colour is different from sound, but there is no sense-organ which can perceive both. There must therefore be a faculty higher than sense-organs which is capable both of perceiving things directly without any aid of sense-organs as well as of making use of sense-organs. Moreover, an essential object of knowledge is existence, and this we do not perceive by sense-organs; it is the mind which directly reaches existence. Plato concludes that perception is not knowledge, because "it has not part in apprehending truth, since it has none in apprehending existence."

That which the higher faculty perceives directly is, according to Plato, the essential and universal element in the particular. This element he calls the Idea or the Form. Pertaining to each characteristic of a particular thing there is a universal Idea by participating in which the particular thing is

what it is. Indeed, each particular thing has many characteristics, and therefore each particular should be regarded as participating in many universal Ideas. A cat, for instance, partakes of the universal cattiness, but also of Beauty, Blackness, and so on. A particular cat may die but the universal Ideas of which it partakes are permanent; they are eternal.

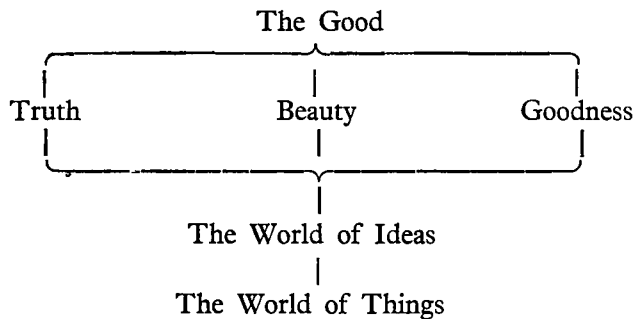
These Ideas are, according to Plato, typical or ideal; things of the world are copies of these Ideas; they reflect or imitate them and become what they are. But the original stuff of the particulars, the substance which imitates and reflects the Ideas, is Matter which is indefinable since it is something of the nature of non-being. It is a non-entity which, however, is and partakes of the universal Ideas. Particulars are not the manifestations of the universals, nor are universals made of the particulars; Ideas are self-existent and uncreated; the original stuff of the particulars too is self-existent and uncreated, but this self-existent is non-existent and attains to being only by partaking of the universal Ideas.

Obviously, one feels here the limitation of Plato's theory. A self-existent which is non-existent is a self-contradiction; it is inconceivable and therefore something that cannot be. If it is really non-existent what is it that partakes of the Ideas? And can the non-existent ever attain to being? Plato would say that perhaps it cannot and it does not and therefore it is neither being nor non-being; object not of knowledge but only of opinion. It is a mere appearance. But still, if it is an appearance, it must in some sense be. And if it is, it must be related to the Ideas and by that relation would form a unity of a total existence or Reality.

There are several other difficulties too with respect to this theory. In fact, Plato himself is aware of them. Indeed, we find that he puts in his *Parmenides* certain objections to his own theory of Ideas. The first argument relates to the question whether the particular partakes of the whole Idea or only of a part. It is argued that if it is the former, one thing is at many places at once; if the latter, the Idea is divisible, and a thing which is a part of smallness will be smaller than absolute smallness, which is absurd. The second argument is the same as Aristotle's argument of "the third man". It states that since there is a similarity between the thing and the Idea of which it partakes, there must still be another Idea to explain this similarity; and if there is such another Idea, there will be similarity between these two, to explain which there will be the need to posit a still further Idea and *ad infinitum*. There is still a third argument which points out that since everything in the world has a corresponding Idea, there must be Ideas corresponding to hair, mud and dirt as well, an argument which is rejected not on any rational ground but only with indignation. According to a further argument, if Ideas are thoughts,

thoughts must be *of* something and therefore they cannot be ultimate. There are still some more arguments which, however, are not so important.

