

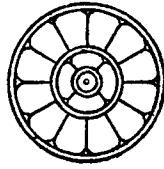
# MOTHER INDIA

OCTOBER 1962

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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. XIV

No. 9

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*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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## NOTICE

The next issue of MOTHER INDIA will be the joint one of November-December and come out on December 5.

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# THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SRĪ AURŌBĪNDŌ

## CONDITIONS FOR PROGRESS — BASIS FOR YOGA

It appears from your present letter and attitude that you propose to give God a seat on your right and X another on the left and to sit in meditation between oscillating sweetly from one to the other. If this is what you want to do please do it in the Cherry Press and not at Pondicherry. If you want to come here, you must do it with a firm determination to get rid of this attachment and make a complete and unconditional consecration and self-surrender. ...

When you came here, your psychical being was opened up, and the mental, vital and physical obstacles sufficiently worked upon to admit of this opening. This came first, because that was the strongest part of you for the purposes of the Yoga. Afterwards there was an attempt to open up the mind and other parts. But owing to certain influences their resistance became strong enough to bring things to a standstill. Doubt and non-understanding in the mind and vital attachments of which this one to your son is the strongest, were the main instruments of this resistance. It is no use coming back with any of these things still cherished and supported by your mind and will. Either you will make no progress at all here or if the power works on you it will work to break the resistance of the vital being and if you still support that resistance, the nature of this struggle and the consequences may be of a serious and undesirable character. The power that works in this Yoga is of a thorough-going character and tolerates in the end nothing great or small that is an obstacle to the truth and its realisation. To come here will be to invite its workings in the strongest and most insistent form.

1923

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For your sadhana it is necessary first to establish the entire openness of the physical being and stabilise in it the descent of calm, strength, purity and joy with the feeling of the presence and working of the Mother's force in you. It is only on that assured basis that one can become an entirely effective instrument for the work. Once that is done, there is still the dynamic transformation of the instrumental being to achieve and that depends on a descent of a higher and higher power of consciousness into the mind, vital and body—by higher being meant nearer and nearer to the supramental Light and Force. But that can only be done on the basis of which I have spoken and with the psychic being constantly in front and acting as an intermediary between the instrumental mind, vital and body and these higher planes of being. So this basic stabilisation must first be completed.

25th April, 1933

## TALKS WITH SRĪ 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, Puram, 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 twenty-first instalment in the new Series which, except on two occasions, has followed a chronological order and begun at the very beginning. The four earliest talks, after Sri Aurobindo's accident, appeared in Mother India 1952.)*

JANUARY 15, 1939

DR. RAO had come and, as usual, he commented on the usefulness of slings, splints, etc. Then he remarked : "Medicines are after all not the main thing. It is Nature that cures and medicines merely help Nature." We had a small debate on the point. The Mother also was present. After Dr. Rao had left, Sri Aurobindo started speaking.

SRI AUROBINDO: It is curious that doctors after long practice come to such conclusions as Dr. Rao has stated. A medical friend of the Mother's used to say that it is the doctor who heals and not his medicines. This is quite true. One must have an element of healing power. Medicines lend their properties to this power. Without this power which is the main thing in a cure, medicines are of very little use.

S : The ancient system in India recognised it as Vital Force.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Even now in some Universities in the South of France—for example, Montpélier which is a famous University there—they admit this Vital Force. This is because the South of France as well as Spain came much under Arab influence. The Vital Force theory may come back everywhere.

At one time physical science claimed to explain everything according to its laws. Now they admit they can explain nothing.

P : The law of causality which once allowed no exception is now said to be not absolute. The physicists can't determine the causes of phenomena in every case because in trying to observe the phenomena they interfere with the process and thus vitiate it. This they now call Indeterminacy.

SRI AUROBINDO : The attempts of scientists like Jeans and Eddington to find Reality by science are futile. You can't found metaphysics on physical science; for, when you have built your philosophy, after some 30 years or so science will change and your building will tumble down. All you can say is that certain conclusions of science agree with and correspond to certain conclusions of metaphysics. You can't make metaphysics depend on physics.

P : The Continental scientists have now refused to build philosophy on science. They say it is not their business to explain but only to lay bare the process. Eddington says in his *Gifford Lectures* that the human mind, the subject, ultimately accepts one conclusion out of a number of conclusions not because of the nature of objective reality but because of the nature of the observing subject. That  $8+8=16$  and not 61 points to some correspondence in the material world to the movement of the thinking mind.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the accumulated experience—the invariable experience—that gives that sense. Man has found by putting 8 and 8 together that it makes 16.

P : Again, in regard to the rainbow, the scientists study the wave-lengths of light while the poets make a play of the imagination over it. We have no means of saying that the real rainbow exists for the scientist and not for the poet.

SRI AUROBINDO : I should say it exists for neither. Only the scientists get excited over the process and the poets over the result.

P : Eddington also admits that we have no ground to say that non-scientific knowledge and experience are less real than physical science.

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course not.

P : Did you read Spengler's *Decline of the West*? It is a huge volume and deals with many things.

SRI AUROBINDO : No, I haven't read it. What is the upshot of its argument?

P : The upshot is that time is not a mental entity. It has a direction, a tendency. It tends to produce certain events. It points to destiny, a recurring pattern which the sum of forces inevitably leads to. On the data of human history Spengler believes that there have been cycles in the life of the human race when cultures have arisen, reached a zenith and then declined. From a study of these cultures it is possible to predict the decline of every human culture. European culture at present is full of the symptoms of decline and therefore it is bound to decline. The signs of decline are the rise of big cities, impoverishment of the countryside, capitalism, etc. He says that to classify

history as Primitive, Mediaeval and Modern is not correct. We must study universal history and that, too, impersonally.

Again, within the recurring pattern, a culture has its own characteristic aspects. The mathematical discoveries, for instance, that are seen in a particular culture are organically connected with that culture. The Greeks, could never have arrived at the conception of the "series"—regularly increasing or decreasing numbers leading to infinite number. The "series-idea" is only possible in modern culture.

He goes so far as to maintain that even if you grant that Napoleon's rise could have been prevented by some causes, still the events that came as a consequence of his career would have followed inevitably because they were destined.

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't quite understand. Even granting that there is destiny, why can't it be changed? How can Spengler say that even if Napoleon had not existed the results of his rise would inevitably have followed? It is a very debatable proposition. I believe the results would have naturally varied. If he had not risen at the time, the European powers would have crushed French Democracy. What he did was to stabilise the French Revolution so that the world got the idea of Democracy. Otherwise it would have been delayed by two or three centuries.

Again, as to destiny, what is meant by it? It is a word that can have several meanings. Is destiny a working of inert blind material forces? In that case there is no room for choice. You have to end up by accepting Shankara's Mayavada or rank materialism. But if you mean by destiny that there is a Will at work in the universe, then a choice in action becomes possible.

Once more, when Spengler speaks of cycles, there is some truth in the idea but it is not possible to make a rigid rule about the recurrence of the cycles. These cycles are plastic and need not be all of the same duration. In the recent *Aryan path* a Mr. Morris has written an interesting article, full of study of facts and based on historical data. In it he tries to show that human destiny has always a cycle of 500 years. And do you know his conclusion? He believes that there are Mahatmas who manage the world!

Besides, the extension of mathematical numbers to infinity was well known in India long ago; and I don't understand why classification of historical epochs into Primitive, Mediaeval and Modern is incorrect. Does he mean that there are no differences or that differences of epochs are to be overlooked?

(*After some time*) In a philosopher it is not the process of reasoning that is important, for he blinds himself to everything else in order to arrive at his conclusions. Therefore what you have to do is to take his conclusions and even in taking the conclusions you have to accept the essentials and not the words or the inessentials. For instance, there is some truth, as I said, in Spengler's idea of destiny—also in his idea of cycles. All the rest is not material to us.



What is destiny ? It can't be the work of the individual. Then you have to accept that it is the working out of a Cosmic Will. And then the question is whether the Cosmic Will is free or bound. If it is free, it is no longer a blind determinism and even when you find there is "no progress", yet that Will is working itself out in evolution.

If, on the other hand, you accept that the Cosmic Will is bound, the question is : "bound by whom or by what ?"

There is something like a cycle. This means there is a curve in the movement of nature that seems to repeat itself. But that too is not to be taken rigidly. It is something that answers the need of evolution and can vary.

P : Probably something in a man's mind has already accepted the conclusions, unknown to the man himself, and it is by his reasoning that he seems to arrive at them.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, it is something unknown to the surface-consciousness of course !

Then, again, the human ego comes in. It is so limited that it thinks the contribution it brings to human thought is the only truth and all who differ or conflict with it are wrong.

We can turn round and say that a man was destined to think as he thought and thus to bring his contribution to the process of evolution. But it is easy to see that the process of evolution is universal and human evolution cannot be bound down to a set of philosophical ideas or rules of practice. No epoch, no individual, no group has the monopoly of truth. It is the same with religion—Christian, Mohammedan, etc.

P : I don't think such a wide view is possible unless one reaches the Universal Mind.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not necessarily. One can see this much, while remaining human.

P : Wells perhaps speaks something similar when he presses that all knowledge must now become "human".

SRI AUROBINDO : That is another matter. He means "internationalism". All science is already international and much of literature and of other realms of ideas is so.

What does Spengler say about the future—after the decline of the West ?

P : He dismisses China and India as countries whose cultures are useless now.

SRI AUROBINDO : Then we have the Arabs.

P : Not even the Arabs They are also effete.

SRI AUROBINDO : Then the Africans remain, and the Abyssinians.

P : I think his hope is in the Americans and the Africans.

S : But America goes with the West. So we are left only with the Africans.  
(Laughter)

P : It is very curious that Spengler misses the fact that there can be resurgence and reawakening.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Take China, for instance. There were always cities in China—from the most ancient times. The Chinese are a peculiar race—always disturbed and always the same. If you study their history 2000 years back you will find they were in disturbance and yet they had their culture. The Tartar king who tried to destroy their culture by burning their books didn't succeed. And I wouldn't be surprised if after the present turmoil you find them 2000 years hence what they are today. That is the character of the race.

When you follow the course of history you may find there is a certain destiny which represents the sum of physical forces. That is one destiny. And when that tends to go round and round in an infinite circuit you find that there is a tendency which seems inevitable in the movement.

But the question is . “Are physical forces the only determinants of destiny? Or is there anything else—something more than physical that can intervene and influence the course of the movement?”

We find that there have been such inrushes of forces in history and the action of these inrushes has been to change the destiny indicated by the physical forces; it has changed in fact the course of human history.

Take for an example the rise of the Arabs. A small uncivilised race living in arid deserts suddenly rises up and changes completely the course of history. That is an inrush of forces.

P : Thinkers like Emerson and Shaw believe that human beings have not made any substantial progress in their powers of reasoning since the Greeks.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is quite true. Of course, you have today a vaster field and more ample material than the Greeks had, but in the handling of them the present-day mind is not superior to the Greek mind with its more limited field and material.

P : Emerson, writing about Plato, says that he has been the epitome of the European mind for the last 2000 years or more.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes—the European mind got everything from the Greeks and owes everything to them. Every branch of knowledge in which human curiosity could be interested has been given to Europe by the Greeks—even archaeology.

The Romans could legislate and fight, they could keep the state together, but they made the Greeks think for them. Of course the Greeks could fight also but not always so well. Take the Roman thinkers—Lucretius, Cicero, Seneca—all owe their philosophy to the Greeks.

That, again, is an illustration of what I was saying about the inrush of forces. Consider a small race like the Greeks, living on a small projecting tongue of land. It was able to build up a culture that has given everything essential to your modern European culture and that in a span of 200 to 300 years only !

Of course, the Greeks didn't create everything. They got much from Egypt, Crete and Asia.

P : The number of artists they produced was remarkable.

SRI AUROBINDO : They had the sense of beauty. Their life was beautiful. The one thing that modern Europe has not taken from the Greeks is beauty. You can't say modern Europe is beautiful. In fact, it is ugly.

