

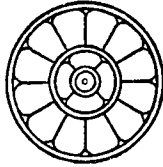
MOTHER INDIA

FEBRUARY 21, 1961: THE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

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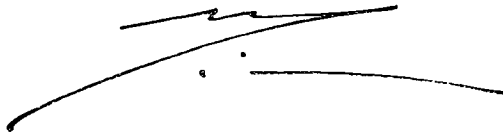


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XIII

No. 1

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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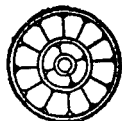
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THE MESSAGE OF FEBRUARY 21, 1961



Once the connection between the supramental and the human consciousness is made, it is the psychic being that gives *the readiest response*—more ready than the mind, the vital or the physical. It may be added that it is also a purer response; the mind, vital and physical can allow other things to mix with their reception of the supramental influence and spoil its truth. The psychic is pure in its response and allows no such mixture.

The supramental change can take place only if the psychic is awake and is made the chief support of the descending supramental power.

Ari Arshado

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE MOTHER

X, who holds a high position in the Government of India, had two interviews with the Mother, the first on 23.3.1956 and the second on 17.3.1960. It is interesting to note the question he put to the Mother on the first occasion which was a little over three weeks after the great event of February 29, the Supramental Manifestation, but before the Mother had announced this event in public.

X's inquiry was about the time when the Supermind would manifest itself upon the earth. The Mother replied, "One day." As he was worried with his personal problems and was becoming somewhat impatient he suddenly said, "What is the use of it if that day comes after we are dead?" The Mother at once replied in a firm tone, "If it is to happen after you are dead, then I will not be speaking to you about it today. You may take it that it is already here."

He then turned to his personal questions but was putting them in a queer way to which the Mother replied that she could answer him only if he had any particular questions to ask. He then referred to the difficulties which honest people meet with in life where the dishonest seem to thrive at their expense. He enquired how long the Divine was going to allow this state of affairs to continue, and when the end would come.

The Mother replied, "Generally it continues until things have become so bad that everyone is fed up with the evil consequences of such dishonest practices. For a time the so-called honest people wonder why they should not follow the ways of the others and themselves prosper at the expense of their opponents. So long as dishonesty continues to receive such support, it goes on from strength to strength. Only when the evil crosses a certain limit of tolerance, there is a burst-up, a revolution."

To this he answered, "But, Mother, why does the Divine not interfere before the revolution—often a violent one—breaks out? Why can the revolution not come about peacefully?"

In a soft but convincing tone, the Mother spoke, "That is why I said 'Generally it continues'. The other way is also open to you. If you stick to your ideals even when the opposing forces seem to be too strong, you will have sufficient followers who will make the limits of tolerance narrower. This is easier if you happen to be in a high enough position to make your example be seen by a large number of people."

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE MOTHER

We may remark how poignant was his problem and how quiet and yet reassuring was the Mother's spontaneous reply.

Still, even after years, the same problem—his struggle against dishonesty—continued to worry him and he put the same old question to the Mother on 17.3.1960. The Mother gave the same answer. She said, "When you find that your circumstances are beyond your control, take a mirror and see how much you are contributing to them. If you withdraw your support to the evil, it is sure to be weaker and weaker. I do not suggest that you are yourself dishonest, but if everyone, be his official position ever so high or low, sticks to the truth in spite of the apparent success of falsehood, then the latter must gradually crumble to dust."

The most instructive portion of the conversation was at the end, when she cited her own experience :

"I had a similar problem here. Sri Aurobindo gave me all the help, and things progressed for thirty years, when there was a sudden halt. I went up to my room, took a mirror and looked into myself and began to make a few changes. Formerly I used to see people very freely. Now I give interviews very rarely. But the effect is much greater, because I now work from above instead of from the same level. The change I have introduced in myself is already being reflected more and more in others."

Recorded by J. N. WELINGKAR¹

CORRECTION

In *Words of the Mother*, which appeared in the January issue, the two French sentences should have run :

Si tu peux toujours sourire à la vie, la vie aussi te sourira toujours.

Si on peut éternellement sourire, on est éternellement jeune.

¹ This "Interview" was originally recorded for Narayan Prasad's "Sri Aurobindo Ashram" appearing in the present issue.

TALKS OF THE MOTHER

(These are Notes written down after attending the talks of the Mother in 1947 apropos of her Prayers and Meditations. Every day a Prayer or two were read out and the Mother commented on them or answered questions put to her. Most of the comments deal with perennial problems of the spiritual life. Some refer to particular occasions; but, just because those occasions are now past, the comments do not lose their point : they always have a wider bearing and join up with the general ones. The Notes are by A. B. Purani.)

18.9.1947

Prayers read : October 9 and 10, 1914

Q. There is a mention of the joy of work and the joy of retiring from work.

THERE are persons who experience joy while working—for them the joy of action is there. Others sit in meditation and unite their consciousness with the Divine. They experience the joy of meditation. The Prayer says that to experience the two kinds of joy together is the ideal. There are people who have the two kinds of joy alternately—that is to say, when they work they have the joy of action and when they are in contemplation they have another kind of joy. But, in the ideal condition, at the depth of the consciousness there is contemplation and absolute silence while outwardly the nature is busy with all sorts of activities and enjoys work. Generally, you begin with one—either the action or the meditation. But if you are plastic you can get the two together. One part of your being which is outward-turned is occupied in various important or unimportant things—play, labour, struggle. But at bottom there is adoration, silence, freedom from everything. The two seem to us opposites and extremes, but when they meet, the real joy of creation is realised.

Of course, the realisation does not come by itself or by accident. It comes by a working for it, by a training of attention.

It is when men haven't got this experience that they debate and discuss whether action and yoga are compatible or incompatible.

Q. But is it not true that one can become conscious of one's psychic being more easily in meditation than in action ?

Yes, at the beginning—when you are altogether a novice. Once you become conscious, then you are conscious of your true being all the time, day and night, in the midst of all actions, even in the midst of a battle just as well as during meditation. To start or establish the contact with the psychic being, one may require to meditate.

You think of action as important or unimportant. But merely action means nothing. As I said, you have to resort to meditation and go deep into the being in order to become conscious of the psychic being; but, once the contact is made, it matters little whether you meditate or not.

Generally, when one strongly affirms the need of meditation, silence, retirement, it is a proof that one has not yet contacted the psychic being. If the psychic being is awakened, you have within you something which is all the time aware and it is this that makes you do everything : all your action springs from it. It organises your whole life. There are cases in which the psychic being does not allow a man to organise his life as his mind or vital being would like to do. For instance, it makes you miss the train you should miss, or the ship you should not travel by. In other words, it organises the life in spite of the man almost !

In order to mark the contact or opening of the psychic being, it is necessary to see what a man does in an acute situation. He generally concentrates, puts all his energies together and intensely wills for a way out or a solution. Then suddenly there is light and he sees. Now, if he is conscious of the opening or of the being that brings the light, there is a kind of permanent consciousness of everything in him, a consciousness which moves every part of him.

This is quite sufficient for a basis of the spiritual life.

But if you have other aspirations, then of course you have to work further. It is not necessarily when one sits in meditation that one feels the presence of the psychic being. It is at the moment when all the movements of consciousness are concentrated that one perceives it. While meditating, there may be no such concentration. This often happens. On the other hand, if one is attentive, one may feel something within one which supports and comforts from inside.

THE MOTHER'S WORKINGS

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

There is absolutely no reason why she should treat all in the same way—that is an ignorant demand of the vital ego. 6-5-1935

It is the old vital with its ego which comes up again and again. It refuses to follow the higher being and be as the true bhaktas are who ask nothing and are content with all that the Mother does or does not do, because whatever she does must be good since she is the Mother. You must impose the truth on this vital part. 6-5-1935

Q : Is it again the ego that makes one think that in the Overmind or Supermind no need would remain of prayer or aspiration ? But does not the Mother herself aspire day and night and do we not feel when she plays her music that she is praying ?

Yes. All that is very true. It is a prayer or an invocation that Mother makes in the music. 1-6-1935

Q : I heard that Bijoy Nag's soul came to you after his death, asking for liberation.

It came to the Mother, not to me. 20-6-1935

Whatever is done by the Mother is for the good of the sadhak and the sadhana. 9-12-1935

You attribute too many motives—e.g. that the Mother tries to allure the vital by indulging it in the beginning. She has no such intention. She behaves naturally and simply with the being—whatever change there is in the vital's impressions about her action rather than in the action itself—except in so far as there is a change necessitated by the change in the consciousness. Formerly you were writing from the higher mind mostly, but partly from the vital—the vital was often dissatisfied with my answers, so I ceased answering to it and wrote only what would help your higher mind and psychic. Now it is from the physical mind and vital that you often write

THE MOTHER'S WORKINGS

and so my answers must be to them and they feel they are not given the answers they want or in the tone of indulgence they would like. But to satisfy and indulge them would not be helpful to your sadhana. 9-12-1935

Q : Is the attitude that I am the Brahman not necessary in the Integral Yoga ?

It is not enough to transform the whole nature. Otherwise there would be no need of the Mother's being here. It could be done by simply thinking of oneself as the Brahman. There would be no need of the Mother's presence or the Mother's force. 27-12-1935

From NAGIN DOSHI

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(These talks are from the Note-books of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others, after the accident to his leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were : Dr. Manilal, Dr. Becherlal, Purani, Champaklal, Dr. Satyendra and Mulshanker. As the Notes were not seen by Sri Aurobindo himself, the responsibility for the Master's words rests entirely with Nirodbaran. He does not vouch for absolute accuracy, but he has tried his best to reproduce them faithfully. He has made the same attempt for the speeches of the others.

This is the Second talk in the new Series which follows a chronological order and begins at the very beginning. The four earliest talks, after Sri Aurobindo's accident, appeared in Mother India in 1952. We are now picking up where we then stopped and shall continue systematically.

DECEMBER 14, 1938

TIME about 5.30 p.m.; silent atmosphere; Dr. M. meditating; N sitting by his side. Sri Aurobindo cast a glance at Dr. M. After a few minutes N. tried to kill a mosquito and made a clapping sound. Sri Aurobindo looked at him. Dr. M. opened his eyes. N felt both embarrassed and amused.

Dr. M : If you make such a noise to kill a mosquito...

N : I am sorry to have spoiled your meditation.

Dr. M : Meditation can't be spoiled. We shall meditate when the Mother comes. (*Laughter*)

The talk turned on Theosophy.

Dr. M : The theosophists speak of Mahatmas from whom they receive messages.

Sri Aurobindo : Yes, Moria and Koothoomi are two of their Mahatmas. The Mahatmas are said to be living somewhere in Bhutan among rishis who are thousands of years old, I hear.

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

DR. M : Not true ? You wrote, a long time ago, a poem on Koothoomi in the *Standard-Bearer*. From it we have thought of a being with great spiritual realisation.

SRI AUROBINDO : It was purely a play of the poetic imagination.

DR. M : What do you think of Madame Blavatsky ?

SRI AUROBINDO : She was a remarkable woman, but there is a lot of mixture in her writings.

DR. M : Were you ever a freemason ?

SRI AUROBINDO : My eldest brother was. I gathered that there was nothing in it. But it certainly had something when it was first started.

Have you heard of Cagliostro ? He was a mystic freemason with a great prophetic power. He never charged anyone any money and yet he was affluent. It was said he could make gold. He prophesied about the French Revolution, the taking of the Bastille and the guillotining of the King and Queen. He used to prophesy about race-horses too. This got him into trouble. He was imprisoned and died in prison.

After this there was a few minutes' silence. Then Sri Aurobindo spoke again.

SRI AUROBINDO : Have you heard of Nostradamus ? No ? He was a Jew. At that time the Jews had a lot of knowledge. He wrote a book of prophecy in an obscure language and foretold, among other things, the execution of Charles I, the establishment of the British Empire and the lasting of the Empire for 330 years.

N : Then there is a long time before it goes.

SRI AUROBINDO : No. It is to be counted from the beginning of Britain's colonies. That means from James I. In that case it should end now.

DR. M : Judging from Chamberlain's utterance lately, it looks as if Britain were not obliged to side with France in case of war.

SRI AUROBINDO : The English always keep their policy open so that they may change according as they like or want.

DR. M : But they can't join Germany or Italy, can they ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Why no ? They can share with them France's African colonies.

At this time the Mother came in. Seeing her, we changed our positions from near Sri Aurobindo's bed. She said, "Don't move, don't move."

DR. M : Mother, we have decided to meditate when you come.

MOTHER INDIA

The Mother opened her eyes wide and all of us laughed.

MOTHER : But if I want to hear the talk ?

DR. M : Then, of course, we shall talk.

SRI AUROBINDO (*to the Mother*) : I am giving the Doctor a few prophecies of Cagliostro and Nostradamus whom he has never heard of.

Then Buddhism came in as a topic.

N : Lokanath Bhikshu, an Italian convert, tried to call me back from here. I found him rather illogical.

SRI AUROBINDO : All preachers are illogical. Were you a fervent Buddhist ? Is there much Buddhism where you come from ?

N : There are about one or two million Buddhists, but there is practically nothing of Buddhism.

MOTHER : Is Northern or Southern Buddhism professed ?

N : Southern.

MOTHER : In China and Japan too no real Buddhism is found—only ceremonies. In Ceylon, they say, there is still some authentic Buddhism.

N : Also in Burma nothing authentic remains, I am told, But the Burmese people show a great respect for their Bhikshus.

DR. M : Yes, respect for the appearance and not for the reality.

SRI AUROBINDO : Lele used also to think that the appearance has some value. Once I met X with him. He asked me, "Why don't you bow down to him ?" I replied that I didn't believe in the man. He said, "But you must respect the yellow robe."

As the Mother had gone into meditation all of us tried to meditate with her. At about 7 she departed and we gathered again round Sri Aurobindo's bed.

SRI AUROBINDO (*addressing N*) : You seem to have had Ananda in your meditation. Your face is beamig.

DR. M : Yes, Sir. N. nowadays beams with Ananda.

N : I fell into deep sleep, I think. But I had also some visions which seemed to be quite distinctly outside me.

SRI AUROBINDO : Then why do you call it sleep ? It may be the psychic being or the inner being watching what was happening. Sometimes one goes into a deep state and remembers nothing of the outer consciousness though many things may be occurring on the surface. What is called dreamless sleep

is really a sleep where many dreams are passing on : only, one doesn't know of them. Sometimes one discusses important problems in such a condition. At other times, one gets the ecstasy of union with the Divine. One may also go into other worlds with a part of one's being and meet all kinds of forms. This is, of course, the first stage and a kind of beginning of Samadhi.

From what you describe, it may be an inner-being experience and not a psychic one. Even then, there is no doubt that your face is beaming with Ananda. It is on seeing it like this that I thought you had gone within.

N : Can one get diagnoses of diseases in such a state ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh yes. Many people are said to have had their problems solved when they had gone within. I remember a peculiar experience of mine. As I was meditating, I saw some writings crossing above my head. Then a blank. Then again those writings with a gap in the middle which meant that things were going on though I was not conscious of them. (*Addressing Dr. M.*) Now what about your meditation ?

DR. M : Not successful, Sir !

SRI AUROBINDO : How ? I saw you grim and powerful, wrestling your way towards the Brahman. (*Loud laughter*)

DR. M : Plenty of thoughts invaded me. I tried to reject them and make myself empty.

SRI AUROBINDO : And the result was emptiness ?

N : But that is meditation, surely ?

DR. M : No, no, it isn't. I couldn't go within. I didn't feel the pressure. Was it meditation, Sir ?

SRI AUROBINDO : That is the beginning, the first stage. The mind must first be quiet for other things to come down. But one must not dictate to the meditation what it should be or not be. One must accept whatever it brings. Do you always have to try to meditate ?

DR. M : Not always. I have told you that sometimes it visits me all on a sudden and then I have to sit down. But was I right in saying what I did just now ? I said that I was able to reject thoughts.

SRI AUROBINDO (*laughing*) : How do I know ? You are the man to know it. I was only making comments on your statements.

DR. M : You don't know ? We consider you omniscient.

SRI AUROBINDO : You don't expect me, surely, to know how many fishes the fishermen of Pondicherry have caught or how much money they have made out of the catch. People from Bombay used to ask me if the price of cotton would go up, if this or that horse would win a race and if the child they had lost would be found again. What's the use of knowing all such things ? You must have heard of Ramakrishna's story of a Sannyasin's river-crossing

by occult power. Of course, if necessary, one can know all those things in a *swapna-samādhi*. Besides, I am not occupied with details of occult working. I have left them to the Mother. She often hears what is said at a distance, meets sadhaks on the subtle planes, talks to them. She saw exactly what was going to happen in the recent European trouble. We know whatever we have to know for our work.

N : What puzzles me is that you have never told me anything when I have asked you about the condition of a patient or my diagnosis of his complaint.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why do you expect me to do your work ?

N : Oh, that's different. But you said you have no latent medico in you and hence you couldn't say anything. I thought you could by your intuition.

Then the talk drifted to the subject of Intuition or doctors getting their diagnoses in sleep. Then N mentioned the Mother's advice to him to get intuition through silence of the mind. The results were discussed.