All these arguments point to the difficulty of reconciling the universal and the particular. And in *Parmenides* itself, Plato seems to be struggling to arrive at some solution. For although the dialogue is inconclusive, he at least shows the impossibility of assuming the One only or the Many only as the ultimate reality; for he argues that if the One is, many cannot be and if the Many are, the One cannot be. In the *Sophist*, he attempts to show how the Being and the Non-Being can coexist and on this basis he even goes to show how even the Ideas themselves could be synthesised and harmonised into a unity. And in Plato's concept of the Good, we find a principle of the supreme harmonisation of all the Ideas. A philosopher, according to Plato, is one who is engaged in the task of synthesising the Ideas and in perceiving them as the manifestations of the three highest Ideas of Truth, Beauty and Goodness which in turn are united in the supreme Idea of the Good. The Good, according to Plato, is not essence, "but far exceeds essence in dignity and power". At places we get the impression that the Good, according to Plato, is the Supreme Reality which is the source of all, including even the particulars. And indeed, if the Universal Ideas are so many forms of the Good, there is no logical impossibility in affirming that particulars are the still further forms of the Universal Ideas. We would then get a hierarchy of the totality of existence as tabulated below :



But we find in Plato the strain of a double-thought. There are places such as in the allegory of the den, where he compares the Good with the Sun and gives an impression that it is the source of all things; but there are other places such as in the *Timaeus* where he seems to think that the Good is the source only of Ideas and not of things. It is this double-thought which makes it difficult for us to be precise about Plato's position with regard to the Good.

The problem of reconciling the universals and particulars has bewildered philosophers up to the present day. They have arrived either at an ultimate

dualism or at a monism in which particulars are pronounced to be ultimately illusory. Plato who seems to be aware of the difficulties of either position does not commit himself clearly to any position but leaves certain loose ends which can be developed further in the future.

If we consider the problem of the universals and the particulars, it seems that it arises because we attempt to measure the infinite and the universal in terms of the finite and the particular. The particulars are one thing and none other at one 'here' and 'now' and in a certain definite sense; but even they, when analysed fully, turn out to have an infinite complexity impossible to measure in terms of finitude; in each particular there are many aspects co-existing and at the vanishing-point of each finite we find the whole infinite containing in it all contradictions and oppositions. If, on the other hand, we begin with the infinite and affirm its existence, we cannot label it with any limitation; we cannot then say it must be one thing and one thing alone and incapable of being anything else. For the infinite is the ultimate meaning of all things and therefore the substance of all. In logical terms, it is the affirmation of all propositions. There is no proposition which cannot be made of the infinite; therefore of it, it can be true to say that it is at once universal and particular. In this view, therefore, there is no necessity to posit an entity opposed to the universal and the infinite in order to account for the origin of particulars. The particular is the eternal form of the infinite and the universal; for the infinite, we can say with Plato, "is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power."

If the infinite is not only an essence but a power of self-formation in infinite number of forms, each particular is essentially the infinite but unique and particular in form and name; the process of self-formation does not proceed by the division of the infinite and therefore the infinite remains undivided even in its self-formations; but each self-formation is a form and power of the infinite manifesting in Time and Space; each particular therefore occupies a definite and limited position in Space-Time. On this view, we have the reply to the first argument levelled in the *Parmenides* against the Theory of Ideas.

The argument of the "third man" too could be met by pointing out that similarity between the two is not the cause of an Idea but the effect of it; therefore when we explain the similarity between two things by positing a universal Idea, not only is the similarity between two things but also their similarity with the Universal Idea is explained.

As to the question whether there is any typical mud or dirt, Plato could not adduce any rational ground for the rejection of the suggestion because he was not able to reconcile the world of Ideas with the imperfections of the world. It is indeed possible to reconcile the two, but not in the framework of Plato's

## MOTHER INDIA

theory; it has to be greatly enlarged and we have to introduce many concepts such as of Evolution and others and thus modify the original Platonic theory, a task which falls outside the scope of this essay.