What can be said of ancient Greece can be said also of ancient India. She had beauty, which she has since lost. The Japanese are the only race that can be said to have preserved beauty in their life. But now even they are fast losing it under European influence.

The setback to the human mind in Europe is amazing. As I said, no one set of ideas can monopolise Truth and from that point of view all these efforts of Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin to bottle up the human soul in a narrow mould of ideas is absurd.

We had thought during the last years of the 19th century that the human mind had attained a certain level of intelligence and that it would have to be satisfied before any new idea could find acceptance. But it seems one can't rely on common sense to stand the strain. We find Nazi ideas being accepted; fifty years back it would have been impossible to predict their acceptance. Then, again, the way the intellectuals accept psychoanalysis is surprising.

Krishna Prem (Ronald Nixon) is afraid that psychoanalysis will drive out or kill spirituality because it claims to explain away many spiritual things.

S : People believe anything that is uncommon.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, it is as in the old dictum : "I believe because it is absurd."

These Nazi ideas are infra-rational. It is because they are not at all rational that they are considered as inspiration. They are even called mysticism. They are really nothing but narrow pointed impulses rising from the lower being. But perhaps this rise of the infra-rational has been necessary in order that the Supra-rational may be accepted and that Reason may not be able to offer any obstruction to it.

The infra-rational also has a truth; it is necessary for the proper understanding of things. You can't know the world unless you know the part which the infra-rational plays.

N : Do you mean by the infra-rational all that man has inherited from the animal ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Not only that. Man has accused the animal for nothing. In the infra-rational are also included the Rakshasa and the Asura. Man has always been speaking of the animal, the Pashu, in a superior way. But take the dog's faithfulness and affection. These qualities are universal among dogs. But, even when they are found among men, you can't say the same.

P : Mrs. Pinto, the English wife of a friend, told me that she was surprised

to find that the cow in India is so mild and docile. In England, it seems, it may attack men.

SRI AUROBINDO : Most animals kill only for food; there are very few that are inherently ferocious. Even snakes don't attack unless they are frightened.

There was a variety of maneless lion in America—the Puma—that would have been friendly to man. Of course it had to live and so killed animals. But the Americans have been killing it—nearly exterminating it. Most of the wild animals don't kill man unless they find that he is dangerous. That's what happens in Africa. Man begins to shoot them down and they turn against him. In Africa the State had to legislate to prevent the extermination of certain animals. Otherwise people would have killed them off for sport. You can't say man kills only when he is compelled.

And yet we cannot declare man has made no progress. True, the philosopher today is not superior to Plato, but there are many who can philosophise today, also many more who can understand philosophy than in Plato's time. And throughout the course of history a small minority has been carrying the torch to save humanity in spite of itself.

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### NOTE

Nirodbaran acknowledges help from A. B. Purani here and there in reproducing the speeches of P.

NIRODBARAN

## REMINISCENCES

*(We continue here from our last issue the author's reminiscences of Jail. In this instalment he lets us into a number of secrets, some of them of a rather startling character. For example, the way in which the Terrorists got their supply of pistols under the very nose of the sentries is a fine reflection on bureaucratic efficiency, but the story of Sri Aurobindo's articles on the Bomb will certainly come as a surprise and perhaps even a shock to the more non-violent spirits among his admirers. The hair-breadth escape of our author from the clutches of the law thanks to an almost inspired piece of acting on the part of one of his life-long friends who is still here in the Ashram, and the magnificent finale provided by Chittaranjan's famous words on Sri Aurobindo are some of the other highlights of the piece which our readers will enjoy.)*

### X

“Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for an hermitage”

—Lovelace

It was as it were a wheel within a wheel, a circle within a circle, a play within a play.

The comedy of our trial was being staged within the world-play, and on the court-room stage itself we the undertrial prisoners had been doing our little private drama. The stage was set in the room of the Alipore Sessions Court. One corner of the room was fenced off so as to form a square enclosure but with wire netting that enabled us to see and breathe. They had also left a small passage through the netting for our entrance and exit, and a sentry had been posted with arms to watch that the tigers and wild beasts did not break through the cage. Inside, a few benches had been laid where we might sit, for we could not obviously be kept standing the whole day. We were some thirty-five in all. They used to take us from Alipore Jail in a carriage—by carriage I mean a horse-drawn vehicle, for motor cars had not yet come. As we left jail, they would handcuff us in two's, the right hand of one being tied to the left hand of the other

with the same pair of handcuffs. The handcuffs were removed before we entered our cage in the court room.

As the proceedings began in court, we would take our seats. But the court proceeded in its own way and we went on in ours. The pleaders and barristers and witnesses and spectators were all engrossed in the subject matter of the case. The barristers pleaded, the witnesses gave their depositions, the court made comments, everything went on as is usual in a court of law. But we remained perfectly neutral and indifferent as if it did not concern us at all. Our interests were elsewhere. We had come to sit together forming separate groups of four or five according to our respective tastes and temperaments. We could of course move from one group to another as and when we liked. Our topics of discussion ranged over all manner of subjects : religion and spirituality, literature and science, our work and our future, all this came within our purview. Our discussions sometimes grew so loud and hot that Judge Beachcroft—he had been contemporaneous with Sri Aurobindo at Cambridge—would shout at us like a school master, “Less noise there, less noise there !” If that did not stop all the noise, then he had to make this threat, “Unless you stop, your tiffin will stop.” That was a deadly blow and made us perfectly still. For the tiffin they served us in court was our chief meal in the whole day, for its quantity and quality were such as to make it a charming oasis in that Sahara of jail. This tiffin came to us from outside, from friends and relatives and well-wishers. It included such items as *luchis*, potatoes and fritters and sweets. Once we had a taste of all this, it was no wonder that the jail rations came to be despised and grew untouchable.

In the midst of all this, Sri Aurobindo used to sit apart in his little corner. But we could approach him if anyone had anything to ask. One day we arranged a “general meeting”, that is, requested him to give us a talk—of course in the court room itself and during the proceedings! The court would go on and we would go on with our “meeting”. Sri Aurobindo agreed to speak and he chose as his subject, “Nationalism and the Three Gunas (Psychological Types).” Afterwards, on coming out of jail, he wrote out the substance of this speech and had it published in one of his papers. It has since been included in his Bengali work, *Dharma O Jatiyata*.

Sri Aurobindo had to devote a great deal of his time in jail to his counsel, Chittaranjan Das, for whatever he had to say had to be given in writing. I found they kept him supplied with foolscap sheets and a pencil in the court room itself, and he went on writing out his statements there. He wrote quite a few pages every day. In these statements he had to explain in lengthy detail his ideas and ideals, the aims and policy of the *Bandemataram* and *Yugantar* papers. Chittaranjan included all that in his speeches in court. Could the original manuscripts be recovered, they would be precious documents today.

One day I mentioned to him that I had not had a chance to read English

poetry for a long time and would like to have some. Could he help me? The very next day, he wrote out a new poem and handed it to me. As he had no paper to write it on, he had scribbled out the lines along the margins of an old letter! I was particularly impressed by the last two lines; of the rest I do not recall anything now. I need hardly add that the poem is now among the lost treasures.

While on the subject of Sri Aurobindo's writings in jail, I cannot help divulging a secret, namely, that he had written a whole series of essays on the subject of the bomb. The terrorists had been subjected to bitter attacks in the press and they had been falsely accused of all manner of things. It was as if Sri Aurobindo took up his pen to defend them against these accusations. In this series of four essays he discussed in detail the cult of the bomb. I can still recall the titles: (1) The Message of the Bomb, (2) The Morality of the Bomb, (3) The Psychology of the Bomb, (4) The Policy of the Bomb. The series was not completed, but what was written could serve the purpose very well. The writings had been left in my custody and I passed them out of jail to a friend of mine. But in order to save them from the vigilant eyes of the police and such every-day hazards as a house-search, this friend of mine had them shoved inside a hollow bamboo stem and buried underground. When he looked for them again after a little while, he found they had been reduced to a dust heap, thanks to the white ants' benign touch.

Let me then give out another secret in this connection. Just as Sri Aurobindo had taken up his pen—or shall we say his pencil?—on behalf of the bomb similarly Nivedita at a later date once took up the cause of Swadeshi dacoits.—The ideas and motives of these patriots, what impelled them to take up this particular line were explained with such fine understanding and sympathy in Nivedita's writing that it read almost like poetry. Here too the manuscript had come to my hands and was in my custody. That was about the time when Sri Aurobindo on coming out of jail had taken up his work again and started the two weeklies, the English *Karmayogin* and the Bengali *Dharma*. At that time, Nivedita maintained rather close contacts with Sri Aurobindo and ourselves. She used to write for the *Karmayogin*, and when Sri Aurobindo went into retirement, it was she who edited the last few issues of the paper almost single-handed, with the sole exception of news-items. She continued all the features which Sri Aurobindo had begun. Thus she too wrote a few "Conversations" on the lines of Sri Aurobindo's "Conversations of the Dead". I translated them into Bengali and have included them in my *Mritter Kathopakathan* (*Conversations of the Dead*) in Bengali.

While in jail, we had the good fortune to read some unpublished writings of Sri Aurobindo's. Each of us had been furnished by the authorities with a printed brochure containing a report of the exhibits—that is to say, all the documents—letters, notebooks, etc.—which concerned us in that case. These

included portions of an unfinished article from Sri Aurobindo's notebook, entitled, "What is Extremism, Nationalism?" But there was another article, one that was ready for the editorial columns of the *Bandemataram* and was to be published the next day; but instead of going to the *Bandemataram* office, it found its way into the hands of the police as a result of the arrests. This article was so beautiful and perfect from the point of view of both style and substance that I read it over and over again and committed it to memory and would often repeat it aloud when I found myself alone. Hear how it begins, with what calm and majestic periods! I record them here not from the book but from memory :

"Ages ago there was a priest of Baal who thought himself commissioned by the god to kill all who did not bow the knee to him...At last, a deliverer came and slew the priest and the world had rest..."

How simple the words, almost all monosyllabic (except two)—how easy in manner! Absolutely unadorned and still most effective! The movement is that of an arrow, strong and firm and straight. There is an epic quality about it, what Matthew Arnold calls the "grand style simple." This piece fortunately has not been lost; it has found a place in one of Sri Aurobindo's works, in his *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance*, under the heading, "The Morality of Boycott." You might read it for yourselves. You will be delighted, I can assure you.

Now I am going to divulge to you yet another secret, perhaps the most important of all, concerning our life in jail. I have said that I had Sri Aurobindo's essays on the bomb slipped out of jail by handing them over to a friend. But how was this done? By what means did we carry on this kind of secret interchange with the outside world? How we could manage to import pistols into jail remained a major headache for the police. The police invented so many theories and there was no end to the conjectures indulged in by the public. They must have been packed in biscuit tins, or in the bellies of fish, or in jack-fruit, and what not. Finally, the Police Chief could contain himself no longer and decided to ask Kanai. Kanai was already under sentence of death and was biding his time. "Now that all is over," said the Police Chief, "where is the harm if you confess it? Why not show some courage and tell us where you found the pistol?" Kanai grew serious and said in measured tones, "It is the spirit of Khudiram who gave me the revolver." Khudiram had been hanged for his attempt on the life of Kingsford.

Well, let me now explain how the pistols came. They came precisely the way Sri Aurobindo's writings went. When the police found that we were not such ferocious beasts after all, they gave us permission to have a chance sometimes of meeting our friends and relatives. These meetings took place in a room next to the entrance through the main gate of the jail. They



erected a partition of iron bars through the middle of the room. On one side of this barrier stood the visitors and friends and we stood on the other. No doubt there were some sentries about, but they did not particularly bother to watch, for on the whole there had grown up an amount of confidence in our good faith. But it was very easy to pass on anything across this barrier, for with a shawl or heavy *chuddar* on, one could easily touch the person on the other side of the bars—out of an excess of feeling, one would normally imagine. I remember how my uncle once burst into tears on meeting me in this manner. Anyhow, the pair of revolvers used by Kanai and Satyen had changed hands through the bars in this manner.