SRI AUROBINDO (*addressing Dr. M*) : I was telling you we know what we have got to do. But it is not always good to know. For instance, if I know a thing is going to happen, I am bound to it and even if it is not what I want I have to accept it and this prevents my having a greater or another possibility. So I want to keep myself free and deal with various possibilities. Below the Supermind everything is a question of possibilities. Hence I keep myself free to accept or reject as I like. Destiny does not mean that a thing is fixed. It is just a sum of forces which can be changed.

N : Without knowledge of the thing, how will one work ? After knowing, can't one reject ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Knowledge comes by intuition. One can reject, but the result is not sure, though one failure may show the way to a later success.

DR. M : You have said that you have conquered the death which comes by a natural process but that you have no complete control over accidents.

SRI AUROBINDO : Where did I say that ?

N : If I remember rightly, you wrote to me that diseases can't end your life but still you can't wholly control accidents.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh ! Diseases usually run a long course; so one has time to act on them. But if there are diseases of a sudden or severe nature that can end one's life immediately, then conquest is not possible. And about accidents, the body has its own consciousness and is always alert. But if the mind is occupied with other things, an accident can take one unawares. As regards

violence—for example, of a riot—I would have to concentrate for four or five days in order to protect myself.

The hostile forces have tried many times to prevent things like the Darshan, but I have succeeded in warding off all their attacks. At the time the accident to my leg happened, I was more occupied with guarding the Mother and I forgot about myself. I didn't think the hostiles would attack me. That was my mistake. As for the Ashram, I have been extremely successful, but while I have tried to work on the world the results have been varied. In Spain—in Madrid—I was splendidly successful. General Miaja was an admirable instrument to work on. Basque was an utter failure. Negus was a good instrument but the people around him, though good warriors, were too ill-organised and ill-equipped. The work in Egypt was not a success. In Ireland and Turkey the success was tremendous. In Ireland I have done exactly what I wanted to do in Bengal....The Turks are a silent race.

N : Did you stop war the last time there was a chance of it ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes—for many reasons war was not favourable at that time.

N : But you stopped it at the cost of the humiliation of some Great Powers.

SRI AUROBINDO : I didn't care for that.

N : What do you think of the Sino-Japanese War ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't think much of either party. They are six of the one and half a dozen of the other. Both too materialistic. But if I were to choose, I would side with Japan, for Japan at one time had an ideal. The power of the Japanese for self-sacrifice, patriotism, self-abnegation and silence were remarkable. They would never lose their temper in front of anybody, though perhaps they might stab afterwards. They could work so silently and secretly that no one knew anything before the Russo-Japanese War broke out. All on a sudden it broke out. The Japanese are kshatriyas, and their aesthetic sense is of course well known. But European influence has spoiled all that and see now how brutal they have become—a thoroughly unJapanese thing. Formerly they could look upon their opponents with sympathy. Look now at Japanese sentries boxing European officers. Not that the latter don't deserve it. Look also at the Japanese commander challenging Chiang-Kai-Shek to come out into the open field. This sort of bragging is not at all truly Japanese.

N : But, without brutalities like the killing of innocent citizens, won't it be difficult for them to win the war ?

SRI AUROBINDO : God knows ! The Japanese are such fine warriors, such a patriotic and self-sacrificing nation, that one would believe the contrary.

But they are doing these things probably because of two supposed reasons : (1) financial shortage, which is not a very convincing reason since they have an immense power of sacrifice ; (2) the population of China.

N : And foreign help to China : for example, from the Soviet Union ?

SRI AUROBINDO : That's a possibility, but the internal condition of the Soviet Union is such that it can't think of giving external help to others.

N : What about India's independence ? Is it developing along your lines ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Surely not. India is now going towards European Socialism, which is dangerous for her, whereas we were trying to evolve the genius of the race along Indian lines and all working for independence. Take the Bengal Movement. The whole country was awakened within a short time. People who were such cowards and trembled at the sight of a revolver were in a short period so much changed that the police officials used to say, "That insolent Barisal look !" It was the soul of the race that awoke, throwing up very fine personalities. The leaders of the Movement were either yogis or disciples of yogis—men like Monoranjan Guha Thakurtha, the disciple of B. Goswamy.

N : Was he a Nationalist ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Good Lord ! He was my fellow-worker and also took part in the Secret Society. Then there were others, like Brahma B. Upaddhay. The influence of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda worked from behind. The Movement and the Secret Society became so formidable that in any other country with a political past they would have led to something like the French Revolution. The sympathy of the whole nation was on our side. Even shopkeepers were reading *Jugantar*. I'll tell you an instance. While a young man was fleeing after killing a police officer in Shyam Bazar, he forgot to throw away his revolver. It remained in his hand. One shopkeeper cried out, "Hide your revolver, hide your revolver !" And, of course, you have heard of Jatin Mukherji ?

DR. M : Yes, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO : A wonderful man. He was a man who would belong to the front rank of humanity anywhere. Such beauty and strength together I haven't seen, and his stature was like a warrior's. Then there was Pulin Das.

N : Pulin Das, I hear, turned out a spy.

SRI AUROBINDO : A spy ? I don't believe it. He may have become a Moderate but not a spy. Such were the leaders at that time, and look at Bengal now !

N : What about Gandhi's Movement ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Gandhi has taken India a great step forward towards freedom, but his Movement has touched only the upper middle

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

classes while ours comprised even the lower middle classes,

N : Has it diminished the spirit of revolution ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes,

N : Was it Anderson, the Governor of Bengal, who killed the Revolutionary Movement ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Certainly not. It was the Force behind that receded and people became corrupted. No such leaders as before were forthcoming.

N : Is the last Terrorist Movement a part of the one of 1905 ?

Sri Aurobindo : Yes, it is the remnant of that.

N : During the War of 1914-1918 the revolutionaries were perhaps deceived by British promises.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh no, the revolutionaries are not people to be deceived by promises.

N : Gandhi seems to have given much courage and strength to the people. In Bengal we were so afraid of the police. I think it was Gandhi who imparted strength there.

SRI AUROBINDO : Did Bengal need it ?

N : What do you think of C.R.Das ?

SRI AUROBINDO : He was the last of the old group. He came here and wanted to be a disciple. I said he wouldn't be able to go through in Yoga as long as he was in the political movement. Besides, his health was shattered. I restored it to a certain extent but there was a relapse when he went back. You know he became Anukul Thakore's disciple.

December 15, 1938

The Mother came. Dr. Savoor also had called.

N (*to Dr. Savoor*) : When you give a homoeopathic medicine, how do you select it ? By intuition ? And how do you know that your intuition is correct ?

DR. S : Intuition by its very definition means something not obtained by logical reasoning; so it must be correct.

N (*to Sri Aurobindo*) : You told me that Dr. R uses mental intuition. So there must be various levels of intuition.

SRI AUROBINDO : By mental intuition I mean that the intuition coming from above gets mixed with the mind. I don't say that mental intuition must be incorrect but because of the mixture it can't always be relied upon. There is also vital intuition, which very often gets mixed up with one's desires.

N : How is one to get intuition ? By calmness of mind ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Calmness is not enough. The mind must become silent.

MOTHER INDIA

N : Then it will take a long time.

SRI AUROBINDO : Can't say. It may take a short or a long time.

N :⁴But it won't be possible to keep the silence until one has realised the Spirit.

SRI AUROBINDO : One can train one's mind to be silent.

Dr. Savorer took his leave and, as the Mother lapsed into meditation, we all tried to do the same. Then after she had got up and gone by 7 p.m., we collected round Sri Aurobindo. He looked once or twice at Dr. M.

N : Dr. M is beaming today.

Dr. M : Couldn't meditate well, Sir, because I have lumbago. But I felt some vibration at the back and felt happy.

N : That must be the Kundalini !

Dr. M : I don't believe in it. Is this vibration the Force, Sir ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. It was trying to cure your lumbago perhaps and the first sign was a little aggravation. (*Laughter*) You don't believe in the Kundalini ?

Dr. M : No, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO : But you were telling us about your experience of ascent and descent.

Dr. M. Was it an experience of the Kundalini ? I didn't know it. (*Laughter*) But the Kundalini is not in the line of our Yoga and you haven't mentioned about it anywhere.

P : Oh yes, he has in *Lights on Yoga*.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. The Kundalini is, of course, a Tantric idea. The Shakti lying coiled in the Muladhara Chakra awakes, rises up and carries the consciousness upward, opening all the Chakras up to the Brahmaraandhra and then meets the Brahman and after that the descent begins. The Tantric process is more technical.

It is curious to see the action of the Force in some cases. Some feel as if a drilling were being done in the brain. Some can't keep the Force in : they sway from side to side, make peculiar sounds. I remember one practising Pranayama rigorously and making horrible sounds. I didn't hear of his getting any good results. Sometimes the Force raises up what lies below in order to be able to deal with it.

SRI AUROBINDO AND EDUCATION

(3)

NATIONAL EDUCATION

I

GRANTED that the aim and method of our system of education were far from ideal, but what were the real reasons for our shortcomings ?

“Is it for the lack of sound ideals about the method and scope of education that our country has achieved such poor results in this direction ? Why is it that the mind has not been trained and character at all influenced ? It is only because being the members of a subject race our young men have pursued education mainly from a selfish motive, and never known the honourable ambition of contributing to the greatness of the nation by giving proofs of its strong intellect and splendid character. The nation that knows no high aspiration lacks the incentive to improve its faculties and fails to take advantage even of the best system of self-improvement. Its activities are always at a lower pitch and do not reach the height which we see in free countries. There is no greater demand on the mind and character than to equip us for living in ease and competence. With such petty ideals of life no nation can hope to be great through the agency of a mere good system. Its own low level of life will react on any system however good, and corrupt it in no time.

“The Universities in India have produced eminent men, but their eminence has not gone beyond shining in particular callings exclusively with an eye to individual happiness in life. This is bound to be the case so long as the nation cannot rise above its present grovelling tendencies. It is not by the state-controlled universities but by those established by the nation with the object of restoring its greatness that real men will be made, capable of influencing the destinies of their Motherland. The goddess of learning will always withhold her gifts from us unless she is convinced that we shall use them for advancing our civilisation, not for personal ends. It is only the precincts of a National University that will inspire such holy and lofty motive.”¹

¹ *Bandemataram Weekly*, 1.3.08.

This was written at a time when the first phase of Sri Aurobindo's work in the cause of national regeneration was drawing to a close: he would be arrested and detained in the Alipore Jail in two months' time and *Bandemataram* would become a thing of the past. But almost from its inception, the idea of national education had been broached by the paper under Sri Aurobindo's inspiration. The following extracts will help to bring out the progress of the movement, the aims it had in view, the obstacles it had to face, the conditions laid down as essential for its success.

“When we desire to give the rising generation an education that will direct their minds not so much to the undoubted greatness of England, as to the present deplorable condition of their own country, and fill them with an earnest desire to reclaim for her the greatness that ought to be hers, the established Universities under British control will not help us. We have to establish a National University which has to contend against the almost insuperable difficulty of the disfavour of a Government under British control...”¹

“There has already been made a beginning in most places in the matter of national education. Still there is much indifference and opposition to be overcome. Those gentlemen who have hitherto been before the public in every district and command some influence with them have not yet thrown themselves heart and soul into this movement. Nay, their attitude is sometimes one of hostility towards it. They not only withhold their own support from it but look upon the movement either as premature or prejudicial to the best interests of the country....It is the usual inertia and the want of confidence in anything new that will mostly account for the lack of confidence in this direction. The coming Conferences should make it a point to see that national education strikes its root into every district, grows and bears fruit. People are gradually losing their confidence in the prevailing system of State-aided education and the leading men of every district should both by example and precept impress upon the people the necessity of supporting national education...”²

“There have been many attempts before the present movement to rescue education in India from subservience to foreign and petty ends, and to establish Colleges and Schools maintained and controlled by Indians which would give an education superior to the Government-controlled education. The City College [in Calcutta], the Fergusson College [in Poona] and others started with this aim, but they are now [in 1908] monuments of a frustrated idea. In every case they have fallen to the state of ordinary institutions, replicas of

¹ *Bandemataram Daily*, 6 10 06.

² *Ibid*, 26 3.07

the Government model, without a separate mission or nobler reason for existence. And they have so fallen because their promoters could not understand or forgot that the first condition of success was independence—an independence jealously preserved and absolute. In other words, there can be no national education without national control.

“A certain measure of success has been secured by two institutions of a later birth, the Benares Hindu College and the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College [at Lahore]. These are successful institutions, but isolated. They have not developed into centres of a network of schools affiliated to them and forming one corporate body. [This happened later to the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic institutions in north India.] They have not in themselves the makings of Universities. So far as they give religious teaching they are a wholesome departure from the barren official form of education, but that is only one part of education on national lines...”¹

“The Bengal National College [in Calcutta] has not only become an established fact but is rapidly increasing in numbers and has begun to build the foundations of a better system of education. The schools at Rungpore and Dacca already existed at the commencement of the year; but immediately after the Barisal outrage fresh schools at Mymensingh, Kishoregunj, Comilla, Chandpur and Dinajpur were established. Since then there have been further additions, the Magura School, another in the Jessore District, another at Jalpaiguri as well as a free primary school at Bogra. We understand that there is also a probability of a National School at Chittagong and Noakhali. No mean record for a single year. As was to be expected, most of these schools have grown up in the great centre of Nationalism, East Bengal.”²

“A sapient contemporary recently suggested that National Education was national because it has been started by Indian gentlemen out of funds supplied by the Indian people and that therefore the new National College and schools are no novel departure. He has brilliantly succeeded in missing the true issue. The question is : whose will guides and controls the general policy and particular acts of any particular institution—the will of the foreigner or of the native-born ? If it is the former, then the institution is not national; if it is the latter, then it is. All other issues are subordinate.”³

“The Universities, if they are left to the people, cannot but set in motion a great democratic force as they did in Germany where professors and students alike were continually contrasting the old glories of united Germany with the

¹ *Bandemataram Weekly*, 1.3.08.

² *Ibid.*, 16.4.07.

³ *Ibid.*, 18.4.07.

littleness of the petty states that then took its place, and their hearts burned for a renewal of the liberties of the past. The then German Universities instituted certain young-men's clubs which were after all very indirectly political. Their watchwords were of the vaguest kind, their ideals romantic and seen but in the far distance. Above all, they were in no way private societies; all that they said or did they shouted loudly to the world in the highways and market places. But all the same, they excited the distrust and alarm of the Government and the reason was not far to seek. The clubs were organised and a joint principle and action ran through them. Besides their social aspects, they were held together by one and the same enthusiasm of patriotism which unless diluted by a considerable dose of loyalty can go any length.

“As an outcome of the patriotic feeling which was then very strong in the Universities, the students also began to celebrate their national festivals with much pomp and ceremony. Luther had always represented to young Germany much more than a merely religious reformer. They recognised in him an illustrious patriot, a veritable German. More than that they thought of him as the champion of liberty and the enemy of oppression and tyranny. So they set themselves to celebrate the festivals in memory of this great reformer with a view to cultivate patriotism. The students and professors delivered speeches on these occasions and threw to the bonfire books which by their unpatriotic tone won for their authors the favour of the Government. The real political significance of such a strange medley of religious and patriotic feeling with the rowdyism always natural to young men of strong digestion assembling together was clearly very small. Historians have held that, had no notice been taken by those in authority of these national festivals, their fanciful follies would soon have been universally forgotten.

“But the childish rage of the authors whose works had been burnt in the festivals, led them to imagine that there lay in them the germs of a revolution. Reigns of terror, communism, the guillotine—all these they developed with true despotic ingenuity from the speeches and bonfires at these festivals.

“We have given above a bit of history to illustrate the truth that autocratic governments have never tolerated the sort of education which kindles in the minds of a subject people a desire for freedom or greatness. The cry for loyalty will be consistently raised when education promises to set the mind to work for national greatness. It is not in vain that the ruling authorities have all been expressing their anxiety to make our young men loyal and obedient. It is not in vain that they are so anxious to tighten their hold on education.

“The friends of national education should now be specially on their guard. Caution and timidity will prove no safety. The dull and languid

course of the movement is at present its chief security. If the whole country takes it up enthusiastically and it yields good results from our point of view, the bureaucracy will either assume its control or stop it in no time. The educational speeches of the rulers and University authorities give us an earnest of what they mean to do with regard to the national education movement. It is now time to put it in charge of men who are determined to maintain its integrity fearless of fall or consequence.”¹

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

¹ *Ibid.*, 22.3.08.

SRI AUROBINDO ON INDIA'S DESTINY

(With the article from Bandemataram reproduced below, we conclude the series we have been publishing under the above heading on the theme that the movement of Indian independence which Sri Aurobindo inaugurated in Bengal in the early years of the century had a divine sanction behind it and was planned by no human agency. We shall in the sequel revert to the main issue, namely, the destiny of independent India)

THE GLORY OF GOD IN MAN*

WHOEVER is still under the influence of intellectual pride, is shocked when people depreciate the reason as the supreme guide. He asks how is it possible for a man of culture to depreciate the reason and exalt some extraneous influence like that which people call God ? But these doubters are under the influence of European materialism which tries to confine man to his material portion and deny him the possibility of a divine origin and a divine destiny.