But in spite of these defects, Plato's idea that particulars have in them the Universal Ideas which are suprasensible and that these Ideas form a unity of the Supreme Good can still be accepted as valid, unless we refuse to go beyond the evidence of the senses; but in the face of the growing evidence of the supraphysical phenomena, the refusal of the senses is becoming less and less formidable and the mind is being prepared to arrive at a loftier and more idealistic view of the world. In this process, Plato's concept of the Good is bound to find its proper revaluation and acceptance as a great truth of the ultimate reality.

*(Concluded)*

MOHINI M. DADLANI

## GARBA SONGS

### SCORCHING SUMMER AND PRAYER FOR RAIN

(1)

You have wakened a terrible thirst, O burning sky,  
There thirst the dried up forests, the flame-laden winds,  
An all-consuming fire roars over the hills;  
Each particle of dust is a living spark.

The cry for water rises up from all :  
The buried seeds pray for the nectared drop,  
The baked-up day desires the drenching shower;  
The thirsty restless night allayment seeks.

All living creatures thirst for liquid life,  
All nature yearns for Rain-god's generous grace;  
With eyes upturned and hope upraised in prayer  
A crowded cry calls on, "O rain, O rain!"

(2)

Come, hurry up, my yoke-mates, black and white,  
My graceful bulls; the cloud hangs over our heads :  
One like the cloud, and the other lightning bright,  
Oh, beautiful pair, my brethren, hurry up.

The rumbling cloud surrounds yon mountain top,  
And with its grace our fields are overspread;  
It calls on the eager peacock rampart-poised;  
The fragrance rises up from earth refreshed.

Come, let us go, we three, and make the fields  
All green with emeralds strewn in deft designs;  
And with the fields make green our dreary life,  
A dance of Krishna's beauty and delight.



MOTHER INDIA

THE FLOATING LIGHT

A floating light is borne along  
World's waters' ceaseless streams;  
Its very sight is joy of joys,  
The dream divine of dreams.

A lotus-flame in eddies caught  
And tossed about by wind,  
It rides upon the restless waves  
Through darkness undefined.

Bright is its smile, a beauty true;  
At times it looks like lost;  
But soon it spreads over earth and heaven,  
A glory uttermost.

No human hands have woven its wick;  
Self-lighted doth it shine;  
No smoke, no worthless residue;  
'Tis light, the light divine.

PUJALAL

# THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

## Act I

### Scene I

*(The Abode of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. Mind is not born there. The One without a second and the Mother of the Trinity are rapt in trance in the holy Fire. The teeming Gods go round the Infinite and the Mother of the Golden All, singing anthems to them.)*

1ST BAND OF THE GODS :

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।  
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥

The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant lid; that do thou remove,  
O Fosterer, for the law of the Truth, for sight.<sup>1</sup>

2ND BAND :

असतो मा सद्गमय ॥  
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥  
मृत्योर्माञ्जुतं गमय ॥  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।  
तथास्तु

From the non-being to true being,  
From the darkness to the Light,  
From death to Immortality.  
OM. Peace ! Peace ! Peace !  
So be it.<sup>2</sup>

*(Their creation has compelled the primeval parents to descend on the earth for the Divine Play and thus to terminate the earth's ceaseless pangs.)*

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo's translation.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

BRAHMA : It is I who create. None save I is the Infinite's creative Power.  
Therefore no equal have I.

VISHNU : It is I who uphold. I am His preserving Power. Hence matchless  
am I.

SIVA : I am Rudra. I am His force of Destruction. Boundless also is my  
Compassion for the doleful earth. It is I who lead the earth and her child-  
ren towards a new creation. Therefore unique am I.

BRAHMA : Earth sows, Heaven reaps. Our supremacy can be proved only  
on the earth and and there alone we shall be able to find whose devotees  
are truly superior.

VISHNU : I see eye to eye with you.

SIVA : Needless to say, I shall accompany you. We are but the triune limbs of  
the Supreme. We exist simply because we needs must help Him in his  
Divine Play.