I referred just now to our good faith. In fact our laughter and fun, our mirth and play, and our sweet simplicity had astonished them all. We had a Court Inspector, an elderly Muslim gentleman, who would almost burst into tears as he looked on us. "How dare you laugh and play?" he used to say, "you have not the least idea of the terror you have to face. You do not know what kind of life it is in the Andamans. You are not the only ones who read the Gita. I too have gone through the book repeatedly and still read it." For this show of sympathy, the gentleman had to suffer punishment. His promotion was stopped or perhaps he was dismissed from the service. The man who was captain of the English guard used to say, "You are strange specimens. You look so tender and soft, and so simple and sweet in your manner! How could you ever commit such heinous crimes? I have lived in Ireland and have seen the Irish patriots, I have had to deal with them. But they were poles apart from you in their looks and their manner. They were harsh and rude and hard; one could know at once what kind of people they were." Most of us were boys and young men of 16 to 20, except for a few like Barin, Upen and Hrishikesh who were of about the same age, all nearing thirty. But within the very precincts of jail we made them understand how one "softer than the flower", *mṛdūni kusumādapi*, could turn into something "harder than diamond", *vajrādapi kaṭhorāṇi*. I refer here to the assassination of our good friend Naren Gosain the approver. That makes another drama.

I have said we used to keep ourselves fully preoccupied with our own discussions, as we sat within our cage in the court room, and never paid much attention to what was going on outside in court. But if something new or interesting or sensational cropped up, then of course we would just turn round to see. There was something sensational that happened one day; it concerned myself. They produced an important witness against me; it was the cabinman at the railway level crossing near Deoghar, a poor old man. Were he to identify me as the person who had been passing to and fro near his cabin—we had several times been to Dighiriya hill across the railway line—that would prove my complicity in the bomb and get me the Andamans without fail. But who can die whom the gods protect? Our Sudhir-da—I use the title in an honorific

sense, for I am actually one month his senior—got suddenly an idea into his head. They had made us line up within the cage for an identification parade. The poor old man was brought in to identify Nolini Gupta. Sudhir-da whispered to me, “You stand in the front line with a quiet nonchalant air. I shall be just behind.” Sudhir-da stood behind, with his head down and showed by his fumbling and nervous manner as if he were trying to hide himself. The old man was in a fix; he got so confused that he finally shouted, “That was the man over there, I have seen him.” This settled the point. The entire court room rang with laughter. Norton was flabbergasted, for he had been conducting the case for the prosecution. He was known as “Madras Norton”: he had earned quite a name as a formidable, almost ferocious barrister at the High Court in Madras. Through this fiasco the path to my release was made clear.

Now let me conclude this story with a description of the last scene. We had all just sat down to our usual discussions as on any other day, when all on a sudden the court room seemed to grow silent and still. Chittaranjan’s voice rose slowly in a crescendo of measured tones. We all stood up and listened intently attentive in pin-drop silence as Chittaranjan went on speaking, as if divinely inspired and like one god-possessed :

“He stands not only before the bar in this Court but stands before the bar of the High Court of History....Long after this turmoil, this agitation ceases, long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and re-echoed not only in India but across distant seas and lands.”

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

*(Translated by Sanat K. Banerji from the original Bengali.)*

## OLD LONG SINCE

*(Continued from the last issue)*

### IV

IN the Matakoil Street, called Mission Street, Sri Aurobindo lived for six months in a house with a tiled roof. That house has at present undergone a radical change; the very spot is unrecognisable. It was in this house that I had Sri Aurobindo's Darshan. There I had the first opportunity of seeing him but from a distance.

During his stay in this house I had the habit of meeting Ramaswami Iyengar every evening on the beach, as I have already said. His heart started melting in my favour little by little even as ants slowly and persistently leave a trail on granite. The result was : he began to welcome me to his room. The school remained closed two days in the week, Sundays and Thursdays. Those days I could meet Iyengar in Sri Aurobindo's house at about 4 p.m. From 4 to 5 p.m. we would be alone conversing with each other. Our relation thus began to ripen. After 5 we would go straight to the beach and join other friends.

Because of my friendship with Iyengar Sri Aurobindo's house appeared to me as my own. That is why I felt no timidity or shyness to go to Iyengar's room; whether he was at home or not, I would go there. But I never took courage to go farther than his room; to do so seemed improper.

As I got more and more familiar with Iyengar, the names of the inmates of Sri Aurobindo's house came to be known to me. Only one of them is still here. His name is Nolini Kanta Gupta. Of those who are no more, Bejoy Kumar Nag was one—his name became Vijayakantan in Tamil. In order to escape from the clutches of the British Government he had assumed the pseudonym Bankim Chandra Basak. Likewise, Suresh Chandra Chakravarti was known to the people of Pondicherry by one name alone : "Sakra". Sourindranath Bose went by his own name. Nagendranath Nag and Biren Roy came later to stay in Sri Aurobindo's house.

Among the inmates Nagendranath was laid up with tuberculosis. Some evenings when engaged in conversation with Iyengar on the verandah outside his room I would see Sri Aurobindo come out from the back portion of the house to the hall in front, take his seat on the same mat with the sick man, put to him some questions and return to his room. I was lucky to have Sri Aurobindo's Darshan in this manner several times without going near him. At that time I

could not speak English well. On his way to the front part of the house and back from there, Sri Aurobindo's preoccupation seemed to be wholly with what he had come for. He would pay little attention, as it were, to any other thing around him. And yet, I was told, nothing could escape his notice.

During this period I requested Iyengar once or twice to introduce me to Sri Aurobindo. But my requests seemed to carry no weight with him.

Sri Aurobindo's birthday was drawing near—August 15, 1913. I requested Iyengar once more. I appealed to him to take me to Sri Aurobindo on his birthday. He replied, wonderful to say, in a consenting tone. I felt an immense joy.

On the 15th August Iyengar asked me to come at about 4.30 p.m. I reached there slightly earlier. All the invitees started coming one by one from all sides. By about 5 or 5.15 all of them had arrived. It was probably one hour before sunset. This I surmised by the dimness of the light inside the house.

In the hall of the front portion of the house some twenty or twenty-five banana leaves were laid out on three sides just as it is done during a marriage feast.

As far as I can remember, no sooner was the main gate bolted from within than Sri Aurobindo came into the hall and stood on one side; some one garlanded him with a rose garland; all present clapped their hands and Sri Aurobindo spoke something in English. All this I can recollect but vaguely. This vagueness of memory is due, I suppose, to an overwhelming joy and palpitation in me on that occasion.

All of us sat down before the banana leaves as we do at a collective dinner. I was one of the guests; with eyes full of delight I saw Sri Aurobindo as he stood before each banana leaf, looked at the person seated there, gently passed on to the next and thus to the last person—meanwhile someone walking by his side served various kinds of sweets and other preparations.

In the courtyard a big jar full of water was kept and by its side a small tumbler. We took some refreshments and after washing our hands we gathered together and kept chatting for a short while. In the meantime Sri Aurobindo had gone to the verandah of the middle portion of the house and sat there in a chair kept for him before a table covered with a cloth. Evidently he was waiting for some other item in the programme. By then it had become dark. In each section of the house one or two lighted hurricane-lamps were put up. The guests took leave one by one or by twos and threes and went home.

I kept on waiting, not knowing what to do. As soon as the guests left, Iyengar came and told me that three big persons, namely, Bharati, Srinivasachari, V.V.S. Ayer, would see Sri Aurobindo to pay their respects to him. If I could wait till they left, there would only be the inmates of the house, five or six, alone with Sri Aurobindo. He had a mind to take me then to Sri Aurobindo. But for that Sri Aurobindo's permission was required, he said finally. I nodded assent immediately. It might have already struck seven or gone on to seven-fifteen. A

fear lurked in me that I would be questioned at home, "Why this delay?" But still I ventured to give my consent.

Iyengar once again asked me, "Do you intend to see Sri Aurobindo with Bharati and others ? Or with the inmates ?" I could not make out what answer to give. Whether in the midst of Bharati and others or in the midst of the inmates of the house Sri Aurobindo would be the same Sri Aurobindo. I began to revolve in my mind how there could be any difference. A little while, it might be less than a minute, I wavered in mind and replied, "When the inmates are there." "If so, you must wait for some time," said Iyengar and left.

I had to wait till 8 p.m. Bharati, Srinivasachari and Ayer at the time of going out of Sri Aurobindo's house looked closely at me with a view to recognise me. They did not expect me there so late. They at once doubted and wondered if I had become an inmate of Sri Aurobindo's house. Their faces betrayed this mixed feeling.

At about 8.15 p.m. Iyengar came to me and said : "You may get Sri Aurobindo's Darshan as you pass before his table. Go with folded hands. But no permission to speak with him. While passing by his right just stand in front, stop awhile, join your hands, silently take leave of him and go home". Iyengar's words were imprinted upon my mind.

I was soon called in. I got up and approached Sri Aurobindo's table. From the ceiling hung a hurricane-lamp that served to dispel the darkness only partially. Going round Sri Aurobindo by way of *pradakṣiṇa* I stood in his presence with joined palms and made my obeisance to him. Sri Aurobindo's eyes, it seemed, burned brighter than the lamp-light for me; as he looked at me, in a trice all gloom vanished from within me, and his image was as it were installed in the *sanctum sanctorum* of my being. Nothing was very clear to me. I went behind him, stood again in front, offered my homage to him and not knowing whether to stay or go I staggered perplexed. Sri Aurobindo made a gesture with his heavenly hands to one of those who stood there. A sweet was given me once again. I felt within that he had accepted me though I did not quite know it. I left Sri Aurobindo's house and proceeded towards my own.

When I reached home, it was 9.30 p.m. What happened at home ? What trouble befell me ? All this is of little importance. Students of my age of that time can easily imagine all the hubbub that took place in my house !

For long my heart had been in a state of suspense thinking that I might or might not attain the goal; my life drifting in distress on the shoreless ocean had somehow come to perceive the light-house. In the midst of gathering despair my being had found a new life and I allowed it full freedom.

On one hand trouble at home; on the other trouble in studies. All this did not touch me to the extent of upsetting me. At times it appeared to me as if no relation existed between anything and me. There was a screen within; all desires known to me and others unknown were outside the screen. Behind

the screen there existed incalculable possibilities, innumerable things happened not within the range of my vision. Something non-human, something strange and bodiless had been shaping my being and consciousness. That is how I think now.

I had been familiar with Bharati since 1910 or 1911; I had imbibed from him, without understanding, a distaste for the old and a boundless attraction for the new. When I look at it now even this revaluation—this mere rejection of the past and acceptance of the new—seems to have had its origin not deep within but meant simply a surface attraction. For the real reality was quite different. It was not the old or the new, it was not the snare of the old or the temptation of the new but the opening of something else behind or within or above that gave form to everything and touched me profoundly without my knowing it.

I started now frequenting Sri Aurobindo's house. My family members knew nothing of it. I became acquainted with one or two of the inmates—mainly Bejoy Kumar. He used to send letters twice or thrice per month by registered post—called *Poste Recommandée* in French—to Chandernagore. As intimacy with him grew, he began to send letters through me. There was no fixed hour for this work. He used to send me at any time between 12 and 3 p.m. He ordered me not to disclose this posting of letters to anyone.

In Pondicherry there were two types of post-offices in those days : one was French, the other British. The bundle from the French post-office would be carried in a small hand-cart with a French policeman escorting it. The bundle would be secured under a seal. It would then be entrusted to the British head post-office. Nobody was authorised to handle it until it was delivered to the French post-office at Chandernagore. That was why all correspondence of Sri Aurobindo's house would pass through the French post-office. The duty of posting letters of Sri Aurobindo's house luckily fell upon me. Now and then, however, the British Secret Police would persuade the French postal authorities or their subordinates, and procure letters addressed to Sri Aurobindo or those coming to V.V.S. Aiyar from Europe, open them and after scrutiny seal them back before handing them over to the postal authorities. At least a strong rumour was current then to this effect.