When Europe left Christianity to the monk and the ascetic and forgot the teachings of the Galilean, she exposed herself to a terrible fate which will yet overtake her. God in man is the whole revelation and the whole of religion. What Christianity taught dimly, Hinduism made plain to the intellect in Vedanta. When India remembers the teaching she received from Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Madhva, when she realises what Sri Ramakrishna came to reveal, then she will rise. Her very life is Vedanta.

If anyone thinks that we are merely intellectual beings, he is not a Hindu. Hinduism leaves the glorification of intellectuality to those who have never seen God. She is commissioned by Him to speak only of his greatness and majesty and she has so spoken for thousands of years. When we first received a European education, we allowed ourselves to be misled by the light of science. Science is a light within a limited room, not the sun which illumines the world. The *aparā vidyā* is the sum of science but there is a higher *vidyā*, a mightier knowledge. When we are under the influence of the lower knowledge, we imagine that we are doing everything and try to reason out the situation we find ourselves in, as if our intellect were sovereign and omnipotent. But this

* Bandemataram Weekly, 1-3-1908.

is an attitude of delusion and *māyā*. Whoever has once felt the glory of God within him can never again believe that the intellect is supreme. There is a higher voice, there is a more unfailing oracle. It is in the heart where God resides. He works through the brain, but the brain is only one of his instruments. Whatever the brain may plan, the heart knows first and whoever can go beyond the brain to the heart, will hear the voice of the Eternal. This is what Srijut Aurobindo Ghose said in his Bombay speech.¹ But our contemporary, the *Indian Patriot* has lamented his downfall from the high pedestal of culture he once occupied. Our contemporary has forgotten the teachings of Vevekananda which were once so powerful in Madras. What does he think was the cause of the great awakening in Bengal ?

When Lord Curzon thought to rend Bengal asunder, he deprived her of all her old pride and reliance upon her intellectual superiority. She had thought to set her wits against British power, and believed that the intellect of her sons would be a match for the clumsy brains of the English statesman. Lord Curzon showed her that power is too direct and invincible to be outwitted. The brains of Bengal did their best to cope with him and they failed. No course remained to Bengal which her intellect could suggest. But when she was utterly reduced to despair, the time came for her own power to awake and set itself against that of the foreigner. She flung aside the devices of the Greek and took on herself the majesty of Roman strength and valour. When she declared Boycott, she did so without calculation, without reckoning chances, without planning how the Boycott could succeed. She simply declared it. Was the intellect at work when she declared it ? Was it her leaders who planned it as a means of bringing the British to their knees ?

Everybody knows that it was not so. It was Kishoreganj, it was Magura, the obscure villages and towns of East Bengal which first declared the Boycott. What brain planned it, what voice first uttered it, history will never be able to discover. None planned it, but it was in the heart of the nation and God revealed it. If human brains had thought over the matter, Boycott would never have been declared. Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal is the most powerful brain at present at work in Bengal, but Srijut Bipin Chandra has himself often related that he was opposed to the Boycott in its inception, because his intellect refused to assent to the economic possibility of Boycott. So with all the men who were then the recognised brains and voices of Bengal. Only the nation had boycott in their hearts and the heart of Bengal refused to be silenced by its brain. So Boycott was declared. Had the *Indian Patriot* been the

¹ This has since been published in Sri Aurobindo's *Speeches*, under the heading, "The Present Situation".

mouthpiece of Bengal it would have asked for a plan of operations. But what plan of operations could have been given ?

So we see from this one great example what Sriji Aurobindo Ghose meant when he said that it was God's work and not man's. If the *Indian Patriot* can show us who planned the Boycott, or how it has been guided to success by human intellect, we will accept his view of things. Meanwhile, we shall take leave to approve of the view expressed by Sriji Aurobindo Ghose. God is behind this movement and he does not need anyone to tell him how to bring it to success. He will see to that himself. Whatever plans we may make, we shall find quite useless when the time for action comes. Revolutions are always full of surprises and whoever thinks he can play chess with a revolution will soon find how terrible is the grasp of God and how insignificant the human reason before the whirlwind of his breath. That man only is likely to dominate the chances of a Revolution, who makes no plans but preserves his heart pure for the will of God to declare itself.

The great rule of life is to have no schemes but one unalterable purpose. If the will is fixed on the purpose it sets itself to accomplish, then circumstances will suggest the right course; but the schemer finds himself always tripped up by the unexpected.

Compiled by SANAT K. BANERJI

THE LIFE DIVINE OF SRI AUROBINDO:
ITS LEADING PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

(Classified Excerpts)

SECTION II — THE NATURE OF THE ABSOLUTE

(i) SACHCHIDANANDA

THE Unknowable knowing itself as Sachchidananda is the one supreme affirmation of Vedanta; it contains all the others or on it they depend. This is the one veritable experience that remains when all appearances have been accounted for negatively by the elimination of their shapes and coverings or positively by the reduction of their names and forms to the constant truth that they contain.¹

Sachchidananda of the Vedanta is one existence without a second; all that is, is He. If then evil and suffering exist, it is He that bears the evil and suffering in the creature in whom He has embodied Himself.²

In this creation the real Sachchidananda has to emerge. Man, the individual, has to become and to live as a universal being; his limited mental consciousness has to widen to the superconscious unity in which each embraces all; his narrow heart has to learn the infinite embrace and replace its lusts and discords by universal love and his restricted vital being to become equal to the whole shock of the universe upon it and capable of universal delight; his very physical being has to know itself as no separate entity but as one with and sustaining in itself the whole flow of the indivisible Force that is all things; his whole nature has to reproduce in the individual the unity, the harmony, the oneness-in-all of the supreme Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.³

We know that our world has come forth from Sachchidananda and subsists in His being; we conceive that He dwells in it as the Enjoyer and Knower, Lord and Self; we have seen that our dual terms of sensation, mind, force, being can only be representations of His delight, His conscious force, His divine existence.⁴

This power [of Knowledge and Will] indeed is nothing else than Sachchidananda Himself; it creates nothing which is not in its own self-existence, and

for that reason all cosmic and real Law is a thing not imposed from outside, but from within, all development is self-development, all seed and result are seed of a Truth of things and result of that seed determined out of its potentialities.⁵

But with the extension of our knowledge we discover what this spirit or oversoul [of the Superconscient] is : it is ultimately our own highest deepest vastest Self, it is apparent on its summits or by reflection in ourselves as Sachchidananda creating us and the world by the power of His divine Knowledge-Will, spiritual, supramental, truth-conscious, infinite. That is the real Being, Lord and Creator, who, as the Cosmic Self veiled in Mind and Life and Matter, has descended into that which we call the Inconscient and constitutes and directs its subconscious existence by His supramental will and knowledge...⁶

This Divine Being, Sachchidananda, is at once impersonal and personal : it is an Existence and the origin and foundation of all truths, forces, powers, existences, but it is also the one transcendent Conscious Being and the All-Person of whom all conscious beings are the selves and personalities; for He is their highest Self and the universal indwelling Presence.⁷

The presence of the spirit is there in every living being, on every level, in all things, and because it is there, the experience of Sachchidananda, of the pure spiritual existence and consciousness, of the delight of a divine presence, closeness, contact can be acquired through the mind or the heart or the life-sense or even through the physical consciousness; if the inner doors are flung sufficiently open, the light from the sanctuary can suffuse the nearest and the farthest chambers of the outer being.⁸

(ii) EXISTENCE AND THE EXISTENT (SAT)

If this indefinable, infinite, timeless, spaceless Existence is, it is necessarily a pure absolute. It cannot be summed up in any quantity or quantities, it cannot be composed of any quality or combination of qualities...If all forms, quantities, qualities were to disappear, this would remain. Existence without quantity, without quality, without form is not only conceivable, but it is the one thing we can conceive behind these phenomena.⁹

For the Force that builds the worlds is a conscious Force, the Existence which manifests itself in them is conscious Being and a perfect emergence of its potentialities in form is the sole object which we can rationally conceive for its manifestation of this world of forms.¹⁰

We may, therefore, if we will, pose eight principles instead of seven, and then we perceive that our existence is a sort of refraction of the divine existence, in inverted order of ascent and descent, thus ranged,—

Existence	Matter
Consciousness-Force	Life
Bliss	Psyche
Supermind	Mind. ¹¹

An absolute, eternal and infinite Self-existence, Self-awareness, Self-delight of being that secretly supports and pervades the universe even while it is also beyond it, is, then, the first truth of spiritual experience. But this truth of being has at once an impersonal and a personal aspect; it is not only Existence, it is the one Being absolute, eternal and infinite.¹²

(iii) BEING (AND COSMIC BEING)

But this conscious Being which is the truth of the infinite supermind, is more than the universe and lives independently in Its own inexpressible infinity as well as in the cosmic harmonies. World lives by That, That does not live by the world. And as we can enter into the cosmic consciousness and be one with all cosmic existence, so we can enter into the world-transcending consciousness and become superior to all cosmic existence.¹³

Pure Being is the affirmation by the Unknowable of Itself as the free base of all cosmic existence. We give the name of Non-Being to a contrary affirmation of Its freedom from all cosmic existence,—freedom, that is to say, from all positive terms of actual existence which consciousness in the universe can formulate to itself, even from the most abstract, even from the most transcendent. It does not deny them as a real expression of Itself, but It denies Its limitation by all expression or any expression whatsoever. The Non-Being permits the Being, even as the Silence permits the Activity. By this simultaneous negation and affirmation, not mutually destructive, but complementary to each other like all contraries, the simultaneous awareness of conscious Self-being as a reality and the Unknowable beyond as the same Reality becomes realisable to the awakened human soul.¹⁴

Since, then, eternal and immutable delight of being moving out into infinite and variable delight of becoming is the root of the whole matter, we have to conceive one indivisible conscious Being behind all our experiences supporting them by its inalienable delight and effecting by its movement the varia-

tions of pleasure, pain and neutral indifference in our sensational existence. That is our real self...¹⁵

In that spacious equality of oneness [of the comprehensive Supermind] the Being is not divided and distributed; equably self-extended, pervading its extension as One, inhabiting as One the multiplicity of forms, it is everywhere at once the single and equal Brahman. For this extension of the Being in Time and Space and this pervasion and indwelling is in intimate relation with the absolute Unity from which it has proceeded, with that absolute Indivisible in which there is no centre or circumference but only the timeless and spaceless One. That high concentration of unity in the unextended Brahman must necessarily translate itself in the extension by this equal pervasive concentration, this indivisible comprehension of all things, this universal undistributed immanence, this unity which no play of multiplicity can abrogate or diminish. "Brahman is in all things all things are in Brahman, all things are Brahman", is the triple formula of the comprehensive Supermind, a single truth of self manifestation in three aspects which it holds together and inseparably in its self-view as the fundamental knowledge from which it proceeds to the play of the cosmos.¹⁶

The Supermind then is Being moving out into a determinative self-knowledge which perceives certain truths of itself and wills to realise them in a temporal and spatial extension of its own timeless and spaceless existence. Whatever is in its own being, takes form as self-knowledge, as Truth Consciousness, as Real-Idea, and, that self-knowledge being also self-force, fulfils or realises itself inevitably in Time and Space.¹⁷

In its supreme status the Spirit is the supreme Conscious Being, Purushottama, and the Consciousness-Force is his supreme Nature, Para-Prakriti. In each status of the gradations of Nature, the Spirit takes a poise of its being proper to that gradation; in Mind-Nature it becomes the mental being, in Life-Nature it becomes the vital being, in nature of Matter it becomes the physical being, in supermind it becomes the Being of Knowledge; in the supreme spiritual status it becomes the Being of Bliss and pure Existence. In us, in the embodied individual, it stands behind all as the psychic Entity, the inner Self supporting the other formulations of our consciousness and spiritual existence.¹⁸

The Being can have three different states of its consciousness with regard to its own eternity. The first is that in which there is the immobile status

of the Self in its essential existence, self-absorbed or self-conscious, but in either case without development of consciousness in movement or happening : this is what we distinguish as its timeless eternity. The second is its whole-consciousness of the successive relations of all things belonging to a destined or an actually proceeding manifestation, in which what we call past, present and future stand together as if in a map or settled design or very much as an artist or painter or architect might hold all the detail of his work viewed as a whole, intended or reviewed in his mind or arranged in a plan for execution : this is the stable status or simultaneous integrality of Time....The third status is that of a progressive movement of Consciousness-Force and its successive working out of what has been seen by it in the static vision of the Eternal ; this is the Time movement. But it is in one and the same Eternity that this triple status exists and the movement takes place.¹⁹

It is our first premise that the Absolute is the supreme reality ; but the issue is whether all else that we experience is real or unreal. A distinction is sometimes made between being and existence, and it is supposed that being is real but existence or what manifests as such is unreal. But this can stand only if there is a rigid distinction, a cut and separation between the uncreated Eternal and the created existences ; the uncreated Being can then be taken as alone real. This conclusion does not follow if what exists is form of Being and substance of Being ; it would be unreal only if it were a form of Non-Being, *asat*, created out of the Void, *śūnya*.²⁰

There is also a status of the Supreme in which no distinction can be made between being and consciousness,—for they are too much one there to be thus differentiated,—but this supreme status of being is also a supreme status of the power of being and therefore of the power of consciousness ; for the force of being and the force of its consciousness are one there and cannot be separated : it is this unification of eternal Being with the eternal Consciousness-Force that is the status of the supreme Ishwara, and its force of being is the dynamis of the Absolute.²¹

The Being, the Self-existent sees all existences in its one existence ; it contains them all and knows them as being of its being, consciousness of its consciousness, power of its power, bliss of its bliss ; it is at the same time, necessarily, the Self in them and knows all in them by its pervadingly indwelling selfness : but still all this awareness exists intrinsically, self-evidently, automatically, without the need of any act, regard or operation of knowledge ; for knowledge here is not an act, but a state pure, perpetual and inherent.²²

MOTHER INDIA

But if we can suppose a One Consciousness, or a One Energy, creating a multitude of figures of itself and accommodating in its world a plurality of beings, there is no difficulty in supposing a one original Being who supports or expresses himself in a plurality of beings,—souls or spiritual powers of his one-existence; it would follow also that all objects, all the figures of consciousness would be figures of the Being.²³

The Being is one, but this oneness is infinite and contains in itself an infinite plurality or multiplicity of itself: the One is the All; it is not only an essential Existence, but an All-Existence.²⁴

It is a fact that the cosmic Being expresses itself through the individual being, but also it is a truth that the Transcendent Reality expresses itself through both the individual existence and the Cosmos; the soul is an eternal portion of the Supreme and not a fraction of Nature. But equally any view that sees the universe as existent only in the individual consciousness must very evidently be a fragmentary truth: it is justified by a perception of the universality of the spiritual individual and his power of embracing the whole universe in his consciousness; but neither the cosmos nor the individual consciousness is the fundamental truth of existence; for both depend upon and exist by the transcendental Divine Being.²⁵

In this integration [of mind and life with the spiritual consciousness] the supracosmic Reality stands as the supreme Truth of being, to realise it is the highest reach of our consciousness. But it is this highest Reality which is also the cosmic being, the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic will and life; it has put these things forth, not outside itself but in its own being, not as an opposite principle but as its own self-unfolding and self-expression. Cosmic being is not a meaningless freak or phantasy or a chance error; there is a divine significance and truth in it: the manifold self-expression of the spirit is its high sense, the Divine itself is the key of its enigma. A perfect self-expression of the spirit is the object of our terrestrial existence.²⁶

(IV) DIVINE BEING

...it is through self-giving or surrender of soul and nature to the Divine Being that we can attain to our highest self and supreme Reality, for it is the Divine Being who is that highest self and that supreme Reality, and we are self-existent and eternal only in his eternity and by his self-existence.²⁷

The Divine Being is not incapable of taking innumerable forms because He is beyond all forms in His essence, nor by assuming them does He lose His

divinity, but pours out rather in them the delight of His being and the glories of His godhead; this gold does not cease to be gold because it shapes itself into all kinds of ornaments and coins itself into many currencies and values, nor does the Earth-Power, principle of all this figured material existence, lose her immutable divinity because she forms herself into habitable worlds, throws herself out in the hills and hollows and allows herself to be shaped into utensils of the hearth and household or as hard metal into the weapon and the engine.²⁸

It is a necessity for the soul in the universe—and therefore the inner trend of the evolutionary Energy and its ultimate intention—to know and to grow into this truth of itself, to become one with the Divine Being, to raise its nature to the Divine Nature, its existence into the Divine Existence, its consciousness into the Divine Consciousness, its delight of being into the divine Delight of Being, and to receive all this into its becoming, to make the becoming an expression of that highest Truth, to be possessed inwardly of the Divine Self and Master of its existence and to be at the same time wholly possessed by Him and moved by His Divine Energy and live and act in a complete self-giving and surrender.²⁹

In this last category [the integral view] would fall our view of our existence here as a Becoming with Divine Being for its origin and its object, a progressive manifestation, a spiritual evolution with the supracosmic for its source and support, the other worldly for a condition and connecting link and the cosmic and the terrestrial for its field, and with human mind and life for its nodus and turning-point of release towards a higher and a highest perfection.³⁰

For this new consciousness [of the spiritual being] has itself the nature of infinity : it brings to us the abiding spiritual sense and awareness of the infinite and eternal with a great largeness of the nature and a breaking down of its limitations; immortality becomes no longer a belief or an experience but a normal self-awareness; the close presence of the Divine Being, his rule of the world and of our self and natural members, his force working in us and everywhere, the peace of the infinite, the joy of the infinite are now concrete and constant in the being; in all sights and forms one sees the Eternal, the Reality, in all sounds one hears it, in all touches feels it; there is nothing else but its forms and personalities and manifestations; the joy or adoration of the heart, the embrace of all existence, the unity of the spirit are abiding realities.³¹

Compiled by NATHANIEL PEARSON

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TWO POEMS

GIVE ME A SMILE

RUBIES of thy ring I shall fashion for thee
With the purest drops of my heart's blood,
And pearls for thy necklace with warm tears,
Thy flowing robe of pale apple-blossom hue
* I shall weave out of pink and white gossamer-dreams.
The rose-buds for thy shimmering hair
Shall come from my hidden fields of sleep.
The tender petals of lotus in the mystic soul
Shall create the sandals for thy delicate feet.
What would I not do to win a smile from thee !
Give me a smile to lighten
The burden of my unending journey.
A fall becomes a passionate challenge
To rise to dizzy heights,
Death blossoms into a joyous life
With the sweetness of thy radiant smile.