BRAHMA : Has the earth invoked our presence there ? Without their mounting  
cry how can we descend ?

VISHNU : I shall sow the seed of yearning in the heart of the mortals. With a  
heart full of devotion they will pray to us.

SIVA : Remember, the Asura with his hosts will not remain asleep. How can  
the earth hail our advent, she who has been under the octopus tentacles  
of the brooding Giant of Evil ?

BRAHMA : We are fully aware. Mahadeva, you will be our Captain. It is you  
who will ruthlessly destroy the Evil and found our victory on the aspiring  
soil.

*(Behind the curtain a tremendous hue and cry.)*

O save the earth ! O save the creation ! Do flood the earth with the sancti-  
fied waters of the Truth and cast the Falsehood down into the Chasm of No-  
where. Set the earth-life free from the roaring den of Death. Brahma, Vishnu,  
Siva ! deign to alight on this orphan earth where Ignorance reigns supreme.  
We are yearning to see your divine Play on the sorrowful dust.

*OM. Anandamayi Chaitanyamayi Satyamayi Parame.* (3 times)

THE MOTHER : Alas, the earth is inundated with ceaseless sorrows and pangs.  
Her throbbing heart compels my descent. I am the Mother. Who but  
I can save my children ?

THE INFINITE : I too on earth shall descend. My advent the East shall acclaim,  
thine the West.

THE MOTHER : My Grace shall give Immortality to the earth. With me I will  
carry the fruit of fire-pure Transformation.

THE INFINITE : I will found thy supernal Kingdom on the neglected earth.

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

Scene 2

*(The residence of Dr. K. D. Ghosh. A smiling garden in front. Swarnalata, while plucking flowers, sings.)*

“What shall we mortals do ? O ours to meet  
With worshipping brow the flowers of His feet !”

*Enter K. D. Ghosh.*

KRISHNA DHAN : I cannot believe my ears. To my great surprise you sing so sweetly. They say you are ‘the Rose of Rangpur’ and a matchless belle. But I never heard you sing.

SWARNALATA : Truth to tell, I am not inclined to music; to say the least, music is not my forte.

K.D. : Who was it then singing ?

SWARNA : Ah ! don’t you know that while alone anybody would sing ?

K.D. : Not so always. The singer in me, if any, wouldn’t sing, even if alone.

SWARNA : I believe you too would sing if you dreamt my dream.

K.D. : Dream ! Do open your heart.

SWARNA : True, you are my confidant. But it’s not the proper moment to give away the secret. Let me see if my dream comes true.

K.D. : Swarna, you too !—you appear to be my eighth wonder.

SWARNA : That is a long story. It would be a Mahabharata if I told it. To be brief, I had a toy Krishna when I was a child. As I grew up I was wont to pray to Sri Krishna in the evening when the earth sank in to silence. My sole desire was to be the mother of the embodied Divine.

K.D. : We are too human for a divine dream. Kausalya, Devaki, Sachi—was there anyone on earth who suffered more than they ? What a fancy desire, indeed ! What a lofty dream !

SWARNA : But you have not yet heard me out.

K.D. : I will keep it to myself. I give you my word of honour. Do say your say.

SWARNA : But do you know yourself ? You are an atheist.

K.D. : Atheist ! My father was a Hindu, so am I. I am a worshipper of Kali. My father’s mother is at Varanashi. A devotee of Lord Siva is she. Am I an atheist because I move in European society ?

SWARNA : Let it alone. My dream demands your heart’s encouraging but genuine sympathy.

K.D. : Swarna, I empty my heart.

MOTHER INDIA

SWARNA : My prayer shall bear fruit before long. He, the Light of the world, is within me.

*(A bashful smile)*

K.D. : Is He ? *(A broad smile.)*

*Enter a poor Muslim in hot haste.*

ABDUL : Babu, Babu ! cholera has broken out in our village. I am very, very, poor. Two of my sons were snatched away to the other world last week. My youngest, my dearest, my last son threatens to go. I pray, do call at my hut. Your very presence shall cure my dying son.