*(To be continued)*

AMRITA

## A COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST SUKTA OF RIGVEDA

COSMIC creation is a great and sublime sacrifice. "The all-pervading Brahman is established in the sacrifice," says the Gita. Each and every object offers itself into this sacrificial fire. Why? Sacrifice indicates movement, that is to say, an ever-proceeding course towards the greater and still greater fulfilment of evolution. Sacrifice is being performed; creation has become dynamic and presses forward with the self-sacrifice of the objects inherent in it. By self-sacrifice one creates another form and gets in it one's larger self. The plant has evolved from Matter; the animal from the plant; man from the animal, and God wants now to manifest Himself through man by virtue of this process of self-sacrifice. Sacrificing itself, the cloud comes down as rain. Parents sacrifice flesh and blood to give birth to their offspring. All these are but different forms of this sublime sacrifice. We may quote the Gita again: "With sacrifice the Lord of creatures of old created creatures and said: By this shall you bring forth (fruits or offspring), let this be your milker of desires."

It is the gods who are the primal powers holding and controlling this sacrifice and the cosmic creation. By his self-offering man fulfils the nature of the gods.

What is called the sacrifice of elements outside is really Yoga in union inside. The discipline of human life is also a sacrifice. What is the aim of such a sacrifice? Evolution, ascension, from the little to the vast, from suffering, weakness and ignorance to delight, strength and knowledge. How is it possible? By the same self-sacrifice, self-offering, dedication and prostration. The lower levels and baser propensities of our life must be surrendered to the higher levels and sublimer propensities. The Katha Upanishad declares:

"Let the wise man restrain speech in his mind and mind in Self, and knowledge in the Great-Self, and that again let him restrain in the Self that is at peace." (*Translated by Sri Aurobindo*)

The Gita too says:

"And others offer all the actions of the sense and all the actions of the vital force into the fire of Yoga of self-control kindled by knowledge."

The innermost and the uppermost "commune" of the divine energies is known as the gods. The aspirant will offer heart and soul and carry their prostration to the "commune" of the gods. Then alone will the gods descend in him with all their divine plenitude. The truth-seeker gives birth to the gods in his being. Likewise the gods draw him towards them. With regard to the mystery of this sacrifice Lord Sri Krishna proclaims:

"Foster by this the gods and let the gods foster you; fostering each other, you shall attain to the supreme good."

This mutual exchange of sacrifice between man and the divine forces leading to progression, to evolution of life, is guarded by Fire, the light and heat that signify the power born of spiritual discipline. It is this energy that enables the practisant to go forward on his way of sacrifice. The aspirant offers as an

oblation every limb of his being into this energy of spiritual practice which in its turn carries the self-offering of the aspirant to his divinity, and continues to work for its establishment; that is why Fire is the offerer. Fire is also called the carrier, for he brings down the divine powers into the aspirant and carries him up into their region. This work Fire has undertaken to perform without the least violation of the rhythm of Truth day after day through the evolutionary process. Hence he is called the priest. The priest is he who knows the proper time for the performance of the seasonal sacrifices. The energy born of spiritual practice too has the spontaneous tendency to determine the spiritual course of the practisant. The Fire of spiritual discipline burns up all the dross contained in the receptacle of the aspirant making him more capable and bringing down into him the divine power, knowledge and bliss—complete success. The power of Fire is no other than the dynamis of the Divine vision, the activity born of direct realisation (*kavi kratu*); therefore Fire is called the protecting power of Truth (*gopām ṛtasya*). The status that forms the habitat of the vast, the unmanifested and the manifested Truth, the fourth order beyond the ordinarily known three states, *viz.*, the waking state, the dream state and the dreamless sound sleep : this indeed is *swarloka*, the real home of the Fire-god and all the other gods (*swadhāma*). It is here that the gods reign supreme in their own real form, in their true nature. But, then, every god has his assigned field of activity here on earth through some suitable subtle embodiment. The seat of Fire, his field of action, is the earth, the gross sheath. The Energy of spiritual discipline first possesses the practisant in his body, the body-consciousness; and gradually with the help of the other gods this Fire-god leads him to the vital region and then to the sphere of the mind, thence to the Supermind, the fourth heaven. Each god represents the divine embodiment of the special virtue of a particular region or level. But Fire is the foremost God, and the aspirant who wants to have an access to the secrets of spiritual practice and is eager to progress must become a worshipper of Fire (*aṅgira*).

This Sukta (the word literally means “well spoken”, the faultless speech, the infallible words of the seasoned seer of Truth) can be divided into three parts called Riks in accordance with the special differences in the current of thoughts. The first three Riks deal with the theme : Who is Fire, what are his particulars, name and form ? The second three deal with the subject : What is Fire, what his virtues, nature and innate tendencies ? The third group describes the relationship between Fire and the aspirant in the matter of spiritual practice, the holy sacrifice. The Mantras are composed in the metre called Gayatri, which too has three feet. Thus every Rik too has three metrical divisions.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali.)



## THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LITERATURE OVERSEAS

*An Address delivered at the Open Session of the Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English Literature, held in Cambridge, 1962.*

*(Continued from the last issue)*

THE extra benefit which developing countries derive from a study of English literature Dr. Holloway traces to the impact of the structure and conditions of a "modern western society". I am inclined to agree with him in some measure on this point. In the first place, English literature is remarkable not only for the personal but also the impersonal exercise of language. Burke, Gibbon and Darwin present the facts and ideas of political philosophy, history and science in a language which is as striking for its precision as for its grace, energy or imaginative colour. A study of such historical and scientific prose is very helpful to literary evolution in developing countries. Their creative literatures are flowering beautifully today. It is their "applied" literatures that need to be stimulated now. Our science students have yet to realise that their task is not merely to handle test tubes and telescopes well but to give in their own language a competent and engaging account of what they achieve with these instruments. These and other students have also to distinguish genuine artistic beauty from the false glitter of cliché-ridden passages like the one quoted by Mr. L. D. Lerner in his *English Literature: An Interpretation for Students Abroad*: (p.16): "My friends, let us explore all avenues before we abandon our last ray of hope. The hand of doom is upon us. We are in the very jaws of death, and must beware of the snake in the grass. Let us not jump from the frying pan into the fire. If we keep a stiff upper lip we need not fear what the future will hold. We are on the ladder of progress. The cup of fortune is within our grasp. The flood-tide of freedom is flowing, and the fruits of progress are ripe for plucking."

The Afro-Asian will find the study of English literature fascinating from another point of view—the evolution of modern literary art-forms. Half the glory of the Indian Renaissance, for example, consists in the assimilation of modern literary forms like the Novel, Biography, Autobiography, the Lyric with all its enchanting subdivisions, the Short Story, the Personal Essay and the like for well over a century and a half. Even recent art-forms like the stream of consciousness novel and the modernist lyric have been assimilated and used with remarkable power and originality. The Afro-Asian has his own tradition of epics and romances, songs and plays and sociological and philosophic prose. But modern art-forms are—if I may use a Marxist term without subscribing

to its Marxist context—bourgeois forms and new to the Afro-Asian. These are new to him because the twilight of feudalism lingered for a longer time in his part of the world than in Europe. He has therefore to be grateful to the West for this contribution towards the literary evolution in his own country. A survey of these art-forms gives him a clear insight into their technique and development and is bound to be of immense value.

The impact of important political events on English literature is of great interest to the Afro-Asian for a similar reason. The literary development in Asia and in Europe was more or less on a par till about the middle of the 16th century when Queen Elizabeth ruled over England and Akbar over India. The middle class emerges as a reckonable power about this time in Europe. We have had several Reformations in Asia but one major Renaissance promoting the secular outlook of the common man as a result of the western impact on Afro-Asian society. A study of the Renaissance, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution and their impact on English literature is bound to be instructive to the Afro-Asian because it is these events which separate the modern world from the old world which held him longer in its grip. Africa and Asia are in the midst of an industrial revolution today. Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* which saw the collapse of civilisation in the rise of industrialism holds a far more vivid meaning for the Afro-Asian today than for the student in Britain. The fervent opposition of Wordsworth and Ruskin to the introduction of the railways will, for a similar reason, be understood more sympathetically in certain parts of Africa at the present moment than in Great Britain. Writings like Burke's speeches on India and America and on the French Revolution, Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, Carlyle's *The French Revolution* and Ruskin's *Unto This Last* and *The Crown of Wild Olive* will appeal to him in a special way, apart from their abiding literary interest.

The manner in which English literature mirrors the gradual evolution of British society from its feudal to its bourgeois form and then to a Welfare State is sure to fascinate the student in Africa and Asia. The emerging middle class is seen in Chaucer's Host and Franklin and other portraits of common men in *The Prologue*. The Near and Middle East have plenty of their own *Faerie Queene* stuff. But even the glorification of national history in Shakespeare's chronicle plays came as a revelation to Indians a hundred years ago. The England of Queen Anne yields an even more interesting picture. That was the time when the urbanisation of culture that preceded the great Industrial Revolution was taking place. Coffee houses had sprung up in London and men of letters were just emerging from their garrets. I still remember vividly how, as I sat reading in the Bodleian *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, *The Citizen of the World* and *The Rambler* for my tutorials at Oxford twenty-five years ago, this London sprang to life before my very eyes in place of the 20th century London that I

had been seeing. It reminded me of a similar transformation that had come over Indian society. The doings of Sir Roger De Coverley in town are still enacted in every Indian city when a village squire or jagirdar visits it. Our Sir Andrew Freeports are multiplying fast and promoting both the prosperity and the philistinism of the land. When in 1947 the partition of India was in the air and the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League were contending with each other for victory, I won a prize announced for the best letter of the week by *The Illustrated Weekly of India* by quoting the following lines from Addison's essay on Party Government under the caption "Addison Come to Judgement": "There cannot a greater judgment befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another, than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but destroys even common sense."

Dr. Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield regarding the dedication of his great Dictionary, the glorification of the feudal past in Scott's historical novels and the dissection of pre-industrial middle-class preoccupations in Jane Austen had the warmth and freshness of contemporary life itself for Indians towards the close of the 19th century. The reverberations of labour unrest in Charlotte Bronte's *Shirley* had the poignancy of real life. The revival of folk ballads brought about by Percy's *Reliques* and the folk refrains of Burns' songs had a remarkable impact on Indian literature. A conscious cultivation of the oral literary past gave a new direction to the literature in India. Scholars have been busy for several years collecting proverbs, folk tales, ballads and songs in each part of the country.

Industrial society in the West is now evolving into the Atomic Age and the Age of Space Travel. The literature which reflects these new pressures and problems is sure to interest the Afro-Asian as something that is already in the offing, that may break in on him tomorrow if not today. The entire globe is involved in the repercussions of these tremendous events, and it is stimulating for him to read works like H.G.Wells' *The Shape of Things to Come*, T.S.Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Ape and Essence* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*.

The impact of great movements of thought on literature is another fascinating aspect of literary study. An examination of major and minor works of art with a view to discovering the way in which a movement of the human spirit permeates the literature of a period is indeed a rewarding experience. The student is thrilled to perceive the consanguinity of outlook that distinguishes

the writers of the blossoming period of the Renaissance, its ripeness and decadence. The impact of German transcendentalism—ultimately traceable to Indian thought—which is such a powerful factor in the Romanticism of the early 19th century and the influence of Karl Marx and Freud on recent English literature can be studied with great profit by students in developing countries.

The spiritual evolution of writers like Shakespeare, Shelley and Keats is another interesting branch of literary study. Their rapid transformations of outlook and the material in the form of letters and of critical analyses which facilitates such study can give to the reader a wonderful insight into the formation and evolution of the aesthetic personality. We have in India a great deal of literature about the psychology of Art but not the psychological evolution of individual artists. I would recommend to young students in India with a poetical bent of mind a book like Middleton Murry's *Keats and Shakespeare* more than any book on aesthetics or on principles of criticism. It is rewarding to study how even the evolution of living poets like T.S.Eliot is X-rayed with great interest and fidelity by critics. Our own Tagoriana is growing. But modern English literature can provide us with a rich variety of literary portraits.