THY ENEMY

TELL me, my heart, is he thy enemy
Who launched thee into adventure and glory
By demolishing the magic ring of thy cloistered happiness ?
Or the woman you adored who chased thee from her door
To plunge thee into the open arms of the Lord ?
Sing, my heart, a kinder friend than those is hard to find.
O Great Mother, we feel thy love in disaster
When thy glow consumes the night of the soul.

NIRANJAN GUHA ROY

SIGNPOSTS AND SYMBOLS

("VINGT-ET-UNS)

3

My craft had drifted unto uncharted seas
And stranded afar on perilous faery shores :
The spectral shades of sheerly-rising cliffs
Flitted about, huge monstrous hooded shapes
Casting weird spells o'er sleeping fiords benumbed;
And fitful blasts that blew chill ominous notes
Sent eerie shivers into its fibres frail;
And chameleon skies that hourly changed their hues
Helped but to mock its flagging plight the more !

For long it stood there, a derelict phantom-thing,
A warmth part-petrified, part-flickering unsure,
With hardly a vestige or one memory-stir
Of its grand adventures under stately skies,
Its palmgrove-passage, its caresses wild
With lusty trade-winds, its wayward pricks and pranks
With wave-tossed wealth of lavish tropical sun !

But the waters stirred at last—and a gale struck
Full on the flapping sails—and quivering, rocking,
Nightmare-blasted, reverie-shaken, it moved
Pulsing to life, and soon was seen aswing
Over blithesome billows rolling under heaven-free Bonus of Light !

SIGNPOSTS AND SYMBOLS

4

I CLOSE the shutters of my senses fast
And take a plunge into my inmost depths :
The surging din and mounting roar of Life
Batter their last vain desperate swamping charge
Athwart sense-buttresses, and sink, and die :
And with them sinks and dies a self of mine.

And now I'm dissolved into two counter-selves,
Dissolved and sent adrift unto diverse seas :
One trailing heavenwards, a fiery flake,
Seeking its natal home among the stars;
The other sinking heavily, a clayey speck,
To darksome nether-haunts of monsters grim,
Gaunt shapes and shades grotesque, obscurity's breed,
Replete with secrets all unguessed, untold !

But wait, what Self is this that stands on void
And mediates twixt twin-infinities ?—
A Self that calls on stars to yield their fire,
And strains the waters till they submit and serve
Their alchemy of 'something rich and strange' ?—
A self that fuses selves diffused even now,
And emerges finally, bath-newborn, back to Life ?

CHIMANBHAI

SECOND SIGHT

I SEE not only the flower in her tenderness,
Nor the butterfly in his beauty,
I see his poignance in her fragrance
And her petals in his wings.

I see not only the candle in her flame,
Nor the moth in his flutters,
I see his passion in her light
And her gold in his sacrifice.

I see not only the river in her flow,
Nor the ocean in his waves,
I see his vastness in her heart
And her modesty in his glory.

I see not only the worshipper in her humility,
Nor the deity in his power,
I see his firmness in her penance
And her surrender in his boon.

SHIV SHARAN DIKSHIT

THUS SANG MY SOUL

(33)

VIII. MOTHERING THE BOND OF LOVE : PRAYERS AND PRAISES

(Continued)

62. THY LOVE ALONE I CRAVE !

O MOTHER, let me put apart
All knowings of my brain,
Open my simple seeking heart
To the flow of Thy love's main.

Let my ingeniousness of mind
Lie at Thy Feet prostrate,
All my surrendered longings find
Sole solace at Thy gate.

O keep my silenced poise above
World's glory, show and pride;
To hold the nectar of Thy love
Make my soul-chalice wide.

My eager and intense emotions
Shorn of all self I pleat,
A garland of profound devotions,
Around Thy saviour Feet.

Leaving all world behind I come,
Thy love alone I crave.
With Thee alone my soul's at home,
Disown me now or save !

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

THOUGHTS

O Mother, in great depths lie hidden the roots of my difficulties, and their number is legion. What shall I do ? I pray to Thee :

Dig deep in me with the glance of Thy Grace and pluck the roots and the difficulties they breed. No, do not stop short there. Rather burn the whole brood to cinders. And scatter them to the four winds.

O supremely puissant Mother, make me immune from the setbacks that the goblins born of the Inconscient inflict on me.

Clear from my path the hurdles that impede me.

*

*

It is ridiculous to desire to give to Thee. Thou art the giver and all that I have to do is to learn the art of using Thy gifts according to Thy Will.

The eagerness to give and the anxiety to receive suggest that a gulf million miles in width yawns between Thee and me. This gulf has to be bridged.

And afterwards ?

All giving and receiving is to be done without the slightest notion of giving to someone else or receiving from someone else.

Life is to be lived on this earth but a life unsullied by the taints of matter.

*

*

O Supreme, what tie links Thee with the lowest ? That Thou kissest it with the rays of Thy light is a fact Why then hast Thou flung it away so far from Thee ?

That Thou hast use of its works and services is a fact, Why then, keeping Thyself smiling, hast Thou kept it so engulfed in gloom ?

The Supreme smiled more and spoke : Tell me with what tie are the roots of a banyan tree bound with the branches ? Learn to look all round. Thus you shall see a single majestic Reality both pervading the highest and the lowest.

GIRDHARLAL

(Translated from the author's Gujarati "Uṣarāma")

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

INTERVIEWS

(Continued)

BEFORE 1945, for officials or men of note arrangements were made in Pavitra's room to meet the Mother. When the playground activities started, she gave interviews after 5 p.m. in the eastern end of the School Playground. Afterwards it was shifted to a specially furnished room in the centre. In this room there is a photo of the Master. Below the photo there is a complete map of India with the Mother's symbol in the centre. Facing the door, on the floor inside, there used to be artistic flower-designs from day to day.

When the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, paid a visit to the Ashram, a special arrangement was made in the Meditation Hall downstairs in the main Ashram building, as he was medically advised not to climb stairs. Old Persian hangings were put up on the walls. Green Velvet was spread on the floor. The half hour that he spent in the Ashram he was all the time with the Mother and could find no time to see the various activities of the Ashram.

During the interview the Mother told the President, "India must rise to the height of her mission and proclaim the Truth to the world."

Later, a group of children, belonging to all nationalities in the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, were presented to the President and he posed for photographs with them.

A photo of the President with the Mother was published in the *Hindu*. The *Daily Post* in its November 16 1955 issue wrote: "It transpires that one of the subjects they discussed was the international situation."

Acharya Vinoba Bhave came with his party in July 1956. After going round the Ashram Granary and Bakery and seeing the long sea-wall erected by the Ashram engineers, he visited the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education and took special interest in the system of education introduced by the Mother. At an informal gathering he said that he was always telling foreigners that they should at least see three things in India—viz. Gandhi Ashram, Santiniketan and Sri Aurobindo Ashram, because all these institutions were working for the world.

When he went up for an interview with the Mother and asked for her blessings, the Mother said :

MOTHER INDIA

“You are doing your work perfectly well. So I have nothing to say.”

“Still I like to hear something.”

“Aspire for the Divine, work for the Divine.” With these words the Mother gave him the flower of blessings.

Addressing his prayer meeting in words of fire Bhaveji laid great stress on the importance of Indian spirituality and added in a forceful tone that it was India's spirituality and culture that could make India great and raise her in the estimation of the world. For it was the spiritual knowledge which could inspire people to rise above the petty material things and induce them to work for the noble cause of mankind.

What Prime Minister Nehru stated, in reply to the civic address in the local Town Hall, will ever remain ringing in the history of Pondicherry. He asked the people of Pondicherry to remember that the inclusion of this area was not merely the result of a political bargain nor would it serve a mere political aim as an enlargement of territory. He saw in Pondicherry a distinct individuality and a unique character which was more important than anything else. It was indeed this underlying necessity which ultimately brought about a peaceful settlement of the difficult question of transfer of power. *The preservation of this individuality would contribute in a large measure to India's much-cherished ideal of a unity in diversity.* That individuality, it may be noted, had resulted from the immixture of France and India, two great countries of the East and the West, through two centuries or more...”

Pandit Nehru came to visit the Ashram at 11 a.m. (January 16, 1955). The Ashram accorded him a cordial welcome. The Ashram boys and girls (J.S.A.-S.A.) beginning with the youths and ending with the infant section formed a Guard of Honour lining his route from the street through the inside courtyard up to the Meditation Hall. He was received by the Secretary and others at the gate. He regarded the boys with intent eyes as he passed to pay homage to the Samadhi.

While passing, Panditji was shown in the Reception Room a plaster model of the representation of Pondicherry State intended for the ceremonial parade held every year at Delhi on January 26. The model was conceived by the Mother and executed by the Ashram artists and craftsmen; it stood on a boat, incidentally to remind one of the seaboard of the four once-French settlements of Pondicherry, Karikal, Yenam and Mahé. Four lions, symbols for India, guarded the boat at both ends. The four sides of the central platform were adorned by four statues, thus representing the four continents : Buddha stood for Asia, Pallas Athene of Greece for Europe, Isis of Egypt for Africa and the Statue of Liberty for America.

At the centre, surrounded by these statues, there were eight columns

decorated with white and red lotuses which signify the spiritual power at work for the victorious realisation of the divine destiny for all mankind.

On top of the pillars rested a globe of the world flanked on one side by an Indian woman holding in her hand a palm leaf representing victory and on the other by a Frenchwoman holding the olive branch of peace.

On the globe descended the white bird of peace with its wings half spread out. Pundit Nehru liked immensely this representation in bluish granite finish and asked whether it was possible to carry it to the capital.

As he was going up to the Mother, the youngest child at the end of the Guard offered him a bouquet of roses and greeted him with "Jai Hind." He was then closeted with the Mother upstairs for about twenty minutes.

From the Ashram he went to the Library where he was introduced to seven nationals from America, Germany, France, England, China, Iran and Switzerland. He presented to our Library his silk-bound Abhinandan Grantha (Nehru Commemorative Volume) with his autograph in Hindi.

After the official functions he came to the Playground in the evening. As he entered the gate, the Ashram Band struck up the Bandemataram. The Mother received him and seated him by her side. The Ashram children gave a recitation in 12 different languages of a passage of *The Mother* by Sri Aurobindo. The item of Swedish rhythmic ball drill, unique of its kind in India, performed by the Ashram girls, drew spontaneous applause from Pandit Nehru. He also appreciated highly the vaulting and agility exercises as well as the little ones' 'symbol drill.' The programme ended with the Band playing Jana Gana Mana.

During Nehru's second visit to Pondicherry, his coming to the Ashram was no part of the official programme. Towards the end of the official functions he inquired where the Mother could be met at that time. "At the playground," he was told.

Then he cut short the rest of the programme and drove out without security escort to see the Mother.

Indira Gandhi had preceded him and was with the Mother. She was visibly touched by the Mother's affectionate way of welcome.

Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, the then Finance Minister of India, was chosen by the Mother for the Enshrinement of Sri Aurobindo's relics in the Delhi branch of the Ashram. In his address he said : "My acquaintance with the early life and work of Sri Aurobindo goes back to my school days...It was not till about three years ago that, accompanied by my wife, I had the good fortune to visit the Pondicherry Ashram....We returned greatly impressed and stimulated and decided to take an early opportunity of revisiting the Ashram....Sri Aurobindo

taught that humanity is not the highest Godhead, that God is more than humanity....”¹

Giving his impressions about the Ashram he said, “The Yoga Ashram at Pondicherry is, in fact, a unique spiritual laboratory. It is a dynamic phase of Sri Aurobindo’s Yoga. All the Sadhakas are one in the Mother; all meditate in the presence of the Mother. The Ashram is but the rough sketch of the Promised Land.”²

The approach of Dr. Harekrishna Mahtab and Sri R.R. Diwaker, Governors of Bombay and Behar respectively, was that of a sadhak. The former had an interview with the Mother for about an hour on September 13th 1956. He dined at the Ashram Guest House and spent the night there.

Early next morning he joined us at the balcony to have *Darshan* of the Mother.

At lunch time he was with us at the Common Dining Hall.

Dr. Mahtab, after returning to Bombay, wrote the following lines to a sadhak of the Ashram :

“I felt spiritually elevated while I was in the Ashram. I was convinced that without divine blessings a human being cannot achieve anything....I am remembering almost every moment of my meeting with the Mother. The entire atmosphere there was something ennobling. I shall visit the Ashram again for a longer period after I settle down in Orissa. I shall be writing to you now and then. Kindly convey my obeisance to the Mother.” (*Dated Bombay, Raj Bhavan, September 28, 1956*)

Sri R.R. Diwaker who has been an admirer of Sri Aurobindo from his school days had agreed to perform the opening of the building for the Charthwal Centre. When all Delhi was enthusiasm itself over the visit of the American President Eisenhower, Sri Diwaker was one of the invitees to the state banquet. His friend advised him not to miss the opportunity. And when Dharmbir came from Charthawal and saw Sri Diwaker’s secretary, the latter said, “He has changed his programme, he cannot go to your place.” When Dharmbir met Diwaker, the latter said, “No, no. I am ready to go,” and he started with him by car. When the organiser of the centre gave him thanks for his sacrifice he said in reply that he could have excused himself by sending a wire about his inability to attend but he could not, because some unseen power had impelled him to come there.

C. F. Baron, who was once the Governor of Pondicherry during the French regime, said in the course of his speech: “I have very often seen the

¹ For details *vide* his Enshrinement Address published in the *Pioneer of the Supramental Age*.

² *Ibid.*

Mother and had long talks with her....She is the greatest lady that I have met in the world.”

“There is nothing in my life that I could compare with the impression the Mother gave,” wrote O. Wolff from Germany to an Ashramite. He had visited the Ashram with his wife in 1955.

Let us close this chapter with the interview and impression of a notable figure, Vedmurti Mahamahopadyaya Pandit Sripad Damoder Satwalekar, Sahitya Vachaspati, Gitalankar, author of two volumes of commentary on the Gita in English and 30 volumes on the Veda. He has made a life-long study of the Veda, and its interpretation. He visited the Ashram on 29th July '60 and remained here up to 17th August as an honoured guest. He had an interview with the Mother on July 30, just a day after his arrival.

His eyes lit up as he recounted his reminiscences. From the very day of his decision to come he had been, he said, feeling the Mother's Presence within him and undertook the journey from Surat to Madras all alone, having no difficulty on the way. As he was alighting from the train at Madras, he was met by a gentleman waiting to receive him and he drove him in his car to the Ashram.

The interview was mostly in silence and meditation. In meditation he saw six to seven gates of different hues, opening in his heart one after another. He also saw his own being steeped in white light.

As long as he remained, he experienced the Presence of the Mother more and more. In the activities of the Ashram, he was moved to his depths to see the Mother's power at work everywhere. He said, “The thing for which I was praying for the last fifty or sixty years, the dream I cherished all these years I see in living forms here. Perhaps after the Vedic age for the first time this kind of thing is being attempted. The whole process of sadhana is based here on Vedic principles. My heart overflows with joy to see that all that is hinted at in the Vedas is trying to find its fulfilment here in one way or another.”

Ravindra, who had been asked by the Mother to show him round the Ashram and whom Panditji has given his personal impressions, reports :

“We all know that once Gandhi lamented that he had put in so much effort to do away with casteism but saw no sign of the evil giving way. Pandit Satwalekar said : ‘Here I see not a trace of casteism anywhere. What a change the Mother has brought about here ! However, this is a thing which one can understand and appreciate with the mind. But it is simply a miracle that young boys and girls are allowed to meet without the least bit of scruple in the Ashram, in the school, in the playground and anywhere else. Here co-education, academic and physical, has raised no problem.’

“Panditji said further : ‘The Mother makes no distinction between men and women. It is a great experiment indeed. It seems to me the Mother is trying to found a purely spiritual society. The Veda recognises no sex-distinction. It looks as if the Mother wants to create a Society where relations would be as between soul and soul. Bodily difference does not count. Fault-finding minds may detect defects here and there, I also do not say that it is all perfect but the attempt is definitely in the direction envisaged by the Veda, and I am sure that the Mother’s efforts will one day meet with success.’