K.D. : I shall try my best. My life on earth has no other aim but to protect the weak and help the needy. Those who wallow in wealth can call in eminent doctors. But my hand and bottle are for those whose friend is poverty itself. My work is to have money from the haves and contribute to the fund of the have-nots.

ABDUL : Babu, Babu ! I can pay the flood of your sympathy only with my tears of delight.

*Exeunt K.D. Ghosh and Abdul.*

SWARNA : *(With tears streaming)* Alas ! him to call an atheist whose heart is a surge of sympathy—the living image of philanthropy ? O Merciful ! O Light of the blind ! your pardon, your high pardon my foul tongue desires.

Scene 3

*(The Himalayas. A galaxy of Kuthums. The ingress and egress of the aspirant souls.)*

1ST KUTHUMI : The largesse of the mind is almost come to an end. Mind is the fount of problems. A permanent solution is not to be had there.

2ND KUTHUMI : True, mind is unable to solve all problems. Dangers weave their meshes around the human souls. But who or what can make the impossible possible ?

3RD KUTHUMI : I know, I know. It is the pinnacled light of the Supermind which is utterly empty of all problems. It is an abyss of harmony, of unity-in-multiplicity.

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

4TH KUTHUMI : The endless urge of the Supermind is to descend on the earth and change her consciousness.

1ST KUTHUMI : To serve the purpose God's human birth is the supreme need.

2ND KUTHUMI : Many a time He has descended on the earth across the centuries. But earth seems to have made no satisfactory progress. He comes and goes in his choice time. Every time his Mission appears to be thwarted by the wild ignorance of the earth. The wide hunger of Time devours all the spiritual wealth that He brings down. A ruthless oblivion lords it over the mortals.

3RD KUTHUMI : It is victory and not defeat that is the first and last word of God. Soon the Infinite shall alight on the throbbing heart of the soil.

4TH KUTHUMI : When, why, how, where ?

3RD KUTHUMI : It is in India, it is in the land of the sages and the spiritual giants that He will see the light of day.

2ND KUTHUMI : And what is expected from us ?

1ST KUTHUMI : Ours to be a flower-offering to Him, to his Mission.

Scene 4

*(The residence of Rishi Rajnarayan Bose. He adores the formless Aspect of the Brahman.)*

RISHI : Swarna, Swarna ! have your seat hard by me. Swarna, I had a dream last night. To me that dream seems more vivid than reality itself.

SWARNA : Father, may I have a share ?

RISHI : Certainly, my dream concerns you much. You all know that I have been a votary of the Nirakara Brahman for a couple of decades. But now no more. I saw Him....It is beyond my power of expression. My eyes swam in light and delight.

SWARNA : Who was it, father ?

RISHI : The Light of the world, Sri Krishna.

SWARNA : Where ?

RISHI : My daughter, in you, in you and nowhere else. Since the small hours of the morning I have been a torrent of ecstasy. I have also seen the Gods bow down on their knees before Him, your coming son. Swarna, you are my matchless jewel.

SWARNA : Father, you are my highest pride. You stand very high in the estimation of all. You are the pole-star of the Nation. Your voice has rung out the inmost voice of India.

*(To be continued)*

CHINMOY

## A LETTER FROM THE HIMALAYAS

No. 2

Dehra Dun, U.P.

My dear X :

I received your most affectionate letter yesterday. I would like you to come to Dehra Dun for a few days before leaving for the Ashram. But it does not matter if you are unable to come because we stand on a different plane from the ordinary and our relations are very different. We ever run on the path of Divine Progress where the physical absence does not at all interfere. We establish a kind of communion which is not physical nor intellectual, but spiritual and present everywhere. Space and time are no longer a hindrance in the spiritual relationship.