But it is good to remember that the psychological approach should usually be supplemented by the sociological. I remember an English critic wondering whether Irish poets like W.B.Yeats and A.E. wore any clothes at all—their early poetry was so ethereal and so full of angelic wings. Had the critic been acquainted with them, he would have realised that it is possible to dress oneself and eat one's breakfast and hear the sound of angels' wings at the same time. On the eve of my departure from Poona to Oxford, at a farewell meeting I spoke so feelingly about my desire to bring home with me a handful of dust from Shelley's birthplace that a young friend of mine actually presented to me a fine casket in which to treasure this handful of dust. But other influences prevailed on me when I set my foot on English soil. I realised that the political and industrial glory of England was at least as great as the glory of Shelley's poetry. I felt that the primary duty of an Indian then was not to bother about a handful of dust from the birthplaces of poets but to lend a helping hand to free his mother country from an alien yoke. I returned home with an empty casket and lectured to my friend on the need to industrialise India. Having lived in England for some time I learnt to appreciate Dryden and Pope, whose poetry I had abhorred. Now that I am back in England again, though in this other place, and participating in this Conference as a citizen of the Indian Republic, I hope to fulfil my long-cherished dream and return home with a casketful of dust from Shelley's birthplace.

(To be continued)

V. K. Gokak

## THEY GATHERED

THEY gathered in unholy congregation  
And mocked and whispered and jeered  
While, smug in their goodness,  
The good watched and waited,  
And I stood alone, unbelieving.

They pointed their fingers at me,  
Foul-smelling fingers dipped in other people's sins,  
Hungry, grasping, lusting for the kill,  
They closed on me with ghoulish cries,  
While I stood alone, wondering.

They surrounded me in gloating expectancy.  
But suddenly, She—the one Beloved of my heart—  
Reached out Her hand and tore the veil,  
Waking my eyes wide open to Her Glory,  
And I stood calm, ungrieving.

They were still there in unholy congregation,  
But I saw them not—the vulture hordes,  
Only vain black shadows dwindling in Her radiance—  
And in the whole wide wondrous world  
I was alone with the Alone, delighting.

VATSA

## I DRAGGED MY DESIRES...

...ALONG a dream street,  
A blue façade  
Angular buildings  
Windowless,  
Yet the blank walls knew  
The walkers on the grey-yellow paving.

The street bent and rolled  
Back and on and into myself.

A dusk-crimson wraith  
Descended—  
Slowly waltzed  
On retinas,

Jade green hands  
Emerged from mind,  
Reached the wraith  
And the red mist  
Danced through the fingers

And I left.  
The street curled  
Into a hidden recess  
Atop a giant blue gum-tree  
Swarming with manic mantis  
Heads switching  
A-twist with blood.

I dragged my desire-soul...

Through spinning circles of rice-green light,  
Clockwise, anti-clockwise,  
Triangles  
Of a lightening purple.  
My eyes cleared,

My mind cleared  
 Thrusting aside the floating blocks of turquoise grey  
 I moved into light,  
 A burning haze of light  
 In amethyst...  
 All that I possessed was a new idea of broken destiny :

I remembered the slow lingering  
 Of the moon's embrace with earth,  
 A white rose greeting the dew  
 Of the first morning  
 And a dragonfly  
 Freshly spun with fire...

ANURAKTA (TONY SCOTT)

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## FREEDOM

KNOT upon knot circled my faithful heart  
     Racking soul's white transparency; a false  
     Instancy kept me prisoner of blind calls.  
 Submitted to God's word, I suffered smart,  
 Hour on cross-hour, victim of tortures' dart.  
     "Not in world's push and pull is freedom. Rise  
     Above the turbulent shackles; short way, wise,  
 Keen-flamed, of faith is freedom's secret art !

Uncover the diamond dazzle of thy soul,  
     Mingled in mean confusion of life's mud;  
 Allurements, hatreds, both must sink down whole,  
     Raise thyself far beyond the earth-crazy crowd.  
 Ignite thy sacred flame and burn each flaw.  
 Rapt, victor, noise-free, to My Truth-Sun draw."

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## MAHAMAYA

SEATED at the mute centre of my soul  
Who art thou, Empress? Even the mightiest dream  
Has failed to see thy mystery and magic roll  
On the cosmic scene. O kiss me not, Supreme,  
If thy endless ages kissed not the divine !  
Clasp me not to thy breast, if its flower-grace  
Be not like flowers of paradise ! Dearest mine,  
Open love's sea where, melted, thy heart plays  
In a grand symphony to change the faith  
Of mortal life. Mahamaya, be unfurled  
To embrace each sullen soul, for I see thy breath  
Of love and passion as the rapid pulse of this world.

I am the traveller of the sorrowful road of time,  
I am the man who seeks the seeds of Bliss,  
I am the spirit who digs his heart for truth sublime  
And a visible world of Beauty, Light and Peace  
As the home of happy solitude. This earth  
Is charmed by thy lucent eyes and smile unseen,  
Enchanted by thy mystic harmony's mirth.  
O thou sole Wonder, sweet invisible Queen  
Of all humanity, shine out through thy veil,  
Give me the secret key to thy path serene,  
Enrich my dream of love ! Let me not fail,  
Elusive One, to find the luminous world within.

SRIJIT  
(with K.D.S.)



## THOUGHTS

A GOOD number of people are there collected in Pondicherry. What are all of you doing there ?

We till the fields, drive the ploughshares.

Indeed ?

Of course !

What crops do you cultivate ?

All the good and beautiful spiritual verities that can grow in the field of a human body.

Is it so ?

Yes, it is so. You can say we are doing sadhana, you can say we are tilling the fields, it is one and the same thing.

What made you select Pondicherry for that ?

Because here lives a cultivator, an all-round expert, a man unique in experience of his vocation. Moreover he delights in turning us also into experts in all the pros and cons of cultivation. He enjoys sharing out to us all the crops we have reaped by our labours.

\*  
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GIRDHARLAL

*(Translated into English from the author's Gujarati book "Uparāma")*

## THE SONG AND THE SNAKES

THOSE were the days when there used to be only a few sadhaks in the Ashram. Continuously for more than a year, snakes, big and small, used to come to my house; even elsewhere they would come my way. I do not know how and from where they would appear. I had then no alternative but to kill them. I was very much troubled by them and did not know how to get rid of them.

One day as I killed a snake, a voice came to me, "First you are calling and then killing us?" It looked strange to me how I could be calling them. On the contrary I was feeling more and more troubled by them.

Another day someone in my house caught a snake and put it in a bottle. After a couple of days, it sloughed a very nice skin. The person who had caught it presented the skin to Sri Aurobindo. The same day I also told Sri Aurobindo about my having heard that voice. In fact I gave him the whole tale of snakes appearing in my house. He replied that I might be calling them by my songs and songs are very pleasing to snakes. Indeed I was singing songs very often when in a free and joyful mood. One of the songs was in praise of Sri Krishna recalling that episode of his in which he had killed the many-headed serpent in the Yamuna.

I informed Sri Aurobindo all about it. He replied that when I was singing that song my psychic being, the true soul, responded. It came very much to the front and because of its power it was attracting the snakes to listen to my song. But if I stopped singing that song, the snakes would not come to me any more.

I stopped singing that song, the song which I had been accustomed to hum since my very childhood, and I was not troubled by any snake thereafter.

RAMBAI

*Reported by* HAR KRISHAN SINGH

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

(Classified Excerpts)

Section VI—*The Nature of the Soul.*

(I) PURUSHA OR CONSCIOUS SOUL

BEHIND, even in our terrestrial being, there is this other, subconscious or subliminal to us, which knows itself as more than the body and is capable of a less materialised action. To this we owe immediately most of the larger, deeper and more forceful dynamic action of our surface mind; this, when we become conscious of it or of its impress on us, is our first idea or our first realisation of a soul or inner being, Purusha.<sup>1</sup>

As the aspect of Self is in its essential character transcendental even when involved and identified with its universal and individual becomings, so the Purusha aspect is characteristically universal-individual and intimately connected with Nature even when separated from her. For this conscious Spirit while retaining its impersonality and eternity, its universality, puts on at the same time a more personal aspect; it is the impersonal-personal being in Nature from whom it is not altogether detached, for it is always coupled with her : Nature acts for the Purusha and by its sanction, for its will and pleasure; the Conscious Being imparts its consciousness to the Energy we call Nature, receives in that consciousness her workings as in a mirror, accepts the forms which she, the executive cosmic Force, creates and imposes on it, gives or withdraws its sanction from her movements. The experience of Purusha-Prakriti, the Spirit or Conscious Being in its relation to Nature, is of immense pragmatic importance; for on these relations the whole play of the consciousness depends in the embodied being.<sup>2</sup>

In a phenomenal universe so created, the separative form becomes the foundation and the starting-point of all its life action; therefore the individual Purusha in working out its cosmic relations with the One has in this physical world to base himself upon the form, to assume a body; it is the body that he must make his own foundation and the starting-point for his development of the life and mind and spirit in the physical existence.<sup>3</sup>

...the spirit, Purusha is one but it adapts itself to the formations of Nature. Over each grade of our being a power of the Spirit presides; we have within us and discover when we go deep enough inwards a mind-self, a life-self, a physical self; there is a being of mind, a mental Purusha, expressing something of itself on our surface in the thoughts, perceptions, activities of our mind nature, a being of life which expresses something of itself in the impulses, feelings, sensations, desires, external life activities of our vital nature, a physical being, a being of the body which expresses something of itself in the instincts, habits, formulated activities of our physical nature.<sup>4</sup>

### (ii) CONSCIOUS BEING

Is not this after all the perfectly natural and simple mystery of Conscious Being that It is bound neither by its unity nor by its multiplicity? It is "absolute" in the sense of being entirely free to include and arrange in Its own way all possible terms of Its self-expression. There is none bound, none freed, none seeking to be free,—for always That is a perfect freedom. It is so free that it is not even bound by its liberty. It can play at being bound without incurring a real bondage. Its chain is a self-imposed convention, Its limitation in the ego a transitional device that it uses in order to repeat its transcendence and universality in the scheme of the individual Brahman.<sup>5</sup>

We have then the manifestation of the divine Conscious Being in the totality of physical Nature as the foundation of human existence in the material universe. We have the emergence of that Conscious Being in an involved and inevitably evolving Life, Mind and Supermind as the condition of our activities; for it is this evolution which has enabled man to appear in matter and it is this evolution which will enable him progressively to manifest God in the body,—the universal Incarnation.<sup>6</sup>

The Conscious Being, Purusha, is the Self as originator, witness, support and lord and enjoyer of the forms and works of Nature.<sup>7</sup>

### (iii) JIVATMAN OR CONSCIOUS-SELF

In the second poise of the Supermind the Divine Consciousness stands back in the idea from the movement which it contains, realising it by a sort of apprehending Consciousness, following it, occupying and inhabiting its works, seeming to distribute itself in its forms. In each name and form it would realise itself as the stable Conscious-Self, the same in all, but also it would realise itself as a concentration of Conscious-Self following and supporting the individual play of movement and upholding its differentiation from the other

play of movement,—the same everywhere in soul-essence, but varying in soul-form. This concentration supporting the soul-form would be the individual Divine or Jivatman as distinguished from the universal Divine or one all-constituting self. There would be no essential difference, but only a practical differentiation for the play which would not abrogate the real unity. The universal Divine would know all soul-forms as itself and yet establish a different relation with each separately and in each with all the others. The individual Divine would envisage its existence as a soul-form and soul-movement of the One and, while by the comprehending action of Consciousness it would enjoy its unity with the One and with all soul-forms, it would also by a forward or frontal apprehending action support and enjoy its individual movement and its relations of a free difference in unity both with the One and with all its forms.<sup>8</sup>

( *To be continued* )

*Compiled by* NATHANIEL PEARSON

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## WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD ?

*How a philosopher may look at the question*

“OUR distressed generation is obscurely aware that the present crisis is a spiritual one and what we need is a healing of the discord between the outward resources of power, which are assuming frightful proportions and the inward resources of spirit which seem to be steadily declining,” said Dr. Radhakrishnan, a representative philosopher of the east and a “philosopher king” of India, at the Columbia University in the city of New York. Obviously he hinted at something wrong, maybe at a lag, maybe at a wrong emphasis or an over-emphasis on one of the aspects of life. The United States of America, a land of plenty and the paradise of the brave pioneer, very likely lacks something or at least has betrayed an inadequacy of emphasis on the other aspect of life.