“One department of the Ashram has been named Prosperity by the Mother. When Satwalekarji was told that the inmates could have soap, oil, clothes etc., from this department, he broke out in ecstasy : ‘Here we can see spirituality taking a true form. Nowhere in the Veda is there the gospel of *Sannyas*. Everywhere we come across prayers for prosperity, fire and force, *tejas* and *ojas*, even material things. Nowhere one sees the scene of poverty, nobody living the life of a destitute, passing his days at the foot of a tree, clad in rags with total renunciation of material things. Escape from the world and its concerns and passing one’s days in inert contemplation of the All-High—these things are far from the Vedic way of life. In the Vedic age kings like Janak ruled kingdoms; Rishis like Vasistha stood behind kings to give them counsel. The Rishis never betook themselves to the forest, renouncing the world. These things belong to the dark period of India. I see, to-day, that the Mother insists on prosperity, not austerity. She does not want to leave the world to its fate but to endow it with opulence governed by spirituality. The world itself has to be changed. Here one finds the Vedic age being re-born. No material thing has to be shunned or scorned. Everything is trying to find its own legitimate place.’

“These truths uttered by him are as striking as the wide open receptivity of his scholarly mind.”

It would naturally be too much to expect of a man of 93 to interest himself in the activities of the Playground. But we learn from Ravindra that Panditji is above the common run. He could not contain himself when he saw men and women, boys and girls marching together and taking an equal part in games, sports, even athletics. He spoke out :

“Do you know the real cause of the fall of India ? I attribute it to two things.

“We despised the material world in order to turn to the spiritual, gave more importance to luck than to labour and reduced our women, that is to say, half the Society, into a benumbed mass.

“What a pity ! The country which gave birth to the idea of women as Shakti, the country which gave to gods four to eight hands in the pages of the Puranas but visioned the goddesses as having a hundred and eight hands, that very country

relegated women to a lower level than that of men and deprived them of the right to read the Veda and, worst of all, shut them up within the four walls of the family, lowering their status in Society to being cooks and child-bearing machines.

“I have been praying for years and years : Oh Lord ! Grant that our women may rise again to their rightful place as in the days of yore.

“What we see being done in the country to-day for the advancement of women is far from advancement in its true sense. It is here that I see happy signs of true progress. It is here that the Mother seems to have taken upon herself to raise the status of women. It is here, I repeat, that I sense the Vedic ideal taking form.”

We hear the echo of the Mother’s voice in Satwalekarji’s statement : “Man cannot be reckoned young or old by the length of his years. He who marches on and on is, despite his years, young. He who cannot is old. According to the Veda old age begins after 116. Until one was 80 one could not pass for a full-blown youth; only after 116 or 120 old age could dare set in. Before that, even if death appeared, a true sadhak could defy it and say that his whole life was a ceaseless *yajña* and he must not be stopped from his offering.”

He farther added : “At the time of the Mahabharata Arjuna was 72 and was reckoned as a full-bloomed youth. The oldest among them all was Bhishma and he was about 170. Leave aside olden days, even 1400 years ago, the Chinese pilgrims to India left on record the fact of their meeting men of 140 even in lanes and by-lanes of Indian towns. What the Mother has said is wholly true.”

In his final interview on the eve of his departure the Mother told him “When you come to the Ashram, take it to be your home.”

Back in his own place, he wrote : “I feel here like a *prabāsi*; one far away from home, a sojourner. Every morning I have balcony *darśan* and not a day passes without my feeling the Mother’s Presence.”

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

AS A SPORTS INSTRUCTOR IN INDIA

(This article is by Herr Werner Haubrich who came to the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Pondicherry, on the 1st of September 1958, to conduct a three months' training course in Physical Education for the Physical Education teachers and students of this institution.

A young man of charming personality, a keen and successful sportsman himself, he had taken his diploma of Physical Education from SPORT-HOCHSCHULE, KOLN, MUNGESDORF, WEST GERMANY. An account of his training course with photographs was published in the November 1958 and February 1959 issues of the Bulletin.)

THE German Foreign Office sent me to the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre¹ in Pondicherry, India. My mission was to make our modern methods of physical education known in India.

After staying for four months in Europe, an Indian could hardly write on "Sports in Europe". The same would be true of any account of "Sports in India" after my four-months' stay there. Yet it may be worth while to set forth a few observations based on my experiences in the field of sports in India.

The institution in which I taught for three months is unique. It bears the name of perhaps the greatest modern Indian philosopher, Sri Aurobindo, who, till his passing away in 1950, worked in Pondicherry on the south-east coast of India some 170 km. south of Madras. The co-worker and organiser but above all the spiritual helpmate of Sri Aurobindo was a French lady who today presides over almost 1,500 inmates as "The Mother." Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother enjoy divine veneration. Expounding the philosophy of this Ashram (home for spiritual practitioners and workers) would be beside the point in this article. Here we can speak only about the close relationship between body, soul and mind.

As the mind is exercised each morning in the school, so the body is exercised each afternoon. Everyone here, from the little child to the oldest grey-haired man, is active in sports. Thus physical education is not merely a subject to be learned as mathematics, physics, etc., but is much more; it is part of the philosophy, part of the life. The boys and girls were tough on

¹The name, at that time, of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education (Editor).

the sportsground, soft and tender in their souls, and wide open to spiritual discipline—almost ideal !

After what I have said, it may seem a contradiction when I now say that no distinction is made in the physical education of men and women. The sports items which we consider typical for men only—boxing, rings, hammer-throw, hop-step-jump, pole-vault and football—were done by girls also. A discussion on this point would often arise between the director of sports and myself. Finally no agreement was possible, because this fundamental equality of education for both boys and girls is based on the philosophy of this Ashram. It is assumed that man is evolving towards a state in which the difference of sexes would no longer be present.

Too much organisation in sports often works to lessen the enthusiasm of the participants. But such was not the case here. The boys and girls were on the contrary so full of enthusiasm that my work was made considerably easier. Early morning and late in the evening I instructed them in the main subject—athletics. Besides this, each Sunday I was asked to lecture for an hour on subjects that were given to me, e.g. "History of Physical Education in Europe", "How to be a Successful Athlete", "The Importance of Gymnastics in Physical Education", "Body Mechanics", etc. This institution has at its disposal sportsgrounds and facilities which would do honour to any large city even in Europe. The body-building room is fitted out in American style. What pleased me most was that everything provided for sports was really utilised. And this was not limited to the practical side of sports. A library is attached to the Department of Physical Education where boys and girls acquire some knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and sociology of sports—an opportunity which here with us is reserved for the trainers.

While judging all the theoretical and practical performances I had to allow for the fact that none of these Ashramites does sports as a career. After a 14-days' course of instruction in life-saving and swimming I could give a certificate to 25 boy and girl students because they had fulfilled all the conditions of the fundamental certificates of the German Life Saving Society. This number should be sufficient to give an impression of the level of activities. Exceptional top performances were lacking, but almost everybody was an all-round sportsman. I was happy that after a short time they were not calling me "Coach" any more, but "Saumitra" (Sanskrit—"Brotherly Friend of All").

It is clear that the form of sports which is practised here is not to be considered as typically Indian. One may not be able to imitate it even in other parts of India, not to speak of Europe. Yet there is something we can learn from it. What we strive for in our Physical Education—harmony of body, soul and mind—is realised there, in Pondicherry, in an ideal way.

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As an acknowledgement for my services, the Institute arranged for me a four-weeks' tour in India, by which I became acquainted with the most important centres of art and of Hindu and Buddhist culture, and also saw Indian life in its shocking contrasts. But here in this article we are more interested in sports. I visited a few institutes of Physical Training in Calcutta, Banaras and Bombay. In the school for the trainers in Cuttack, near Calcutta, I was asked to give a lecture on the subject : "Consideration of Different Ages of Life in Physical Education."

I found people much concerned about India's comparatively weak performances in some sports.

It is somewhat astonishing that India has no athletes above average in athletics, boxing, wrestling, weight-lifting, swimming etc. At the second Asian Games in 1954, India could win only five (in athletics) out of 76 competitions. And, at the third Asian Games in 1958 which was held in Tokyo, India secured the 7th place in the total estimation, far behind Japan, the Philippines, China, South Korea, Pakistan and Iran. Even the victory in hockey, in which she seems to have had a monopoly since the Olympic games in 1928, she had to yield to Pakistan, of course only because of the somewhat unfavourable goal points. Even if Pakistan is considered practically, at least in this connection, a part of India, still this defeat has surely affected the Indians severely.

Let us have a look once at the result of Indian athletics, because this makes possible a simple comparison with that of other countries. In the world's ranking list of 1958, in which the 50 best athletes became champions for each item, we find only five times the names of Indian athletes : Long jump 7.55 m. (Ram Mehar, in 32nd place), 200 and 400 m. in 21.2 and 46.6 (Milkha Singh in 37th and 11th places—recently he has improved his performance in 20.8 and 46.3),¹ 400 m. hurdles 52.5 (Jagadish Singh in 39th place) and hop-step-jump 15.62 (Mohindar Singh at 30th place).

When one observes that even these athletes just mentioned stand in their country on a lonely summit, then the question which was often put to me, as to why Indian athletes have shown so little noteworthy performance internationally, is understandable. In our discussion on this point I think we should take into account the following facts :

1) According to the science of sports, the position of sports and sport performances is closely related to the development of civilisation and technique. Now when we think that almost 85% of the Indian population is peasant, living for the most part in very miserable conditions, then this could be an explanation. A playground in a village is something unusual. Even in town schools, physical

¹ Since then Milkha Singh's timing for 400 m. has been improved to 46.1 sec.

culture is not treated as it could be. Thus there is no broad foundation out of which the summit can develop.

2) If what we have said applies to the foundations of physical education, then we have to add, for the special situation of top performances, the lack of qualified trainers. From time to time foreign trainers give a course which is naturally only a stop-gap solution.

3) There is a further reason which should not be taken as a reproach but only as an observation. I had the impression that the training course of an average athlete is only a small fraction of that of a European or an American. This cannot be a reproach because the climate permits no greater burden. I have mentioned very often—and I was not alone in my opinion—that precious time for training is lost because of day-long cricket playing.

If you ask me whether talent is lacking in India, I can answer with absolute certainty, "No", because I have seen too many good athletes with great possibilities. After having observed sports and sportsmen in India, and while drawing comparisons, I ask myself whether the standard of sports in India is indeed as critical as I have been told and as it appears on the basis of performances and statistics, or whether, perhaps sports in India are rather understood as something fundamentally different in their essence from what western countries conceive it. Not the measurable result, not the performance, is the criterion, but body building value, as it shows especially in the typical Indian exercises of "Malkhamb". I think that the study of sport in Pondicherry and generally in India can bring us a liberation from the narrowness of our exaggerated, competitive emphasis on stop watch, tape measure and point system.

WERNER HAUBRICH

(From "Die Leibeserziehung", September 1960)

ON TRANSFORMATION

THE word "transformation" in its common use means change—a change either in the form of a thing or in its consciousness or in both. The sculptor carves out statues from stones, the potter moulds pots and images from clay; the stone and the clay undergo transformation. Storm, earthquake, flood, war and other catastrophes bring about a change in topography, the surface of the earth is transformed at places. Such changes are mainly in objective form in nature. Social thinkers, scientists, philosophers, prophets and seers contribute new ideas and theories and reform old ones in the world of thought and modify thereby, to a certain extent, human conduct and social habits. Changes of this kind relate more to the mental nature of man and society and can be called subjective. Although they cannot be sharply divided into categories as they are interdependent and very often influence one another, still their causes can be identified and attributed to certain agencies. But beyond our common understanding and superficial perception, a transformation is always going on which is universal and eternal and includes all the aspects of existence and the process of which is evolutionary in character. That is to say, it takes place by unfolding the latent potentialities and hidden natures of things and beings by means of working of forces inherent in them. Mother Nature has taken up this work from the very beginning of creation and has been conducting it against heavy odds and immense difficulties. As a result, an onward march of creation from plant to animal and from animal to man has been possible.

From the point of view of this advance, man is infinitely higher than the plant and animal. But from a different angle of vision, he is inferior to them since he has not attained the perfection of his own nature as the plant and animal have done of their own. Man, the mental being, has to establish the mental principles, principles of truth, beauty and good in his life as well as in the life of the society. Has he been able to do that perfectly? Is the life of the individual or of the society beautiful, harmonious, without corruption and degradation? Is it not, on the contrary, full of discord, ill-will, selfishness and most lamentable pettiness and ugliness? On the other hand what do we find in the subhuman state up to the animal? Do we not see that it is most natural and direct, full of vigour, free from hypocrisy, corruptions and the thousand other ills to which humanity has fallen a prey. Sub-conscious and half-conscious instincts and impulses are the directing principles in animal life.

Innocently they accept their guidance, faithfully they obey their dictates and are ignorant of any ideal or ethical conception of life. So they are normal, natural, harmonious, satisfied, established in their *dharma* and have a poise of their own. Man does not seem to have achieved any poise, spontaneity and naturalness of his nature as yet. He is maimed, artificial, devoid of directness and shining simplicity. Why is it so? What is the root cause of his inability? Is there any way out for him or is this distorted manhood his destiny? An intimate look into man's nature and consciousness as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo may help to throw some light on the subject; and then, with a clear sight, the solution of the problem may be sought for.

It can be appreciated without much difficulty that man's nature is not an undivided composite whole. In other words, it is a combination of different powers, forces and propensities. But principally his conduct is governed by the balance between two powers. Firstly and mainly the will central in his life and inherent in his power of action, secondly the influence he receives from the idea in mind to give his life-force a conscious method and order. Unfortunately the conscious mind evolved in man cannot wholly change the life-principle according to its own ideal but can only modify it in an incomplete way. This incapacity of the mind is the basis of man's difficulty and the root cause of his abnormality and disharmony. Man has not become what he has to be, has not attained his true character and *dharma*. Many thinkers and social reformers have understood this fact and have contemplated various means to solve the knotty problem. They have even suggested a natural living in conformity with the life-principle of subhuman types as a remedy. But it is difficult for man to follow that since it is to him to go against his *dharma*. The German philosopher Nietzsche's ideal was on the other hand to become ourselves by exceeding ourselves, to develop superman out of our imperfect manhood. This, in essence, is of course a sound teaching. But the problem remains unsolved unless we know what is our real self. Surely it is not our mind and intellect nor the magnified vital ego. For, none of them can give us the secure poise and spontaneity which we seek.

The double nature in man, one part animal and the other rational, is the cause of his unease. The rational ideas are only a super-imposition on the life and body. Mind is incapable of transforming life in its own image. The rare individuals who appear to have effected a kind of transformation and led an entirely artistic and intellectual life have done so at the cost of impoverishment of their vital and physical life. In such cases, the vital principles can be kept under check for the time being, but in the long run the essential elements in life must find their way out to re-establish themselves or else they completely die making the life of the individuals and society empty of dynamic force and aspiration and

finally bringing about the death of the society. Such results are not uncommon in history. If, instead, the mind is subordinated to physical and vital principles, the danger comes in a different way. Such a condition we find in our modern civilisation of economic and commercial expansion and physical and vital comfort—which may otherwise be termed commercial barbarism. In this case, the titanic development of the vital living carries within itself the possibility of death and extinction by the powerful nations' conflict for the domination and enjoyment of the world. But before that actually happens, a nobler ethic and reason may come in the fore-front to give a better organisation and order to the individual, national and international life. That also will be doomed to failure unless the secret of the solution which is not in the mental ethic or intellect, however nobler it might be, is found.

The solution lies in the awakening in us of our true self, our psychic, spiritual, and supramental self and the pursuit of an ancient ideal, i.e., "the establishment of the kingdom of God". This pursuit must be integral and should not stop short at the midway by creating a separation between life and spirit. It should neither escape by departure to another world or make a compromise between life and spirit. The imposition of spiritual ideas or fixed rules on the mind and life of the community should not also be the final goal. All these have already been followed by the society in the past, and perhaps this is one of the reasons why spirituality has mistakenly served as the cause of weakness and lack of energy and vigour in India and other Asiatic countries.

Herein comes the question of the necessity of spiritual transformation. The process of this transformation will also, no doubt, be evolutionary in character, but with this difference that whereas in its unaided usual course evolution takes an infinitely long time to effect a decisive change, with the conscious co-operation of the awakened souls the change is expected to come about at a more than usual intensity and speed. It demands the transference of the will and power in the vital to a higher consciousness and will and the acceptance by the life of a spiritual will from above which is essentially its own. Giving up the unregenerated will and instinctive impulses and movements, our life should be obedient to the spontaneous will and inspiration from the spirit above and the central being within. Up till now there has been an unsuccessful attempt to impose the mental will upon the vital. But the mind is not our real self nor has it always the capacity to make the life obedient to its influence. It can arrange, organise, scrutinise and judge but it cannot transform. It is an agent and instrument of the spirit. Its position is in the intermediate region of our being. On one side of it there are the lower and outward planes; on the other, the inner and higher ones. In order to be concrete and practical facts of life, the mental ideas have to gravitate downwards to the vital and physical regions,

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otherwise they float about unsubstantially. But ideas from the mind level are empty of the transforming power of the spirit and the essential and effective truth of our being. They have at best a borrowed light and a mutilated truth. So before they gravitate, they must be in contact with Real-idea or Truth-consciousness. They should first go up, see and touch the truth and convert mental idealism to spiritual realism. Then only can they be richly equipped with the true knowledge of our being and becoming, look deep into the dangerous nether regions and make life obedient to the higher realities and the will of the spirit. In short, this is the way how an unprecedented transformation can take place and a key towards a natural, harmonious and spiritual living be made available to humanity. Unlike as in the case of the subhuman type, the new spontaneity will be intuitive and fully conscious, not instinctive or half-conscious.