Dear X, you must be well-confirmed, after your moving experiences, that we are all the pilgrims of Divine shrines. We are all flowing, like the holy Ganges, to meet our parent ocean which is full of bliss and peace. That is our destiny, the place where we have to anchor our ship. Don't our bodies seem like the vessels carrying our little selves, to merge them in the fathomless ocean ? And isn't that ocean infinitely more beautiful than any object of the senses can be ? I like to feel the body as carrying the sacrifice, itself the sacrifice strong and pure, to pour on the holy feet of Divinity.

The experiences of our lives seem to teach us that we are not only moving like little vessels, but are unfolding ourselves like little seeds. A seed has the potency to become a branching tree which is its life perfection ; the fulfilment of the seed lies in breaking the outer shell and sprouting into that tree. Similarly the accomplishment of our life lies in the Divine evolution, for to realise the Divinity within us is our very nature. In Sanskrit it is called Swadharma.

Do you know why there are miseries and worries, why there are temporary depressions in our life, why there is so much restlessness ? The main reason is that we are not fulfilling the purpose of our life. Think of a little bud which does not open its petals due to the fear that it will lose its fragrance and nectar. Thus it withers away and does not attain the accomplishment of its life, the perfection of beauty.

Tagore, in his *Sadhana*, speaking of the self, says : "To reveal itself, it has to give everything it has, thus becoming perfect like a flower that has blossomed out from the bud, pouring from its chalice of beauty all its sweetness."

Indeed we are all like unblossomed flowers. The buds of our being have yet to bloom so that we may place them upon the holy feet when we meet our Beloved face-to-face.

SOORYA PRAKASH

(To be continued)

## STUDIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

STUDY No. 5: *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*—THE CRISIS OF THE RIALTO

( *Continued* )

### CHARACTERS

THE major characters of *The Merchant of Venice* are Antonio, Bassanio, Shylock and Portia ; the minor Gratiano, Lorenzo and Jessica.

### ANTONIO

Antonio is a man of vast possessions stationed in vaster risks. Unattached, indifferent and almost contemptuous of riches, he is imprudent in the exercise of his judgement in matters of finance.

He lends without interest, spits upon the Jew, floats upon the seas merchandise without discretion. He is in some respects the opposite of the Jew. Spurning of wealth and not attachment, ill-considered liberality and not miserliness, are his tragic defects. He has the vague depression of the rich, listlessness in luxury, lovelessness in plenty, languor in health, peril in the dalliance of fulfilled desire. Abundance is the source of his miseries. He is focus of the sycophant, the flatterer, and the fool. His generosity is his trap. He succumbs to Bassanio without wisdom. He lends without terms, contracts without circumspection, teases Shylock without cause. He is a dual personality ; he is magnanimous to Bassanio, but intolerant of the Jew.

Antonio's bearing in the Trial Scene carries the noble demeanour of his means and his mind. Patience and fearlessness in face of his imminent danger is the hallmark of his breeding. He wins by a severe trenchant dignity the sympathy of Portia and the Duke. The fall of Shylock does not raise a cry of triumph. On the contrary it releases commiseration for the Jew and to a plea for the relaxation of the rigour of the Law to ease the circumstances of Lorenzo and Jessica. There is a Katharsis of his impatience and intolerance. Antonio's idealism shines best when he has seen the worst. He pities most when he has lost most.



## MOTHER INDIA

### BASSANIO

Bassanio is reckless in penury as Antonio is reckless in riches. He has nothing to lose ; he can therefore borrow. He has nothing to suffer ; therefore he can ratify contracts blind to terms and conditions. He has the money and the trouble in his pocket. Antonio risks gold, Bassanio risks love. Portia is his safest investment. The eyes of his soul discern , he chooses the leaden casket. In the Trial Scene he shakes off faults and fitful idiosyncrasies. He is changed by love's alchemy. Portia saves, heals, and harmonises Bassanio. In the Trial Scene, he rises to a certain nobility, conscious of the mistakes of the past, repentant of his rash indebtedness, true in heart and soul to his friendship for Antonio. The love which links Bassanio and Antonio is genuine ; it is not broken by their errors nor disrupted by recrimination. In the height of the peril of Antonio, their friendship stands undaunted. In the Court Scene, Bassanio is aggressive towards the Jew ; Antonio reserved. The latter knows, the former misjudges, the hardness of Shylock. In the reversal of the Jew, Bassanio loses his emotional balance. He lacks Antonio's reticence. His reluctant gift of the ring at the generous gesture of Antonio closes the Comedy in laughter.