This might sound pessimistic but an initial pessimism has down the ages, enabled man to examine where he is wrong or where he stands after centuries of effort in a particular direction. “What’s wrong with the world ?” is the question of the hour, because the progress of civilisation mankind has achieved in the few centuries past has not led to happiness in the true sense of the term. These centuries of effort in one direction has yielded many things; time and distance have been conquered, a lot has been done for material well-being, diseases and epidemics have been brought under control, education has spread and has been spreading, Science as a dominating variable—in health, industry, education and even religion—has vitally affected man’s mental constitution and his social institutions. Predominance of the utilitarian and pragmatic attitude of mind has made truth a means of action rather than an ideal for contemplation for its own sake. Knowledge of the environment in its physical aspect has been utilised as a power, and more of knowledge has brought more of power. The Realist approach to knowledge as opposed to the Idealist has led to scientific and technological advancement which, in turn, has generated certain evils, like standardisation, concentration of power in a few hands, specialisation, isolation, conflict of interests, a certain amount of confusion and a host of other pathological states of society. These result from conflict between technological innovations, and the consequent new modes of living, and the age-old empirically grounded ideas, dogmas or faiths. Consequently while the individual enjoys an easy and comfortable life, he is confused, feels insecure and inferior. Changes in material progress outstrip those in non-material. Even if we resist the temptations for an exaggeration of the maladies, we cannot ignore the manifestation of certain pathological symptoms of society. Insecurity

and inferiority of the common man resulting from the all-pervasive lag are at the root of a keen cry for a holiday for science, a challenge to science from common sense and from reason. Obviously reason is set against reason resulting in a negative reaction against science from the classical Romanticists and conservative Economists highlighting a number of other evils of the one-sided cultivation of science. But the question of inhibiting man's scientific pursuit does not arise; the pursuit will survive by virtue of its inevitability and will continue to be a dominant social institution.

The thinking man carefully evaluates science and its applications and finds the strangle-hold science and technology have on man. One wonders at the lack of the scientific attitude of mind in spite of a lot of knowledge, which goes by the name of science. Man has become a slave to his own innovations and inventions, which are essential for the so-called higher standard of living. Machines, which men make, make men machines, till they are afraid of their own machines. By an inevitable reaction to a constant process of stimulation from the environment, discoveries and therefore new powers come to man for an effective harnessing of the universe. The relative ease with which the external world is studied and controlled brings a feeling of success and glory, and the glammers of modern civilisation, obviously a contribution of science and technology, blur his inner vision. As a result he might have understood and controlled a substantial portion of the world around, but he does not know what lies under the tip of his nose. Statements like "Know thyself" still stand unrealised mottoes. The senses are given a higher place and reason in the true sense of the term is often lost sight of. "The eyes and the ears are bad witnesses," said Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher, "when they are at the service of minds that lack reason." Reason, in the true sense of the term, is inward-oriented. The essence of science, the scientific attitude of mind, as the product of mature reason and the basis of all wisdom, is being missed. The glamour of outward achievements outstrips the glow of inner personality excellences. This extraverted outlook of the so-called age of science has resulted in a one-sided advancement of knowledge, that of the external world. The potentialities of personality excellences and the admiration of the higher values of life do not get a chance of manifesting themselves. The geniuses among the votaries of science are admired for the additional power they bring to man through patient labour while their personality excellences are conveniently ignored. Discoveries and inventions come to power-intoxicated makers of the community's destiny and, as the adequate mental excellences are not there, these are more often abused than not. The powerless discoverer and inventor look askance at and very often repent the creations of their own genius. Harnessing matter has gone ahead; life and its problems still await solution. This, in brief, characterises the modern age—an age of catastrophe of the worst order, a perceptible poverty of the spirit, in spite of the triumph of the senses.

We of the present-day world are at the threshold of a new era slowly approaching, an age of self-scepticism and self-examination. What is, after all, that power, which does not promote inner security, freedom from conflict, freedom from inner forces of disintegration, peace and tranquillity? The tremendous materialistic power in the hands of people who do not see things with the eye of reason and cannot control themselves has been viewed with a certain amount of suspicion, and the revolt of alert and thinking minds all over the world is occasionally in evidence. The climax of extraversion is well in sight. The crisis is expressed in the following words by an administrator.

On the eve of America's unsuccessful attempt to launch a Spaceship some time in January this year, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Carl T. Rowan, a Negro and the only Negro in the Cabinet of President Kennedy, said, "We are about to hurtle a man into orbit around the earth and we still can't send a mixed busload of white and negro students to the Mississippi. What profits it if we harness the universe and can't harness the passions and prejudices and petty fears that have brought so much of misery to so much of humanity?" The space between planet and planet may, in the reasonably foreseeable future, be controlled but is it not a fact that here on earth, on our planet, the space between man and man, between race and race and between country and country is yet to be brought under control? The Union of South Africa stands as a glaring example of man's failure in this regard. The argument which Portugal kept advancing through all these years to claim Goa as part of her territory was yet another example of the unscientific attitude of mind though she has probably a lot of science and technology and these are very likely much more advanced than they are in India. Examples can be multiplied to any length.

The worst aspect of modern scientific knowledge is that it has been utilised as an instrument in promoting greed and avarice in those to whom this knowledge passes. It has not produced humility, the outstanding personality trait of the knowing man. It has produced pride and aggression, characteristic of a conqueror. Yet another prominent characteristic of the age of Science is availability of too much of knowledge of the external world and too many ideas without adequate assimilation and integration, too much of wealth, as it were, in the hands of ill-equipped and ill-prepared men. We are still in the ox-cart age so far as the scientific utilisation of human resources is concerned. Our failure to learn about ourselves and the fundamental ways in which we differ from one another has resulted in increased intolerance and bigotry. But science must go on and the course of civilisation is irreversible. While those who have already reached the peak of science and technology may shift the emphasis to the other variable, those who are now going the way the townsmen have gone should learn from the mistakes of their forerunners and effect a reconciliation from now on between the two variables. There is ample room for mutual give-and-take.



The crying need of the hour is, therefore, a correct approach to science and a shift of emphasis. Indications of a positive approach in this regard are already there. Positively there should be a proper approach to what may be called social engineering, the proper application of science in its methods and findings to problems of human adjustment. The division and isolation of science have to be minimised. The unhealthy influence of power politics has to be negated. Science is to be applied more seriously and in a more practical way to the problem of how human beings can get along together. The understanding and control of human nature has to be emphasised. An applied branch of General Science, designated as "Humanics", may with profit be cultivated by pooling together the results of the different branches of science. The age-old precepts of religion may not help because the prevailing attitude is different.

It does not necessarily mean that along with the progress of physical science no attention was paid to other aspects of human life. Whenever there has been in the course of the evolution of human thought an over-emphasis on the material and sensate type of man's adaptation, there has been an age of self-scepticism, leading to a shift of emphasis and a revision of the approach to life and its problems. Control of conditions, objectivity of outlook and comprehensiveness of knowledge are basic to a scientific approach and the predominant love and inclination for science can be utilised for the betterment of man's lot on earth. Efforts should be made to develop the scientific attitude of mind along with the acquisition of scientific knowledge. The child of today has a much richer heritage, but without the cultivation of an unbiassed attitude of mind, all this is bound to be used in promoting intolerance, greed and selfishness. If men in power, for instance, could develop this essence of science, the only form of diplomacy between nation and nation and in the world organisation standing as a symbol of our efforts at achieving the one-world order must mean free, plain and above-the-board discussions and negotiations. Negotiations and discussions, like quarrels and feuds, need at least two human beings and if the two are mentally wide apart, they do not and cannot meet at a point. Therefore, the high-sounding words of diplomacy and diplomatic relations stand not for reason, objective and scientific, but for what may be called irrational rationalising, and success is measured by the extent to which one can hoodwink and deceive the other. Discussions of world problems at the international forum, the basis of our conception of one world and one humanity, demonstrate this cleverness at hide-and-seek. Rejecting anything that is old and not demonstrable, indicative of another attitude of mind not necessarily born of science, has done incalculable harm by throwing to the winds the age-old principle of wisdom, "A limit to experience is not a limit to reality." Human adjustment between man and man in every-day life and between nation and nation depends on a certain amount of loss of ground by the contending individuals and nations, a bit of sacrifice or negation of the ego, and an impartial scientific

attitude is possible when this preparedness is there. Is it necessary to elaborate the basic determinant of what we have chosen to call "the Cold War"? Science has been utilised to obtain more power by harnessing the forces of nature but man has not been able to harness the power that humanity would gain by collective will and collective endeavour. Knowledge gained by the ceaseless toil of the geniuses in any country has been so far treated as the acquired property of that country whereas knowledge knows no bounds and all that has been acquired down the ages has added to the common heritage of man. Can we categorise knowledge as Indian, Chinese, Russian, American, etc., and yet have we not done so?

Hence the age of crisis—the crisis of knowledge, of science and technology—requires a re-orientation of the entire ideal and spirit of education towards 'man-making' more than towards mere dissemination of information. Standardisation, though indispensable to a certain extent, is not inevitable. Standardisation in medicine, for instance, is fast being replaced by a psycho-somatic approach to the individual. Man defies all formulae since he is not a mere physico-chemical total. A psycho-technological approach in the fields of production has, of late, yielded good results and a similar approach may be made in the field of administration in general. Endocrinology and Bio-chemistry can go a long way in controlling the emotional and temperamental angularities of man. The high-strung personality of the politician, who somehow gets his opinion accepted as the opinion of the masses he represents, has to be tempered with an impartial objective attitude of the mind to local, national and international problems. This is the directive of the age of science and all efforts have to be made at the promotion of this attitude on all fronts.

Mankind has nothing, however, to be sorry for. Civilisation has been the end-result of a veritable trial-and-error process. What is needed is an application of the technique, which has delivered the goods in one sphere, to other spheres of life in the same process of trial-and-error. This is possible only if the will to make an effort, honest and sincere, is there. The golden opportunity which man has in this age of science has to be utilised in tackling problems which arise in other phases of life. Let me close by quoting the great thinker with whom I began. In one of his speeches he said, "If we fail to overcome the discord between power and spirit, we will be destroyed by the forces which we had the knowledge to create but not the wisdom to control. Survival demands a change in the spirit of our lives." Let a new unity of all mankind be born out of the anguish of our times, because the history of man's civilisation has been a record of his wrong moves and failures and also of twists of circumstances which showed the light.

## BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

### **Sri Aurobindo on Social Sciences and Humanities for the New Age**

By *Kewal L. Motwani*. Orient Longmans. Rs. 5.00.

IN a graceful dedication to the Mother, Sri Aurobindo and the inmates of the Ashram, Prof. Motwani makes an offering of his anthology of extracts from the writings of the Master.

The author relates the story of the origin of the work during his stay in the Ashram (1948-50) :

“The idea of bringing together Sri Aurobindo’s statements on various Social Sciences and Humanities and publishing them in book-form has an interesting history and will bear a brief statement. It arose out of my placing before him my scheme for an Indian Academy of Social Sciences and an expression of a hope that he may deign to come out of his retirement, address the first session of the proposed Academy which may be convened at Pondicherry, and give to it his benediction, accompanied by a Charter of Social Sciences for the New Age. The scheme for the Academy received his approval while my wish for the Charter was granted in an indirect way. I was led, ostensibly by accident, to look for Sri Aurobindo’s statements on these subjects in his writings. An eager and searching scrutiny of the pages of his various books and of the *Arya*, containing his numerous writing still in the serial form, revealed a wealth of material that satisfied my yearning for an authentic statement, from the Indian point of view, that could lend support to my solitary efforts, then extending over many years, in this much neglected field of thought. The preparation of the book, therefore, became a joyous adventure, and I am glad and grateful to record that both the manuscript and its publication in book-form received Sri Aurobindo’s approval.