In conclusion it may be stated that this is only a brief and superficial observation on the subject. To have a deep and sound understanding, one should undergo a thorough and systematic study. But for its realisation in life, humanity needs a Guru, a teacher who has himself trod the difficult path, has known, realised and lived the truth of the spirit.

CHUNILAL CHOWDHURY

Students' Section

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 TWENTY-FOUR

I HAVE been making for some time a daylong and occasionally even nightlong chase of Blake's "Tyger". Listen to the poem and tell me if the fiery fellow is not worth the chase :

Tyger ! Tyger ! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes ?
On what wings dare he aspire ?
What the hand dare sieze the fire ?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand ? & what dread feet ?

What the hammer ? what the chain ?
In what furnace was thy brain ?
What the anvil ? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee ?

Tyger ! Tyger ! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry ?

The various questions leaping out of the poem have drawn from my mind a multitude of answers. And it is a great temptation to lay these answers before you. But once I start I shall not stop for at least six hours. Let me keep away from you the endless fascination that those six stanzas have held for me. I shall content—or rather discontent—myself now with a few words.

To me *The Tyger* is not about a natural beast of prey standing as a symbol of all those forces in the world, including psychological ones within ourselves, that are at once destructive and admirable. Nor does it set out for me an earthly carnivore to symbolise a supernatural power which is either a grandiose Satanism or a wrathful Godhead. I believe this poem to be directly about a supernatural power and using only the form and name of a natural beast of prey and merely the semblance of world-forces. Blake's Tyger, in my view, is a bewildering projection, by Divinity, of a luminous anger, a beautiful violence, drawn from the highest light and the deepest mystery, against a Satanism of perverted brilliance—of armed rebellious stars—dwelling within an unearthly Night whose dense obscurity of entangling error is like a huge forest. The whole movement of creating the Tyger to oppose and defeat those stars and reduce them to throwing down their weapons and shedding tears—this movement to out-Satan Satan, as it were, in a divine manner takes place for me in Heaven. And it is really complementary though seeming contradictory to the other which made the Divine Lamb, the manifestation of perfect gentleness and peacefulness. It is part of a supernatural history prior to earth and its jungles and animals and men. Of course, what once went forth in Heaven would be ready to strike on earth if any being here repeated in its own way the starry perversion that occurred there. But basically the six stanzas are a poetic-mystic

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visualisation of a supra-terrestrial drama. And this drama, in spite of the poet's knowing the supreme hand or eye behind it, shakes his heart and mind and leads him to wonder whether the God who could be so tender could also be so terrible.

To elaborate and prove my thesis, with a close analysis of the poem's internal structure of idea, image, attitude and with a host of references to Blake's other works as well as to Christian religious thought in general and Milton's *Paradise Lost* in particular, I shall prepare a special set of Talks which I may one day expand into a book for the scrutiny of Blake-experts. Today we shall not go any further on a *safari* to hunt the ultimate significance of Blake's symbol.

You may say : "Why bring in so much mystification ? Is it not better to take the poem as a fairly simple though highly imaginative depiction of the physical Tyger as opposed to the physical Lamb and of the puzzled awe such an animal inspires about its Creator who is the Creator too of its mild opposite ? Why not stop with letting this animal symbolise the great destructive forces of Nature ? It is a pity to complicate matters instead of adopting a reading such as even an intelligent child may find congenial ! After all, isn't this poem taught often at school ?"

Well, I have much sympathy with the intelligent child and can enjoy several sallies of its mind. But its condition may be compared to that of a grown-up Indian with whom I once went to a Zoo. This chap had come from a village and knew elementary English, but he was a pretty bright person, though perhaps not "burning bright". We had a look at those interesting jumpy creatures with a convenient pocket in their tummies where they keep their young ones—the well-known creatures from Australia, the Kangaroos. My friend read correctly the board on which their name had been written. Then we moved to another part of the Zoo. Tygers were there, in a big area ringed with tall iron bars. This appeared a sufficiently safe arrangement, but the keepers had still felt obliged to put up a board near the area, warning the public not to go too near. The board said : DANGEROUS. My friend spelled out the word slowly, letter by letter, and very brightly exclaimed : "Oh, on that side we had Kangaroos and now here we have Dangaroos !"

My friend got hold of something, no doubt, to distinguish in his mind the striped carnivorous quadrupeds before him, but because of his imperfect acquaintance with English he did not catch the full fearfulness of their symmetry. Analogously, with regard to Blake's Tyger, if in spite of knowing English we are inadequately conversant with Blake's visionary symbolic mind and method of expression and with the bulk of his poetic creation in which his highly original mythopoeic and occult-spiritual form of Christianity finds

vivid and profound though also at times fantastic play, we shall fail to gauge the inmost light and might of the beast of prey he sets poetically before us.

Of course, the immediate charm that comes from the simplicity of the exoteric reading gets destroyed. But "immediate charm" cannot be the final criterion in the interpretation of poetry such as Blake's—or that of the ancient Indian Rishis. Many people have protested against Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Rigveda. For thousands of years a paradoxical situation has obtained in India. The very name "Rigveda" connotes "Poetry of Knowledge" and tradition has it that this Poetry is something heard from the mouths of the Gods. And yet the distinction has been made between the Veda's way of religion and the Upanishad's way of spirituality. The Veda is called the way of Ritual and Worship or of Ceremonial Works, while the Upanishads are the way of Inner Illumination and Knowledge. Curiously, this latter way is known also as Vedanta, which means the end or concluding portion of Veda. Yet people have held that the Rishis of the Veda were semi-barbarous priests chanting excitedly about the pleasure of having a large number of cows which would provide them with the ancient Indian equivalent of the American Milk Bar—the pleasure of having a lot of horses, especially a horse called Dadhikravan which had the peculiarity of being a marcher always towards the dawn—the pleasure of a drink known as Soma with which the semi-barbarian priests got so intoxicated that they thought they were partners of heaven with Indra and Agni and Surya—the pleasure of all kinds of wealth including a strange kind which was hidden within wonderful oceans and rivers—the pleasure of smiting dusky Dravidians whom they dubbed Dasyus and Dasas ("enemies" and "slaves") and even sometimes described as quite noseless ! This view of the ancient Rishis has satisfied Indians and, much more, Europeans who have turned scholars in Indian antiquity. But surely there was something fishy in the contradiction between, on the one side, the age-old reverence in which the Rishis were held as well as the high repute the Veda had acquired and, on the other, the "immediate charm" of the simple *terre-à-terre* reading of the Vedic terms. Sri Aurobindo has come along and found that the cows and horses no less than the other themes of the Vedic hymns are deeply symbolic and all the elements of the Vedic life as depicted by the Rishis belong essentially to a super-nature and carry occult-spiritual significances. A genuine pity, this complicated esoteric explication by Sri Aurobindo. But what are we to do about truth ?

One thing certainly we can blame Blake for—just as we can blame the Vedic Rishis. In *The Tyger* he has adopted a form which could tempt the unwary to take a non-symbolic view except insofar as the animal apostrophised may stand for Nature's destructive forces in general. Perhaps some friend of

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Blake's did blame him for it. He seems to have soon dropped being easy on the surface. He snarled and gnarled his surfaces so much in his later works that we are simply obliged to dig for meanings inside. If his Tyger was all that I have made it out to be, he should not have let the physical impression of the animal come fairly strong despite the teasing elusive terms round about and the challenging fifth stanza about the stars. What he should perhaps have done was to write a piece like the following by a contemporary poet. See whether you can make head or tail of it beyond that it deals with no fauna of our earth. It is called *Green Tiger* and runs :

There is no going to the Gold
Save on four feet
Of the Green Tiger in whose heart's hold
Is the ineffable heat.

Raw with a burning body
Ruled by no thought—
Hero of the huge head roaring
Ever to be caught !

Backward and forward he struggles,
Till Sun and Moon tame
By cutting his neck asunder :
Then the heart's flame

Is free and the blind gap brings
A new life's beat—
Red Dragon with eagle-wings
Yet tiger-feet !

Time's blood is sap between
God's flower, God's root—
Infinity waits but to crown
This Super-brute...

There you have supernatural symbolism with a vengeance. I shall leave you to tackle the *Green Tiger* as best you can. I shall only give you the comment Sri Aurobindo dictated on the poetic quality of it : "Very forceful and original poem. There may be some doubt as to whether the images have coalesced into a perfect whole. But it may be that if they did, the startling originality

of their combination might lose something of its vehement force, and in that case it must be allowed to stand as it is. At any rate it is an extremely original and powerful achievement." (9-4-1950)

This poem lands us pat in the midst of two modern movements—Symbolism and Surrealism. The term "Symbolism" is here used in a special connotation: the adjective from it is not "Symbolic". What Blake's *Tyger* vividly anticipates and what *Green Tiger* exemplifies is a particular way of being symbolic that has come to be known as Symbolist. The adjective is framed after its original from France, and Symbolism in the special sense is a mode of poetry consummated first in the France of the closing decades of the nineteenth century. It is associated with the names of Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Valéry and some others. But it is not exactly a single mode of poetry. There are varieties of Symbolism and not all continue or consummate the Blakean type. Let me give you the main four heads.

(1) Synaesthesia. This means union and fusion of sensations. Here colours, sounds, smells, tastes answer to one another and get interpreted in one another's terms. One sense evokes several others as though all were inextricably associated with it or actually implicit in it. That again points to a sixth sense beyond the five, a basic sense which has got differentiated into five kinds: the *Manas* of Indian psychology, the fundamental Sense-mind at the back of all sensation and independent of them and even capable of functioning without the sense-organs. Synaesthesia is Inter-sense Symbolism or Inter-sense Correspondence. Rimbaud is perhaps its most powerful practitioner. He set forth the doctrine of it in the famous words: "The poet makes himself a visionary through a long, immense and planned derangement of all the senses."

(2) Horizontal Harmony. This means that everything in the universe reflects every other thing. The reflection implies, on the one hand, that one object can stand for the significance of another: all similes and metaphors proceed on the assumption of a horizontal harmony, for they seek to illuminate each object in terms of an apparently different. That points to a single manifold of form-activity—a universal Nature-force identical behind all objects and, while variously manifesting them, keeping a subtle or secret affinity amongst them, an affinity whose discovery enlarges or intensifies the quality of each. But Horizontal Harmony is more than Inter-object Symbolism or Correspondence. It is also a harmony between Nature's scenes and man's moods, as if the objective and the subjective were two sides of the same experience and all Nature were a condition of the poet's conscious being. Nature may thus be entered by a sort of empathy, in-feeling, and its shapes and hues read by an answering mood. Or else a mood may seize upon Nature's shapes

and hues and turn them to a personal symbol. An Inter-object-subject Symbolism or Correspondence makes the complete Horizontal Harmony. Perhaps the most general doctrine of it, touching on the essential state of all poetry, is Valéry's words on the "poetic emotion": "I recognize it in myself by this: that all possible objects of the ordinary world, external or internal, beings, events, feelings, and actions, while keeping their usual appearance, are suddenly placed in an indefinable but wonderfully fitting relationship with the modes of our general sensibility. That is to say that these well-known things and beings—or rather the ideas that represent them—somehow change in value. They attract one another, they are connected in ways quite different from the ordinary; they become (if you will permit the expression) *musicalized*, resonant, and, as it were, harmonically related." On the side of converting Nature into personal mood-symbolism, we may cite the statement of Verlaine who was the most sensitive practitioner of Horizontal Harmony: "The landscape is a state of the soul."

(3) Vertical Harmony. This means the presence of the physical universe as an emanation of a supraphysical. A higher world is reflected or imaged in earthly things. The originals or archetypes of what exists in our universe are beyond in a super-cosmos. "As above, so below"—thus runs the old Hermetic formula. The Platonic Ideas and the flux of phenomena—there you have another version of the same vision. Here we have a linking up of the Symbolist with the Symbolic of all poetry: all poetry, as we have often said, is full of image-pointers, direct or indirect, of some hidden multitudinous perfection of Beauty and Bliss. But there are certain differences or rather refinements and specialisations in the Symbolist view, as we can readily see from Blake's *Tyger*. Whatever the interpretation of the poem, that which is the Tyger never gets mentioned in the poem. A strange animal is before us, though not quite different from the striped carnivorous quadruped with which we are familiar—luckily not too familiar, for otherwise we would be fit to become the theme of some such intuitive piece of verse as the following, which recounts the sad story of a Gujarati named Mulji:

Mulji met a Tyger—
The Tyger was bulgy,
And the bulge was Mulji.

Such intimate familiarity would give us rather the horizontal harmony than the vertical. At least, Mulji in the Tyger's lengthwise tummy would be horizontally harmonious with the digestive juices there. To return from Mulji to Blakeji, the Tyger symbolising something is alone presented. No comparison

is directly made. Suppose we take Blake's poem to be about the *Sher-e-Kashmir*, Sheikh Abdulla, *vis-à-vis* the invasion by Afridi tribesmen whose spears he brought low and whose consequent tears fertilised the heavenly vale of Jammu. Nowhere are we told that we have a picture of the loud-laughing large-toothed Ex-premier of Kashmir, with his spectacles "burning bright" at us. Thus a characteristic of vertical Symbolism is that the object which is compared to another is itself suppressed and we have the metaphor only in evidence.

Another characteristic is that the expression is not explanatory and that, as far as possible, direct thinking is absent : pictures stand in front of us with suggestive outline and colour. A series of images makes the poem's significance. Blake's piece is not quite a sheer one of this kind of Symbolism : some intellectual questioning is carried on. But the overall impression is of sheer vision. We may note that Bowra calls it "pure poetry". He means that the object of the vision is vivified straight away and is not mediated by any thinking terms, any explanatory matter. We shall, some time in the future, discuss the concept of "pure poetry" : at the moment we may just observe that the poetry which does not think but sees and feels is called "pure" by some critics.

A third characteristic is that the central image is not quite of a physical reality. It bears some resemblance to it but has a strangeness which marks it as supernatural or occult or spiritual: a mysticism of one sort or another is at play in the picture. The whole atmosphere is charged with the presence of a world beyond the one we know from day to day. A dream-reality seems to be at work—an unusual projection from an in-world or an over-world. In Blake's poem this is not overwhelmingly strong as in *Green Tyger*, but it is strong enough to hit our solar plexus in a queer way : we are not only afraid of his Tyger, we have the feeling to get down on our shaking knees and worship the creature as if it were a god-like terror manifesting in its colossal glory at which we dare not point any rifle but on the contrary feel like shouting : "Come, please, and gobble us up : thus alone our mortal weakness will cease and we ourselves shall be immortal Tygers far greater than any *Sher-e-Kashmir* who can be easily locked up by a Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed."

Vertical Harmony does not imply only a supercosmos reflected in our world. It implies also that the human being is a microcosm. In him the whole universe is summed up—or comes to a climax—and he corresponds most keenly to the Supercosmos. The Supercosmos may be regarded as a Superman. Blake called the ultimate reality the Eternal Man or the Universal Man. A general way of defining this aspect of Vertical Harmony is that, just as in Horizontal Harmony the universe is a state of the soul, here the Transcendent, the Ideal Existence beyond, is a soul-state—but to get to this soul-state we have to pass with intense feeling and imagination to something which is neither the perceived object as

we know it in our world nor the perceiving subject as we know it in ourselves. In its highest manifestation this Symbolism may be summed up in the words of its most subtle and sophisticated practitioner, Mallarmé: "A supreme flash from which is roused That Shape which no one is."

(4) A multifoliate all-inclusive play of themes. This means that all varieties of subjects—good and bad, agreeable and horrid, edifying and sordid—could serve poetry and be part of its powerful vision. No *cordon sanitaire* at all! Stars and slime, swans and maggots, Madonnas and harlots—every imaginable object may be laid hands on and converted into a symbol of the poet's grope for Perfection, a straight or curved or twisted path to his sense of the Ideal, his achievement of the flawless poetic form. Baudelaire is the intensest initiator of this Symbolism as well as of the embryos, so to speak, of the other types. Viele-Griffin, Laforgue, Stuart Merrill, Francis Jammes, Paul Fort carry it on in their own individual manners. Such symbolism takes up somewhat feverishly the happy hold of Wordsworth on common things and Whitman's exultant embrace of even the malodorous and the clinical as part of an epiphany. Was it not Whitman who said something like: "The odour of my armpits is holier than any prayer"? Perhaps the most comprehensive formulation of this Symbolism comes from a French writer whose name eludes me at the moment: "What characterises Symbolism is the passion of a movement whose gesture is infinite."