### SHYLOCK

The rasping, grasping, ravenous Shylock, voraciously breeding principal and interest from the blood of debtors, is the Mephistopheles of the Ghetto.

In him the Ego has blotted out the soul. Men are for him the flesh of rams and goats. He is the outcaste of society. Humanity has abandoned him as he has abandoned humanity. Gold is his god. He would rather see his daughter dead than his ducats spoiled. In spite of his greed he is not a truly cautious money-lender : he assesses the fortunes but mistakes the risks of his client—the bales of Antonio upon the seven seas are sufficient security. He has shrewdness but not wisdom. The cold calculating man of business is subject to secret storms of hate, greed and vengeance which shake his judgement, break his credit, and ruin his harvest. Wealth is a bait for the tragic Katharsis of his personality. The abuses of Antonio unnerve him ; business is subordinated to revenge ; the bond is in effect cancelled for a pound of flesh. Blood not money is his satisfaction. The scoffs of Antonio are the direct cause of the substitution of the original terms of the contract. Public spitting, spurning, scorning, accumulate the seeds of revenge. The teasing by Tubal, the flight of Jessica with ducats and jewels, the reported wreck of his securities upon the seas, alert an unprecedented crisis of his emotions which

## STUDIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

obliterate the consideration of the safety of the principal of the bond. In the Trial Scene Shylock is driven by imperious gusts beyond the plea of reason, refusing twice and thrice the tender of the original sum. The heat of revenging eyes glitters as the scales of Justice apparently veer in his direction. Clamouring for the due enforcement of the processes of law, he stands the apparent master of the situation. Success is his supreme peril. The smoothness of his affairs conceal the suppressed swirl of the incoming tide of troubles. The Law which he invokes is released; the mercy which he repelled is denied; the principal which he refused is revoked. The emotions of Shylock, arraigned for attempted murder, with property confiscated, conversion awaited, bond cancelled, subside into a strange quiescence. The ranting tongue ceases to rail; the wanton wit to strike; the crippled hand to clutch. In the deep dumb distress of the mortal mind, harshness sinks into lassitude and rigour into languor. From the wreckage of his manhood emerges the secret flame of the human Spirit. Sobriety dawns; vengeance is silent. Shylock retires from the stage in calm and almost grandiose dignity. In the concluding scene of the Court of Justice is the majesty of the Jewish gaberdine, a forgetfulness of the taunts of Antonio, the lashes of Gratiano, the menaces of Portia, the wrongs of Society, the violences of Law, and the mockeries of Fate and Fortune.

### PORTIA

Portia, fair, gay, grave and wise, is a type of perfect womanhood. In her are united the qualities of head, heart and hand. Her wit is keen; her judgement clear; her action prompt. Decision is in her eyes and a certainty in her steps. In the boudoir of Belmont her discernment sparkles. She accepts with a smile the lottery of the Caskets with the foreknowledge of her destiny. She sums up the foibles of Morocco, Arragon, Burgundy and the rest with a devastating perception. Within her psychic depths is the secret determination of the choice of Bassanio. Fate stoops to her; she does not stoop to Fate. She disposes off her affairs with a deft diplomatic finish. She dismisses Arragon and Morocco with the due solemnities of their rank concealed in a laugh.