“Indeed, he very graciously had the manuscript read out to him, made a few corrections and suggested comparison with the originals in the *Arya*, which was, of course, readily done. The book is published as it was submitted to him in manuscript form, except that a few excerpts have been divided into parts and appropriate headings have been given to facilitate reference.”

Humility is rarely manifest in the fecund field of academic egotism. Perhaps only in India would a leading scholar (Prof. Motwani is Head of the Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sociology, University of Jabalpur) turn so readily to the Divine for counsel and inspiration. In so doing he has avoided the plague of contemporary literature, the mania for the ‘Digest’ and the subsequent emasculation of the originals. The excerpts published here are lengthy and judiciously selected.

It is to be regretted, however, that Prof. Motwani’s publishers and proof-readers have not served Sri Aurobindo’s text with fidelity. In a book of only one hundred and eighty-seven pages there are more than two hundred and fifty typographical errors. These range through distortions of punctuation, scrambled type, omitted phrases and drastic re-paragraphing

Moreover, Prof. Motwani's introductory intention to trace the original passages from the *Arya* to their correct position in the published works of Sri Aurobindo has somewhere along the line been short-circuited. Several excerpts remain with only the *Arya* references. This will be more than merely frustrating to the reader who wishes to follow the quotation to its source since, in the publication in book-form, Sri Aurobindo often effected drastic revisions and clarifications.

These technical faults are the only flaws in an immensely valuable introduction to Sri Aurobindo's writings. Of those writings in their plenitude, Prof. Motwani correctly states :

"For the vast abundance of material, profundity of thought, sublimity of expression, and for the glory and majesty of its soul-vision, Sri Aurobindo's contribution remains unequalled in the history of human creative effort in both the East and the West."

To all those aspiring to a New Age for man this book is required reading, and alert educationalists will see in it an invaluable text book and supplementary reference for all levels from the Secondary upwards.

AUSTIN

**Vrittanta (Chronique)**, a poem by the Nobel Laureate French poet, *Saint-John Perse*, translated into Bengali by Prithwindranath Mukhopadhyaya. Published by Prafulla Chandra Das, Cuttack-2, Orissa. Pages 44, price 1.50.

Saint-John Perse, according to some competent critics, is a rising star, shedding a prophetic light on the world of modern poetry. He reminds me of Whitman, and perhaps more of Edward Carpenter; but he is different from both, and remarkably original. He has not the pellucid, universal sweep of Whitman's vision, his profound, intimate perception of the spiritual meaning of existence, and the surge and roll of his diction; but he has what Whitman had not, a keen, delicate sensitiveness to the subtle-nuanced suggestions of common things, a fine, imagist faculty of absorbing and expressing in a tissue of quaint but effective symbols the cryptic message of the future, whose breath blows over the crumbling ruins of the present. He seems to unite in his poetry something of the legacy of French Unanimism with the recent trend towards Chliastic subjectivism.

Prithwindra's translation has admirably preserved the atmosphere, the imaginative vigour and vividness of the closely linked imagery, and the cadenced compressed movement of the French original. It is a new splendid feather in his cap as a translator of a few choice productions of modern world literature.

The printing of the book is excellent, and the get-up artistically attractive.

RISHABHCHAND

# 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 FORTY-ONE

BETWEEN my last lecture and this, quite a gap has fallen. And in that gap I fell down! Yes, I had a nasty toss some days back and had to keep at home for a time. What happened? you will ask. Well, as your Professor of Poetry I may say that my life has a poetic rhythm—a falling movement and a rising movement. Also, I am very much like a simile—very much like what I am doing just now, for I am giving you a simile in comparing myself to one. The Romans had the phrase: *Omne simile claudicat*—"Every simile limps."

One may understand this in two ways. A simile may limp because it may not come up to the reality: it may fall short of conveying a true idea of what a thing is: one makes a comparison in order to express some quality in a thing, but the comparison may prove to be merely a suggestive statement which cannot bring out the essence of the matter. I consider this view a piece of ineptitude. To my mind, a simile extends and enriches an object, reveals an object's overpassing of its common appearance, establishes its connection and even its oneness with objects beyond itself and makes it part of an underlying reality wider than individual things and holding the identical essence of a multitude of them. If the simile limps it is because the object fails to measure up to it: the limping comes not because the simile-leg is shorter but because it is longer. To take the most ordinary instance: "This man is like a lion." Do we extend and enrich the man or do we cramp and impoverish him? And do we not hint at something in which man-nature and lion-nature fuse in a kind of world-nature?

The second interpretation is : a simile fastens on a few important features of semblance and ignores others which differ. So no simile copes with an object with completeness. The incompleteness creates the limp. Here too we may argue that if the simile is meant to show something that else would not be revealed in an object the points of difference do not diminish the simile but are neutral inasmuch as they stand outside the purpose of it : some of them may even outshine what is proper to the object. Thus, to revert to our example, a lion has four clawed feet which do not resemble a man's two hands and two feet. But, in regard to the courage and strength prompting the comparison, those four paws are far more effective instruments. I have a high opinion of the illustrative function of a simile. This need not imply a high opinion by myself of my own person, though, of course, some great persons have limped. There was Scott the novelist, there was Byron the poet—and in our times Davies. Timur the terrific conqueror was lame—and Marlowe in his *Tamburlane* made the Tartar look even more terrific by some of his similes. The Greek god Hephaestus had also an abnormal leg, but Sri Aurobindo in his *Ihon* brings out his godhead all the same when he describes how from the conference of the deities before the final battle at Troy he descended to take his particular station among the fighters:

Down upon earth he came with his lame omnipotent motion.

To return to my not so omnipotent movements, let me wind up by quoting two advices I have received on the subject of falling down. One is from the English allegorist Bunyan. He said :

He that is down need fear no fall.

But this would mean an extreme "Safety First" measure. I would have to keep sitting on the ground for ever and a day, or else walk on all fours. I prefer what the Chinese sage Confucius has to offer me. He wrote : "Our greatest glory lies not in never falling but in rising every time we fall."

You can't deny that I have risen and I shall try to rise also to the occasion of our present theme : the planes of poetry. I shall begin at the beginning, the foot of the "World-star" : the subtle physical plane. Here it is the outer activities of man and Nature that pass through the poetic imagination and acquire an inwardness which reveals the psychological or even superhuman powers at work in the world. The poet's preoccupation, however, is now not with these powers in their intrinsic quality but with them as completely externalised and seen as physical movements and interrelations. In English the outstanding example is Geoffrey Chaucer, the so-called Father of English Poetry. The adjective "outstanding" is very apt, for his mind stands out rather than in. The designation "Father of English Poetry" is perhaps less apt. Not because there

is any poet of considerable stature preceding him, but some critics protest that by using this phrase we make Chaucer look as if he were responsible for the birth of something named English Poetry without himself being English Poetry personified. Suppose we speak of the father of Shakespeare: we only make the old man responsible for a birth that is quite different in essential quality from himself. The father of Shakespeare could be a man like any of his son's creations but not at all like his son. He could be like Hamlet or Macbeth or Falstaff or Romeo—at least some sort of Romeo he must be if Shakespeare was at all to get born—but we do not imagine that Shakespeare's father was like Shakespeare who was the literary father of Hamlet and Macbeth and Falstaff and Romeo. So when Chaucer is described as the Father of English Poetry he may be thought to be anything except English Poetry itself. This is declared to be an erroneous suggestion. If the usual designation has to be applied, then Chaucer was a part of what he made: the first child he had was his own self or, let us say, the poet in him.

In the eyes of some judges of literature, this first child is also the highest form reached by the English poetic genius except for just two who overpass the maker of it: Shakespeare and Milton. Sri Aurobindo, when he wrote *The Future Poetry*, did not hold Chaucer in very high regard: he was of one mind with Matthew Arnold who found Chaucer lacking in what he called "high seriousness" as well as the "grand style". Only in a few phrases here and there did Matthew Arnold see these properties of what he considered supreme poetic expression come into the Chaucerian speech—a line, for instance, like:

O martyr soulded in virginitie.

"Soulded" is the same as the modern "soldered", meaning immovably fixed—here in the virginal consciousness, in the purity of the deep soul. Sri Aurobindo says in *The Future Poetry* that Chaucer was content to note outward life with chiefly a stir in himself of "a kindly satisfaction..., a blithe sense of humour or a light and easy pathos." The apparent traits of character are described with aptness and vividness, but mostly no question probes into the profundities of them. Chaucer's job is to present life interestingly, not to interpret it. Ease, grace, lucidity, a fluent yet compact expression adequate to the manifold impression of human nature and earth-nature in a mirror-mind that has no depth of its own but has an individual colour, as it were, so that what is imaged is not a mere "yellow primrose" but a thing made yellow and primrosy by a life materialising itself to the vision of a particular temperament. We do not always feel that the medium of verse was absolutely necessary to Chaucer: well-tempered limpid prose could have done almost as well, and actually some of his "Canterbury Tales" are in prose. But now and again among his 17,000 and odd lines there occur passages that exceed the superficial charm possible to rhymed and

metred expression and stay with us as precious possessions, even though the place where they stay is not always very profound.

I mean, the poetry is authentic and memorable. The authenticity we can at once mark by contrasting this poetry with what a well-known later writer has done with it in the attempt to modernise Chaucer and make him presentable to a more cultured sense. Dryden, seeing the archaic and often childlike form in which Chaucer's work stood, tried to put him in the garb of eighteenth-century language—and, in doing so, brought about often just a garb without any body inside. Take these lines of Chaucer's—having at least something of high seriousness and achieving a rather striking pathos :

What is this world, what asketh man to have,  
Now with his love, now in his coldé grave,  
Allone withouten any companye ?

See what Dryden makes of this naive yet touching world-cry :

Vain man ! how various a bliss we crave,  
Now warm in love, now withering in the grave !  
Never, O never more to see the sun !  
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone !

Dryden is obviously "arty". He gets out as much alliteration as possible. Chaucer too alliterates, but his effects are natural and organic : there is no effort to produce an impression. In line 2 the only marked alliteration is with *n*—it is something inevitable in the very structure of the phrase and too straightforward to be arty. Dryden brings, in addition, "warm" and "withering", and is similarly deliberate in his art in the next two lines. In the very last he wants to drive home the pathos with the gong-note of a terminal "alone". Many masterly lines in English poetry have this ending. I may quote a few. There is the Wordsworth line with its fathomless suggestion : of some wondrous in-world:

Voyaging through strange seas of thought, alone.

There is the vivid vision of savage bird-life in Tennyson's

...let the wild  
Lean-headed eagles yelp alone...

Then there is another glimpse of bird-life, happily haunting as opposed to fearsomely remote—Housman's



The cuckoo shouts all day at nothing  
In leafy dells, alone.

Finally, there is Sri Aurobindo's revelation—as superb as Wordsworth's and more precise in spiritual substance—of a transcendental reality :

The superconscient realms of motionless peace  
Where judgment ceases and the word is mute  
And the Unconceived lies pathless and alone.

But Dryden, to my ear, falls flat : his line is constructed, not created. You feel the forced accent—the two “still” ’s, the “dark” and the “damp”, all hammer away at our ears instead of taking them captive by a spell. In the whole passage, only the second verse—

Now warm in love, now withering in the grave—

strikes me as genuinely moving, yet how far is its polished and elaborate achievement from the simple subtlety of Chaucer's

Now with his love, now in his coldë grave,

where by just calling the grave “coldë” the heat of a thousand suns is packed by silent contrast in the one bare unqualified word “love”. It is a little masterpiece of reticence and understatement. Dryden, as if not content to associate love explicitly with warmth, goes out of his way to add a line of his own where he introduces the sun and spoils the line completely by overloading the tragic accent. Those two “never” ’s should never have been there. He seeks to pack the very essence of the *joie de vivre* in the sensation of sunlight, but the thought has no depth of feeling in it. Arnold has done in a positive way what Dryden fails to do in a negative :

Is it so small a thing to have enjoyed the sun ?