All the four kinds mix and mingle; especially the Mallarméan kind takes up all the others and puts them under its own Platonic-Swedenborgian light. It is Symbolism proper, Symbolism quintessential, and demands our attention most along the line from Blake.

(*To be continued*)

AMAL KIRAN
(K.D. SETHNA)

SRI AUROBINDO

O SWEET Compassion-peak of Volcano-will,
In Thee awakes the recumbent soil,
In Thee ceases earth's weary toil
Freed from the storm-hunger of Ignorance-chill.

Our mission on earth, never a recurring sigh !
This truth sports round Thy wonder-eyes.
No world's vestige of blind surmise
Can dare becloud Thy gold fulfilment's sky.

CHINMOY

THE PONDICHERRY ASHRAM: A VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS

INSIDE the ash-coloured buildings which spread over nearly half of the town of Pondicherry, the once French settlement in India, on the Bay, there goes on an unceasing *sādhanā* to raise the level of mankind, to place human beings on a supramental plane, to transform the lower human into a higher human nature and to secure a descent of Divine Power on earth. Nishkama Karma and Sadhana or Yoga—rather Integral Yoga, a new method of Yoga propounded by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother—are being practised by the Ashramites according to one's own capacity for progress in the spiritual field.

A ceaseless flow of devotees and aspirants from all sides of India and outside, who, for higher spiritual life or for inspiration, reach the small way-side station of Pondicherry on the metre-gauge line that runs from Madras *via* Villupuram, or come directly by motor car from Madras and other parts of Southern India, drive straight to the main Ashram building to offer their respectful homage to Sri Aurobindo's Samadhi and, if fortunate enough to reach in time, to have a darshan of the Divine Mother and receive Her blessings.

Resembling the pure and saintly character of the Sadhakas, flowers blossom profusely within the Ashram compound. Before Sri Aurobindo's Samadhi, beautifully decorated with flowers all around and breathing the enchanting smell of Dhup, Dhoona and Chandana, one cannot but bow down in reverence for the great Saint and Savant and feel His presence within one's own inner mind and take his initiation and make a vow for a higher life.

Besides the ordinary Ashram buildings, which accommodate nearly 1400 permanent resident-devotees, there stands a magnificent three-storeyed house—"Golconde"—to receive guests, disciples and seekers after truth from other parts of India and the world. The building is a blend and harmony of eastern and western architectures, with its spacious rooms, big shutters, verandahs, modern baths and lovely flower garden. And above everything it is commendable for the spotless cleanliness with which it is maintained and for the ready service by the attendants.

Among the Ashramites one will find people from every walk of life—eminent scholars, scientists, engineers, *littérateurs*, lawyers, accountants, medical men, service-holders, landholders, business men and others. After renouncing their earthly possessions and dedicating the same to the Ashram,

THE PONDICHERRY ASHRAM : A VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS

they have become permanent residents, either with their families or alone, and devote their lives not to their own salvation only but to the salvation of mankind along the path shown by Sri Aurobindo and under the guidance of the Supreme Mother.

Round the year, in the early hours of every morning Ashramites and devotees from far and near who may be present at Pondicherry assemble on the road below the balcony on the rear side of the main Ashram building. At the sight of the Mother the vast concourse of people start meditating with her and finally receive Her blessings.

Life in the Ashram goes on in a regular manner. Each and every work here is the Mother's work. One does the job allotted to him or her with the utmost perfection—be it in the farm, field, work-shop, bakery, laundry, printing press, motor garage, water supply station or at "Golconde". Every day the Ashramites gather in the common Dining Room for their breakfast, lunch and dinner, the food-stuff being mostly produced in the Ashram itself.

Education is imparted here to sons and daughters of the Ashramites not by the old traditional method but in a way which may be described in the words of Sri Aurobindo : "a living education which helps the individual to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs." The school and college run by the Ashram are not affiliated to any University or Board but conducted according to its own ideals for the creation of real and perfect men and women in body, mind and soul.

The library, fully equipped with modern books on all subjects, is a living workshop for intellectual development of the boys and girls.

Painting, fine arts, drama and music play a vital role for all-round growth of the children and youths. The Ashram's well-equipped stage and recreation centres are worth mentioning.

India may be proud of a system of physical education that is being followed here. It is most perfect and modern and may vie with that of any other country in the world. If anybody cares to roam about the playgrounds, gymnasium, swimming pool of the Ashram any afternoon, he will see not only the boys and girls playing or taking physical exercises according to the most modern and scientific method but also find venerable aged devotees, even over 60, running or taking exercises along with the youngsters with the same zeal and enthusiasm.

In the gymnasium, after the day's exercises and drill are over, a unique sight attracts the attention of visitors. As soon as the lights are put off wonderful devotional music—*Veda Gān*—is played which takes one's mind to the realm of God. With the stopping of the music the Ashramites, who sit in rows after their physical exercises, plunge themselves in *mauna dhyāna*.

MOTHER INDIA

The whole atmosphere seems at once to be charged with spiritual light. One would certainly feel the impulse to the higher life if he had a mind for that. It is a great moment in anybody's life, which may be felt but cannot be expressed.

The Ashram runs a most modern and well-equipped printing press. Printing in almost all Indian and foreign languages is being done. All the publications of Sri Aurobindo Ashram are printed here.

Agriculture is carried on by the Ashram on scientific lines and with modern implements. The Ashram has extensive paddy fields, grounds for horticulture and orchards, flower gardens, etc. Poultry is accommodated in a spacious garden with up-to-date machines for incubation.

The dairy, bakery, engineering workshop, laundry, workshop for manufacturing building materials, motor garage, carpentry, weaving and the like are all run as self-sufficient units by the Ashramites.

The productions are mostly for use of the Ashramites themselves so that they may be self-sufficient.

In anything and everything that one finds here one will see the Mother's creative hand. Nobody knows how the whole show is run nor do they care to know wherefrom the funds come. They know this much that their beloved Mother, their most revered Mother, knows everything. She guides the destiny of all. She has watchful eyes everywhere. All are fully contented with what the Mother ordains for them or allots to them, be that any work or Sadhana. They know perfectly well that She knows better than they. Everything is going on smoothly and efficiently and with the utmost perfection, and everybody draws his or her inspiration from the Mother.

Though they do not put on the yellow or ochre robes of Sannyasis, the Ashramites carry on their Nishkama Karma and Sadhana ceaselessly as enjoined by the Divine Mother.

HARENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR

THE BREATH OF THE SPIRIT

Those who apply too closely to little things often become incapable of great things.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

If you have knowledge, let others light their candles at it.

FULLER

Prefer a loss to a dishonest gain;
the one brings pain at the moment,
the other for all time.

CICERO

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

BLAKE

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of Thee there ?

FRANCIS THOMPSON

From Delight all these beings are born, by Delight they exist and grow,
to Delight they return.

UPANISHAD

I AM A SOVEREIGN IN MY LIBRARY

(An essay given as a model in class E9a, English)

I AM a lover of beauty and a seeker of delight. I love to roam in beautiful surroundings, to hear the gentle purling of a limpid brook and see the paddy fields swaying and tossing in the monsoon breezes. I love children and the music of my country. I love the subtle breath of scents and the curling smoke of incense sticks. When in Ranchi I first saw the golden blossoms of the Mahua tree on the slopes of a wooded hill I sat looking at them for long. Their memory still fills me with a tranquil joy.

The same love of beauty and delight draws me towards books. When I read Kalidasa's *Meghaduta* a great delight envelops me. I see the blue rain cloud, hiding in its bosom lightning and thunder, sweep majestically across the eddying waters of the Shipra river ringing with the love notes of the Swans. How Kalidasa opens up before us the beauties of nature, the koel warbling in the mango groves, the jasmine flowers dancing in the breeze, the Narbada meandering through the rocks and boulders of Vindhyaçal ! The heart thrills.

I find great delight in Omar Khayyam's Rubais. The music of the lines, the note of calm sadness, the tenderness of the poet are all very sweet to me. Listen :

Oh come with old Khayyam and leave the wise
To talk; one thing is certain, that life flies;
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies ;
The flower that once has bloomed for ever dies.

What serene despair ! What sweet pathos !

In my Library I have stored many such delights. I have not only Kalidasa and Khayyam, but Homer and Keats, all lovers of beauty. I have all the Urdu poets. Great is the joy I feel in the music of Urdu poetry, its amazing variety of metres.

But my interests are not confined to aesthetic pleasure. If I am a lover of beauty wherever I may find it, I am equally a lover of wisdom.

On my shelves you will find among other wonders the plays of Shakespeare, Aeschylus, Sophocles, the *Gulistan* and *Bostan* of Saadi, the sayings of Confucius, Voltaire and Plato.

I AM A SOVEREIGN IN MY LIBRARY

I do not spend all my time in the library: I am not a scholar. For me an evening walk by the side of a lake is far more refreshing than the pages of the most interesting book. Similarly there is much wisdom to be learnt from life and work also. But there are times when such joys and such opportunities are denied. Much as I would like to, I cannot at present visit Ellora and Ajanta and see the marvellous sunrise on Kanchenjunga. And I do not meet in life men like the gentle Shakespeare, the witty Birbal and the wide-hearted Saadi. In the library, however, I see all I want to see and hear the wisdom of these wise men.

I want to see Kashmir and I pick up a number of the National Geographical Magazine. What joy is there to watch the crimson saffron flowers waving in the fields, the Jhelum flowing softly and lapping the banks studded with rhododendrons and the flaming Chinar! Now I am in Venice skimming along in a gondola, now on the top of the Kutub-Minar.

I enjoy the company of Solomon, the flashing wit of Voltaire, the grandeur of Milton, and the exquisite sweetness of Tagore. What king has enjoyed such company? Vikramaditya had nine "gems" at his court, but my gems are countless.

I am a sovereign in my Library!

JAGADISH KHANNA

MAXIMS

CONTROL is better than laxity. Better than control is rejection. Better than rejection is the straightening of what is warped and devious. Best of all is transformation of the base and ugly into the noble and beautiful.

R. K.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

I INTEND to do a certain thing. What will others say if I do so ? I think. Others will say critically 'X has done such and such', and I drop the idea.

I do not wish to do a certain thing. What will others say if I don't do it ? I think. Others will say critically 'X has not done such and such' and I do it.

It is a normal occurrence in ordinary life. Such decisions, obviously, are not based on the intrinsic merits or demerits of the proposed action, but on something extraneous and not very dependable too. If one is wavering, hesitating or in doubt it may be useful to take the help of what others say. There too much depends on who the others are and who the questioner is.

Normally, by 'what others say' is meant the general opinion of the society or community based on tradition and having the force of unverified beliefs. Sometimes it may fit in with the correctness of the solution sought for by the person in doubt, but more often than not it is a routine reaction at variance with the needs of the individual.

Of course, the position is different if the aim of one's life is to gain public opinion in one's favour or to do what people want one to do. Often the very duties of an office may compel one not to act in disregard of public opinion.

We are quite familiar with the painful event of the exile of Sita occasioned by what a washerman was saying and others might say. Rama had no doubt about the truth but the king in him dutifully acted otherwise in deference to his subjects' opinion. This action of his has ever remained a subject of disputation.

In fact, it is nearly impossible to keep the 'others' satisfied. There have always been persons anxious to comment for the sake of comment. If you speak, the comment will be 'Oh ! you speak too much.' If you don't, the comment will be 'Oh ! you should have spoken, why did you not ?'

Besides, the opinion of others is also used as a convenient disguise for one's own weaknesses and desires. It is always advisable to remain on the alert to see whether one is a prey to this temptation in a particular case.

Persons endowed with genius and greatness are seen to act according to their own lights although it results in antagonising a considerable portion of society or men in power. But, for this they do not care, nor for the consequent criticisms, pricks and troubles.

Those who have taken to Yoga, the seekers of the Divine, even these souls are not spared by public opinion. Endeavouring to act up to the guidance of the inmost soul, to obey the will of God, their words and acts are often misunderstood and misinterpreted by the narrow mentality of ordinary beings and it even brings mean attacks on them. But a calm indifference, goodwill and forgiveness is the reaction of the true spiritual person.

S. S. JHUNJHUNWALA

THE ROLE OF GENIUSES IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

ONE sees that Nature has evolved matter and life and is evolving mind. She has succeeded in establishing a sufficiently strong equilibrium between matter and life. But the mind is the latest addition. Therefore it has not yet become a fully harmonious member of Nature's family.

In fact the mind has rather upset the existing equilibrium in the bodily life. It has done this either consciously or unconsciously by the very pressure of its superiority in the scale of evolution. This is noticeable in some of the highly intellectual individuals. Their strong and intense mental life has disturbed the foundation of their outer bodily life. A perfectly healthy and vigorous man is ordinarily one in whom a full-fledged intellect is not yet born.

Moreover, the mental evolution is a step Nature has already taken. And while her efforts are towards consolidating the stability of mind, she is busy also with her further evolution. For the mind is not the last word of human evolution. If it were so, a perfected human intellect with a supple reasoning power and highly developed emotions and sensibility would have satisfied the earthly creature. As we know, no present development, however perfect and comprehensive, has yet satisfied the mentalised man. His upward growth is always obstructed by limitations and imperfections. Therefore his aspiration is always for something beyond mind.

Thus the inevitable next step is for the evolution of Spirit or Supermind. Already we see the signs, though faint and short-lived, of the new manifestation. A few rare individuals have come forward to be the pioneers of the impending Spirit. It is Nature that from behind gives them the urge for the Beyond. For without the aspiration and will of individuals she cannot take a farther stride.

In a general way we may consider those who are called geniuses to be the historical portents of Nature's next step. Because they sought for something unmanifested, unseen, inexplicable, unearthly, the rest of the race took many of them as insane. It explained away their deeper and higher longings as phantasms of madness. Being itself wholly sense-bound it could not look out from its prison. But, we may suppose, there was nothing new in this, nothing unique to mankind. When some monkeys were first trying to outgrow their animality and become like human beings the rest of the simians must surely have sneered at their stupidities. For they must have felt : "How can a monkey walk only on two legs, lift its earthward head skyward ?"

THE ROLE OF GENIUSES IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

There was another reason, too, for the apparent insanity of many geniuses. In the push towards a super-nature they tended to be extremely one-sided. They hardly behaved like normal human beings. The balance between the bodily life and the mind was sometimes, if not often, lost. Even the equilibrium of mind was not properly maintained. All this was interpreted or represented rather exaggeratedly by others. This lack of harmony could have been set right and it was not inevitable. But even otherwise, the supposed madness did not matter much. For it was worth the price for the next great step Nature was taking. These geniuses may be looked upon as her first pioneering team of workers towards that supreme goal. Without them she could never hope to cross the mental border. Progress she would have made, of course, but it would have been horizontal and not vertical.

Thus what is to be evolved is prepared by a pressure from above as well as by a pressure from below. The geniuses of to-day are the sure pointers that the earth is now ready for a greater and farther manifestation.

NAGIN DOSHI

SOLDIER OF GOD

O, SOLDIER of God, the battle's begun,
Prepare, and let us away,
The forces of Darkness are spread o'er the field
And tyranny leads in the fray.

Come, gird on your armour of Purity fair
And fasten the sword of Might.
Emblaze on your pennon the emblem of Truth
And mount the brave charger of Right.

The enemy's bold, but no bolder than we,
They attack with a frenzy and shout,
Or cunning they creep in the hope that we sleep,
To slay us, or send us to rout.

Take heart and take thought, there is much to be bought
With our blood, if needed it be:
Courage our cry, for though we may die
We'll live on eternally.

GODFREY

AMBITION

I WANT to sit in the Lotus pose,
Just to relax in that state.
But how can I make it ? my knees just won't take it !
I fear they will both dislocate.

I tried it today before breakfast,
My family gave a great shout:
'To do this at your age should get you a peerage!'
I said 'You are jealous, no doubt.'

Then I locked myself up in the bedroom,
And felt that I really could cope,
Was sure I could manage, without too much damage ;
When a voice said : '*Not yet ; but there's hope.*'

So meanwhile I do my eurhythmics,
With skipping and bending the knees.
And that Lotus pose...maybe one day, who knows ?
I will do with the greatest of ease.

LEENA

CHAPMAN'S *BUSSY D'AMBOIS*: A 'METAPHYSICAL' DRAMA

(Concluded from the issue of December 5)

7

Now follows Montsurry's torture of Tamyra. Tamyra feels "the torturous darkness, inward horror never lighted". Montsurry who looks upon Tamyra earlier in the play "as a whole world without a spot" considers her now "a world of spots". He realises that "man's delight in woman" is but "a lightning" and "a bubble". Naturally such a frustrated man speaks of "the troubled blood and headlong chaos".

The Duke of Guise feels that Nature has made in Bussy

A thing that from the feet up to the throat
Hath all the wondrous fabric man should have
And leave it headless...

Monsieur sees Bussy as

One on whom Nature spent so rich a hand
That with an ominous eye she wept to see
So much consum'd her virtuous treasury.