The resident fires of her spirit rise in her crisis. She guides Bassanio with the breath of music. Voice of tempered warning, lips of soft endearment, eyes of lifting grace, yield the hand she craves. The kiss she gives is the kiss she has earned. In her is no dalliance with love. Consecration and self-surrender are complete. The crisis of Bassanio is the crisis of Portia. Instant perception is instant action. Head, heart, and hand are aligned. She tutors Bellario, assumes the gown and majesty of the law, interrogates the plaintiff and defendant, frames the issue, adjudicates the case, and delivers the judge-

ment ! Her intellect dominates the Trial. Shylock trusts her ; Bassanio fears her ; the Duke respects her. She maintains an apparent balance of Justice. Acutely, upon the confession of the bond, she withdraws her support of Antonio. She creates consternation in the ranks of Bassanio. Shrewdly she yields to Shylock judgement and decree. Swiftly she proceeds to execution. Wit is matched with cunning. The Jurist entangles the Jew. She mesmerises Shylock with the plethora of laws and penal clauses, punishment of criminal Jurisprudence and liabilities of Civil legislation. The fall of Shylock is the grand crescendo of the forensic abilities of Portia.<sup>1</sup> Her withdrawal from Court leaves a pitiful Shylock with a bare bond in his hands. The gravity of Portia in the precincts of Court is succeeded by a gentleness in the apartments of Belmont. Strife subsides into a softness.

Portia is the source of the harmony, outer and inner, of Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, Jessica and Lorenzo.

#### NERISSA, GRATIANO, LORENZO, JESSICA

The sweetly-smiling Nerissa, the maid-in-waiting, is vocal only in the bedroom of Portia. Free, frank, obedient to her mistress, she is shy and self-withdrawn. Tactfully she tests the pulse of Portia and tenders her wise but veiled advice as to the competency of the suitors. She gratifies the eyes of Gratiano without the notice of the audience. Gratiano's tongue is never silent. He has neither gravity nor profundity. His speech is froth. His flippancy and excitement are tempered by a merry mood and a rare tenderness for Nerissa.

Lorenzo and Jessica are adventurers upon the precarious seas of Love. The moonlight Romeo has a Jewish Juliet, not forgetful of her jewels and her cash, hosed and tailored in youthful attire, as a torch-bearer by his side ! In penury, they fly not without prudence to the house of gold. Romance meets

<sup>1</sup> The forensic abilities of Portia are being treated solely from the dramatic point of view,

The action of the Trial Scene is justifiable on dramatic and not legal grounds. The Duke appears to be an assessor and Portia, the assessor, appears to be a Judge. The Civil and Criminal jurisdictions of a Court of Law are confused. The Trial of the bond should proceed on the principles of Civil Law. The matter of attempted murder would fall on the jurisdiction of a separate Criminal Court. There are no lawyers in Court. Bassanio, Antonio and Shylock argue their own cases. There is no evidence and no cross-examination of Plaintiff and Defendant. The penal clause of Shylock's bond would be invalid on the ground of a Civil decree infringement of Public Policy. Lastly the execution of a Civil decree is done by a separate executing Court. The Trial Scene is a travesty of legal procedure. The matter of conversion to Christianity of Shylock does not lie in either the Criminal or the Civil jurisdiction of a Court of Law. In a restricted legal interpretation, the Trial Scene loses its dramatic and poetic effects. The bounds of Drama are not the bounds of Law. The present exposition ignores all legal deficiencies which have no bearing upon dramatic appreciation.

## STUDIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

Romance. The walks of Belmont are the pleasure-grounds of Love. Lorenzo is a dreamer, whose eyes are drenched with moonbeams, whose ears are awake to occult harmonies, whose silver utterances shake the woods of Belmont. In his lips are locked the charm of starry skies and singing cherubims in viewless air. In his breath linger the melodies of night, wind, and dew. Jessica, long a captive in the prison house of Shylock, young, inexperienced and bold, is more attentive to the caress of love than to the murmurs of song. Music is melted into clinging lips, embracing arms, and joining hearts. The crisis of the Rialto closes with a kiss.

*(Concluded)*

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