Bussy is to him a "tree solid" (V, ii,39), as opposed to a "hollow tree" (V, ii,37) through which "the winds sing...since it lets them pass through" and which the winds will "rend up by the root". According to him, not even the sea on the Lybian sands or the surges of the Euxine Sea rave so terribly

As Fortune swings about the restless state
Of virtue, now thrown into all men's hate

The antagonists use Tamyra as a decoy for Bussy. The Umbra of the Friar and the supernatural powers which speak of "the sun in eclipses" fail to convince Bussy of his impending tragedy. Yet he senses the "weather of his horrid steps" and feels "his dark prediction" as a terror. When he is wounded by the antagonists, he faces death as courageously as he faces life earlier in the play. Well might he say at that moment :

I am up ;
Here like a Roman statue I will stand
Till death hath made me marble.

Bussy realizes at least for a moment that he is composed of a "divine part" couched in a "penetrable flesh". His place is not in the haven of virtue in

this world but among "the eternal dwellers" and his fame will take her wings to places

...Where the grey-ey'd morn perfumes
Her rosy chariot with Sabaeon spices !
...where the evening from th' Iberian vales
Takes on her swarthy shoulders Hecate
Crown'd with a grove of Oaks !...where men feel
The burning axletree...

and to the place where there will be

...those that suffer
Beneath the chariot of the Snowy Bear...

This is the story told by the images in the play. In the light of it, we begin to understand the play and realize how the dramatist's intention and achievement, the spectator's response, the reaction of a sensitive reader and the recording in the sensibility of an ideal critic fall into their proper places in a coherent pattern.

8

Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois*, therefore, becomes a 'metaphysical' drama by virtue of the dramatist's hovering between two equally strong but opposed attitudes, his passionate apprehension of thought, his deep speculative interest in the experiences of his characters of which his drama is an expression, the psychological curiosity with which he writes of politics, love and virtue and above all the "metaphysical character of his metaphors" and images.

Thanks to the complex and rich dramatic sensibility of Chapman, we are now able to find a harmony of such disparate elements as the dramatist's own intention, the spectator's response, the reaction of an ideal and sensitive reader and above all the recording in the sensibility of an ideal critic.

To the "realms of gold" celebrated by Keats, we may very well add this one of "metaphysical" drama in Chapman.

(Concluded)

S. KANDASWAMI

NOTE

All the passages of the text quoted in this article are from T.M. Parrott's Edition of the *Tragedies of George Chapman*.

WHAT IS THE SELF ?

THAT, by which an entity or a phenomenon has being and endures, in the absence of which it ceases to exist, is called its self. It is by earth that an earthen pot has being and endures, in the absence of earth it ceases to exist. So earth is the self of an earthen pot.

Similarly gold is the self of all articles that are made of gold. No woven fabric can be there without the thread; so the thread is the self of all woven fabrics. Ice is but water in solid form, in the absence of water there cannot be any existence of ice; so water is the self of ice. Sound is the self of music, and so on.

Now, what is the self of earth etc. ? All cognisable things are composed of the five elements, namely *Kṣiti* (earth, solid matter), *Ap* (water, liquid matter), *Tej* (heat, light, temperature), *Marut* (air, gaseous matter), and *Vyoma* (ether, space, the sky).

These five elements first appear in their rudimentary state called *Tanmātras*, which are but pure principles. In their gross form the five elements are but complex wholes. We shall presently explain this.

At first, there was the Supreme Self, the mono-stuff, that forms the basis of the whole creation.

Out of this Supreme Self proceeds the all-pervading 'ether'; its principle is 'sound'. From ether originates 'air'; its principle is 'touch'; but it inherits 'sound' also from its predecessor. From 'air' manifests 'heat'; its own special principle is 'sight'; but it possesses also 'sound' and 'touch' as hereditary traits. From 'heat' comes 'water'; 'taste' is the exclusive quality or principle of water; but it owns 'sound', 'touch' and 'sight' by way of inheritance. From 'water' develops 'earth'; 'smell' is its special principle, though it retains all the traits or principles of its ancestors; so all the five principles, viz., 'sound', 'touch', 'sight', 'taste' and 'smell' are inherent in 'earth'. The five rudimentary elements are inseparable from their principles.

Each of the gross elements is supposed to contain eight parts of its own principle and one-eighth part of each of the other four principles, making a complete whole of sixteen parts. Thus 'ether' comprises eight parts of the 'sound' principle and one-eighth part of each of the other four principles, namely 'touch', 'sight', 'taste' and 'smell'. The same rule applies to the rest. These five complex, gross elements are called the *pañca mahāvūtas*.

The combination of these five gross elements lies at the origin of all cognisable things; so it is this combination that is to be regarded as their Self according to the definition with which we have started.

During the time of dissolution 'Kshiti' (earth) will merge in 'Ap' (water), water in 'Tej' (heat), heat in 'Marut' (air) and air in 'Vyoma (ether) and lastly ether will merge in the Supreme Self.

The Infinite, Eternal Self has neither birth nor death. There is hardly a second thing to which the Self can be compared.

Still, in order to impart some idea of the infinite vastness of the Self, Brahman, to the conception of the seeker, the scriptures say, "Brahman is vast like the sky (ether)". With regard to all-pervasiveness, ether stands almost equal to Brahman, but it falls short of consciousness. Brahman has to be compared with ether as the former has no equal. The Upanishad says, "Who could have lived, who could have breathed if this ether were not *ānanda*?" Bliss, the primal cause of creation, has become ether, otherwise we could not have enjoyed the bliss of free breathing. The indifference bred by familiarity does not allow us to appreciate the amount of bliss that we derive from each breath. A patient who suffers from dyspnoea, difficult breathing, can for the moment at least realise the value of free breathing.

In the Gita Lord Krishna identifying himself with the Supreme Self says : "O Gurakesha (conqueror of sleep, inadvertence) I am the Self dwelling in the heart of all beings." To consider the heart as a vacuity wherein the Self dwells must be a meaning helpful to the spiritual novice. In fact, the Self permeates all, through and through, so much so that no second thing is there to intervene. The physical body itself is made of the Self-stuff of Consciousness which is also Existence and Bliss—Sat, Chit, Ananda.

The knowledge of the sevenfold or rather eightfold chord of creation will make it clear that 'Sat' has become Matter. Sat, Chit, Ananda, Supermind, the psychic principle, mind, life and body (matter) go to form the eightfold chord.

Is it not conceivable that in an ocean of pure existence things, physical and supraphysical, arise, float and melt like ice-bergs ?

Such an undifferentiated existence which runs through all things, in which all things live and move and have their being is called "Satta Samanya", the common existence. This existence is the Self of all. It is the eternal, all-pervading, motionless, immovable and everlasting Self.

Similarly, nothing exists apart from the principle of revelation. We ascribe existence only to those things that are revealed or may be revealed to consciousness. The flower wasting its sweetness on the desert air lives by itself but with the possibility of being revealed to someone's consciousness some time.

WHAT IS THE SELF ?

So existence and consciousness are inseparable. Again, there is Ananda, bliss in existence as well as in consciousness. Existence principally implies rest and rest is blissful. The repose enjoyed in deep sleep is a near approach to the bliss of absorption in a trance with a thin veil of ignorance. That the child wants to know everything is a clear indication that there is a joy, a sort of bliss in knowing. The scientist loses himself in the bliss of his research. The Yogi proceeds from knowledge to knowledge strengthened by the nectar of bliss. Existence, Consciousness and Bliss are the three aspects of one and the same ultimate principle. Beyond this is the Absolute. The Absolute is beyond mind and speech. The Absolute that is at once both transcendent and immanent is the real Self.

BHUMANANDA

YOGA PHILOSOPHY OF PATANJALI*

IN the East and specially in India metaphysical thinkers never remained content with mere intellectual speculation about the nature of the highest Truth. A paramount need was felt for undergoing diverse practical disciplines of mind, life and body to help the faltering light of speculation to rise to a level of clear comprehension by authentic experience and realisation. "Each philosophical founder (as also those who continued his work or school) has been a metaphysical thinker doubled with a Yogi." It is not the bare philosophy that counts : the practice of it in life with the help of Yogic discipline was always given the first rank by the philosophers of India in the past. This importance, this superiority of Yogic experience and realisation was also appreciated even by the common mass of Indian people. They pay greater homage to Yogis than to intellectual giants. "Those who were only philosophic intellectuals were respected for their learning but never took rank as truth-discoverers. And the philosophies that lacked a sufficiently powerful means of spiritual experience died out and became things of the past because they were not dynamic for spiritual discovery and realisation."¹

The Yoga philosophy of Patanjali is an invaluable attempt at bringing together some of the principal lines of Yogic discipline and presenting them to the seekers after self-purification and self-perfection. The sutras collected and systematised by Patanjali are called Pātanjala Sutras after the name of the founder. Yoga in its wider sense is as old as the foundation of Indian Philosophy. We know that Indian philosophy has always been practical in its aim, its goal being the realisation of the central truth preached by any school of thought. In the Rig Veda we have the ideas of trance and ecstasy, sacrificial offerings, seeds of Karma Yoga, Jnanayoga, Bhaktiyoga and other spiritual practices for attaining diverse spiritual and mundane objectives. In Atharva Veda we have frequent mention of the science and practice of supernatural powers by the use of which one is able to attain all desirable things in life. The Upanishads speak of meditation and concentration as means of realisation of union with Brahman. In the Gita we have a synthesis of Jnanayoga, Karmayoga and Bhaktiyoga leading to Yoga of Ātmasamarpaṇ. Buddhist philosophy has its own system of Yogic practice for attaining to Nirvana. Lord Buddha himself passed through the severest austerities for gaining the goal of Nirvana. In brief, throughout the whole history of Indian thought

* From lecture-notes given to the philosophy students of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Riddle of This World*, p. 29.

and spirituality, we find this aspect of practical realisation of the Truth in life given along with the intellectual formulation of the Truth.

The Yoga system of Patanjali is a compilation of a particular line of Yogic discipline perhaps most prevalent at his time or in the preceding generations. It does not mean that all the systems of Yoga are compiled and systematised in the manual of Pātanjala Sutras. The term Yoga thus cannot be limited to the Yoga of Patanjali. In the Bhagavadgīta we have the use of the term to indicate different lines of spiritual discipline. In the Yogatattva Upanishad we have the mention of four kinds of Yoga, namely, Mantrayoga, Layayoga, Hathayoga, and Rajayoga. Patanjali's Yoga is one form of Rajayoga concerned with inner and outer asceticism for stalling the mind and destroying all modifications of the *citta*. But in the Gīta, Yoga primarily means union with the Divine through works, knowledge and devotion. Kundalini Yoga of Tantra takes a step forward. Instead of relying only on the Light of Purusha or Self, it invokes the Power of Prakṛiti hidden in the subtle centres of our being and the Para Prakṛiti, the Supreme Mother. With the help of the Supreme Power it seeks to attain its goal of freedom and felicity in this life. In the Supramental Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, we are not to remain content only with the discovery of the Self which gives peace, light and freedom of the Transcendent Purusha nor only with a union with the Divine by Ātmasamarpaṇ as preached in the Gīta ; something more is demanded. "The aim of this Yoga is first to enter into the divine Consciousness by merging into it the separative ego (incidentally in doing so one finds one's true individual self which is not the limited, vain and selfish human ego but a portion of the Divine) and secondly, to bring down the Supramental Consciousness on earth to transform mind, life and body."¹

We should then bear in mind that the Yoga System of Patanjali is only one of the many methods of old Yogas through which a particular result can be gained. His Rajayoga aided by Āsana and Prāṇāyāma of Hathayoga is deemed competent to lead one to a state of immobility of the mind, suspension of breath indicative of immobility of life-energy and also a great measure of immobility of the physical body, ādhār of the life-energy and mind-energy. This triple immobility can finally lead one to samādhi in the Immobile Self or Purusha.

THE SAMKHYA AND THE YOGA

The Yoga System assumes the metaphysical position of the Samkhya Darshan of Kapila. The Samkhya conception of twenty-five principles which

¹ *Letters* (Fourth Series), p 3

are at the basis of the evolution of the world is accepted by the Yoga Darshan without questioning. But in addition to the twenty-five tattvas, Patanjali gives another, namely, Isvara tattva or God. It is therefore held that while Samkhya is atheistic, in the sense that it denies any need of contemplation of God for salvation, the Yoga system is called Seśvara or theistic, as devotion to God is considered by it as a powerful means of liberating one from the fetters of Prakriti. The Yoga of Patanjali is thus rightly called Seśvara Samkhya. Another point of distinction is that while Samkhya relies solely upon spiritual and metaphysical discrimination between Self and Not-Self as the true means of attaining liberation of the soul from the bondage of Prakriti, Yoga Darshana offers an elaborate scheme of discipline, including control of motor organs, sense-organs, mind, *citta*, life and body for effective elimination of the distortions and disturbances belonging to the nature of the body-mind complex. Mere light of reason is not considered adequately effective in dealing with the intricate and elusive movements of the *citta*. The first aim of the Yoga is to emancipate the individual from the clutches of the material sheath composed of the twenty-three principles of material existence released by Pradhān.

And as the subtlest form of Matter is *citta*, freedom from the modification of *citta* becomes the primary need for effectuating liberation of the soul that is in fetters. According to Samkhya the light of discriminative knowledge is the proper means of liberation and it is the flame of consciousness which is to be tended and intensified by concentration for bringing about the desired end of liberation; but the Yoga finds that this flame is constantly being dimmed and covered up by the dark fumes rising from the lower depths of the *citta*. The citadel of the *citta* has therefore to be cleansed and quieted by the practice of ardent austerities of the body and mind. Again, the orthodox Samkhya considers the concept of God as redundant for the attainment of liberation; whereas Yoga takes devotion to God as a powerful aid for increasing the intensity of concentration—*Isvarapranidhānāt*, as it says. Meditation on God with worshipful attitude is taken as one of the means of attaining freedom. The goal of the Yoga is the freedom from mental modifications or the activities of the mind, the complete cessation of the function of the mind and other parts of the individual, finally leading to what is called *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Meditation upon God is prescribed as one of the effective means of concentration. Vision of, or union with God is not offered as the aim of Yoga. In this system God has therefore only a secondary importance as a means only for attaining freedom of the soul. It is not the ultimate end of existence. This Yoga is thus a type of Jnanayoga aided by a kind of Karmayoga for attaining an impersonal status in *samādhi*.

THE VALUE OF THE DISCIPLINE OF YOGA

The supreme value of the practical methods of Yoga as laid down by Patanjali has been recognised by all the schools of Indian Philosophy. We have clear evidence of practices of various kinds of Yoga, disciplines of self-control and self-purification even at the time of the Vedas and Upanishads from which the Yoga school has certainly drawn inspiration. The Dharma Shastras, Smritis, and Puranas also abound in instructions for practices of yoga of austerities necessary for attaining moksa. The protagonists of the different schools of philosophy adopted different yogic practices and enjoined them on their students for cleansing the obscurities of their minds and prāṇic energies, impulses of the vital being, in order that they may thereby become fit to receive the high spiritual instructions from their Guru or spiritual teachers. Similarly in all religious worship and service a severe course of yogic austerities is enforced on the devout for attaining the goal aimed at. Yoga as practice of austerities is thus conceived in India as a prerequisite not only for a right comprehension of philosophical doctrines of the different schools of thought, but for proper practice of religious rites and observances and for guidance of life in general. Yoga, Philosophy and Religion thus constitute the triple power helpful for the attainment of mokṣa.

In the spiritual pursuits the utility of Yoga is indisputable. It is a well-known fact accepted universally by the founders of philosophical schools in India that no spiritual knowledge can be attained by men with impure and unsteady will and intellect. *Citta* which is the collective name standing for the inner organs of knowledge, namely, Buddhi (Intellect), Ahankāra (Ego), Manas (Mind), and the Indriyas (Senses) must be purified and purged of obscurities and impurities and freed from mechanical reactions to external contacts constantly impinging on them. *Cittavṛtti nirodha*, i.e., suspension of the functions of *citta*, is therefore prescribed as the mainspring of all yogic disciplines. According to Samkhya, a clear and precise discrimination between the Self and the not-Self by the light of intelligence is alone competent to bring about liberation of Purusha from the fetters of Prakriti. But Patanjali advocates additional measures for controlling *citta* by Rajayoga and Prāṇa by practices of Prāṇāyāma and Āsana. According to him Viveka alone may not succeed in securing the objective. The immobility of the mind can be firmly established only if the aspirant is able to gain immobility of Prāṇic movement, particularly of the function of breathing and the functions of the bodily system.

Hathayoga, therefore, is to be accepted as a great aid to Rajayoga which thus aided can lead one to the right comprehension of Purusha or Self as discriminated from Prakriti.

MOTHER INDIA

This position of Patanjali as distinguished from Kapala's Yoga of Intelligence need not be disputed. There are of course rare souls who can gain the objective by doing the Yoga of Intelligence only but for the average the wider method of Patanjali would certainly be more useful and effective. To attain mokṣa or liberation, the single goal of traditional Yogas, an effective suppression of the functions of the manas, the outgoing tendencies of the senses and the mechanical movements of the body, obscurities of the intellect and the arrogance of the ego are, according to Patanjali, absolutely necessary in most cases. He therefore selects a code of practical means of dealing with the obstacles arising from the different parts of our being, physical, vital and mental.

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(To be continued)

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