Dryden, however, fails not simply because his way is negative : he fails because the negativeness is underlined too ostentatiously. In the right context and in the right manner one can kick against all limits and come out with a marvellous dramatic impression as does Shakespeare's Lear when he stands before the dead Cordelia :

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life  
And thou no breath at all ? Thou'lt come no more,  
Never, never, never, never, never !

Five consecutive trochees—a falling movement—with the same word, and what a climax just by the excess and by the antithesis to the iambic metre!

The lines, apart from illustrating the work of genius as against the work of artificial labour, illustrate also a plane different from the creative intelligence as well as from Chaucer's subtle physical : the Vital plane, the plane of the Life Force. A vibrant vigour is here which is missing in Chaucer no less than in Dryden. Chaucer poetically has in his passage something equally good, but the quiver of the nerves of sensation is absent. And this quiver will be realised by us all the more if, beside Chaucer's lines on the emptiness and transience of the world, we set the famous Macbeth-passage, on a part of which we have already commented elsewhere and which again triumphantly employs a repetition, a triple one this time at the very start :

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow  
 Creep in this petty pace from day to day  
 To the last syllable of recorded time ;  
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !  
 Life's but a walking shadow ; a poor player,  
 Who struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
 And then is heard no more : it is a tale  
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
 Signifying nothing.

This kind of vigorous many-motioned passionate language was beyond Chaucer : a complexity is present, yet not mere complexity differentiates the Shakespearian cry from the Chaucerian : this complexity is not a quiet one, it is tempestuous, a surge of wide waves, each wave leaping with a sharp zest and pushing its fellow and mixing with it to create a further movement : the imagery is dynamic and multiple. If Shakespeare is like the sea, Chaucer is like *terra firma*, solid earth: a certain simplicity, a suave temper carry him on. Mostly he has charm yet rather an obviousness, as when he speaks of the "very gentle parfit knight" 's noble deeds :

At mortal batailles hadde he bene fiftene  
 And foughten for our faith at Tramissene  
 In listes thryés, and ay slain his fo...

Put beside these lines Othello's account of his military life :

Of moving accidents, by flood and field;  
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;  
 Of being taken by the insolent foe...

Chaucer's eye looks a little below the shaken surface of things and his words give us a just and pleasing expression. Shakespeare's words, as Sri Aurobindo points out, with<sup>1</sup> quite as simple a thing to say and a perfect force of directness in saying it, get, as we might put it, into the entrails of vision and do not stop short at the clear measure of the thing seen, but evoke its very quality and give us immediately the inmost vital fibre and thrill of the life they describe and interpret. No doubt, a greater poetic capacity is at work in Shakespeare than in Chaucer, at least on the whole. But the difference we are out to mark is not so much between the poetic geniuses of the two writers as between the planes from which they write.

From his own subtle physical, Chaucer too can produce supreme effects. Let me quote what seem to me the most pathetic lines a lover ever spoke, pathetic by a heart-breaking homeliness verging on naïveté. You may have heard of Troilus and Cressida. Troilus was a Trojan, a brother of Hector, and Cressida was a Greek girl. She had sworn fidelity, and Troilus had given her a brooch as a sign of his love. Once he sees on the coat of Diomedes the very gift of his to Cressida. He says to her :

Through which I see that clene out of your minde  
Ye hen me cast, and I ne can nor may,  
For all the worlde, within my herte finde  
T' unloven you a quarter of a day.

Now listen to Othello expressing his love. He thinks Desdemona is false to him, but he cannot change his heart—though it does drive him to kill her. Here he is giving tongue to his desperate attachment to her beauty :

Excellent wretch ! Perdition catch my soul,  
But I do love thee ! And when I love thee not,  
Chaos is come again.

Mark the energetic thrust of the language, the grandiose passion in the words. The same thrust, though a little less emphatic and also a little less verbally grandiose and with a more imaginative vein, we find in another speech of Othello's—

Had she been true,  
If heaven would make me such another world  
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,  
I'd not have sold her for it.

<sup>1</sup> *The Future Poetry*, pp. 238-239

Judging from the example of Chaucer we might be inclined to believe that except for occasional outbreaks the poetry of the subtle physical plane is condemned to lack elemental energy and must fall short of dazzling glory. But we should be off the mark very much indeed in believing so. For, among poets of this plane, we have no less a figure than Homer. Homer has shown to what heights the poetry of the subtle physical can rise. Like Chaucer he too is pre-occupied with external life, but his vision is vast and his eye is interpretative and not only representative. Sri Aurobindo writes : "Homer gives us the life of man always at a high intensity of impulse and action and without subjecting it to any other change he casts it in lines of beauty and in divine proportions; he deals with it as Phidias dealt with the human form when he wished to create a god in marble. When we read the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, we are not really upon this earth, but on the earth lifted into some plane of a greater dynamis of life, and so long as we remain there we have a greater vision in a more lustrous air and we feel ourselves raised to a semi-divine stature."<sup>1</sup>

But how shall we have an idea of Homeric poetry ? It is in Greek and to translate great poetry we need a great poet in the new language. Also, Homer wrote in quantitative hexameters and unless we translate him in hexameters of a genuine inspiration and with something of the same sound-spirit we shall miss the final touch of his oceanic verse. One of his most famous lines comes at almost the beginning of the *Iliad*. Agamemnon has captured Chryseis, the daughter of the high-priest of Apollo. The high-priest approaches him and asks for return of his daughter. Agamemnon insolently refuses to hand her over. Then the old man goes home along the Trojan beach, and Homer has the line :

Be d'akeon para thina poluphlois boio thalasses.

Sri Aurobindo renders it :

Silent he walked by the shore of the many-rumoured ocean.

Here apparently is nothing more than a physical scene serving as the background to a simple psychological state accompanying a bodily human movement. The sounds of the sea are mentioned and the man is described in what modern parlance would call "behaviouristic terms"—his outward condition and activity, his body in motion, his face unspeaking. But what an effect is created! There is the contrast between a moving silence and a moving sound, but a small human silence set against a huge natural sound, and just by the human smallness

<sup>1</sup> *The Future Poetry*, p. 85

remaining silent the natural hugeness which is full of sound becomes the voice of that silence and we realise the immensity of the sorrow and the anger the small human figure is feeling, a sorrow and an anger to which the voice proper to that figure could never give true expression and which gets expressed for all time by that multitudinous rumour, that mighty roar of the waters.

To get an effect of a similar greatness in connection with the sea we have to recall that phrase of Shakespeare's in Henry II's soliloquy on Sleep :

Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast  
Seal up the shipboy's eyes and rock his brains  
In cradle of the rude imperious surge ?

Now too the human and the elemental are joined, though in a different way : the very roughness and rowdiness of the ocean is converted into a lulling power by the cradlelike swaying of the waves in their rise and fall, and a tiny human figure is served by a monstrous natural force to find peace.

I said that Homer needs an English master of expression and technique to do him justice. You can see for yourself what a world of contrast is there between Sri Aurobindo's rendering of that line and Alexander Pope's in the eighteenth-century pentameter :

Silent he wander'd by the sounding main.

Not that Pope's line is a pure "dud" : he has tried to get something of the boom of the waters by his *n* and *m* resonances, but I feel that the boom is more nasal than natural : the sea-god seems to have a roaring cold and to be speaking through his many-nostrilled nose. Whatever effect is still on the positive side strikes me as somewhat contrived : the inevitable art of the Homeric utterance is lost.

I shall give you another instance of Homer's greatness and two versions of it, neither of which is a failure but each a semi-success. I do not remember the Greek original. But Homer is describing in one of his lengthy similes (limping all over, I am afraid) a night-scene in which there is a flash of lightning in the deep cloudy darkness and as a result a sudden clearing up and a revelation of the whole starry sky. Tennyson thus Englishes the phrase in well-modulated and expressively enjambed blank verses :

...the immeasurable heavens,  
Break open to the highest and the stars  
Shine...

I believe Homer puts everything into one single line and naturally the effect is fuller and finer, more faithful to the amplitude laid bare at once. But Tennyson shows great skill managing his translation, with the "heavens" a feminine ending suggestive of continuity and then the first foot of the next line a quantitatively long end strongly stressed spondee and the same line holding poised at its far end the noun "stars" and quietly yet by the syntax intrinsically urging us on to the prominent wide-toned verb "Shine" in the next. I think a truer Homeric version is the result, especially as the whole tone is a controlled majesty and drive, than the version made by Chapman in Elizabeth's time :

And the unmeasured firmament breaks to disclose its light.

The expression is very fine, though a little more generalised than Tennyson's : what stamps it as inferior to the latter is the rhythm. Sri Aurobindo considers the rhythm here not equal to the poetic occasion : it is rather jerky, rather explosive, more violent than powerful : it is ballad rhythm camouflaged as a fourteen—two separate bits of four feet and three feet are put together to look large and fluent, a rolling and sinuous and splendid length is not there, the fourteen does not get naturally born.

How important the rhythmic life and the life of the verbal arrangement are to the Homeric expression may be judged from a hexametrical translation by an Englishman named Cotterill of a phrase from the *Odyssey*. Cotterill has done the whole poem into accentual hexameters and off and on he achieves grand effects, but sometimes at the peak-points of Homer he fails in poetic sensitiveness, both in rhythm and word. Here is Homer, godlike yet direct :

Zenos men pais ea Kronion autar oixun  
Eikhon apereisien.

Here is Cotterill :

Son of Cronion, of Zeus the Almighty was I, but afflictions  
Ever-unending I knew.

The translator has knocked half the world-cry out by a somewhat pompous and cluttered and ill-balanced turn at the end. I think a more moving approximation of the Homeric afflatus can be struck upon by something like :

Son of Kronion, of Zeus the Supreme was I, yet have I suffered  
Infinite pain.

Homer is always simple even in his profundity, straightforward even in his subtlety, natural even in his majesty. A typical instance of this style is at the very beginning of the *Odyssey*. Odysseus has lost all his companions—most of them because they slew the oxen that were sacred to Apollo who in return brought about their death. Homer says, as F. L. Lucas has pointed out, no more than : “He took from them the day of their home-coming.” And in this unassuming phrase he packed a whole world of pathos, touching the most sensitive, the most intimate strings of the human heart. Some of the typical Homeric effects you will find again and again in Sri Aurobindo’s *Iliad* which is not a translation but a new vision of the last day of the siege of Troy, long after Homer has finished with his story. Sri Aurobindo is more complex, more rich, more spiritual than Homer, yet he has always Homer’s ocean-rumour, Homer’s eye on clear-cut shape and gesture and attitude and motion, the subtle physical plane taken up into the Aurobindonian universe. And throughout there is the right rhythm, the soul of the Greek quantitative hexameter has been caught without sacrificing the stress-genius of the English language.

AMAL KIRAN (K. D. SETHNA)

## THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

(Continued from the last issue)

ACT 4

Scene I

(A trip to Kashmir. The Maharaja of Baroda and Aurobindo on Shankaracharya Hill.)

MAHARAJA : Arvind Babu, now we are on the top of the hill. We have ascended a thousand feet above the level of the valley of Kashmir. As we climbed higher and higher I found as if a screen was slowly lifting up and revealing the splendid beauty of Kashmir. It seems you are thrilled all over by the scenery of this place.

AURO : My feeling is at once overwhelming and inexpressible.

MAHARAJA : What is it ? I must hear it from you, I must. (He comes closer to Aurobindo).

AURO : I made no effort, yet I have had an experience of something so vivid, so astonishing.

MAHARAJA : Do confide it to me, my young friend !

AURO : It is the vacant Infinite ! I am sure this experience will leave an abiding impression upon my mind.

MAHARAJA : How wonderful you are ! By the bye, do you know the funny story about the Hill ?

AURO : No. I would like to hear it from you.

MAHARAJA : The story is : during his itinerant life the great Vedantin, Shankaracharya, with some of his disciples paid a visit to Kashmir. For some time they made their stay on this hill, and it was at his instance that this temple of Shiva was first set up. Hence this hill has been known as Shankaracharya Hill.

AURO : Now what about the story ?

MAHARAJA : Ah, have patience, I am coming to the point. I have told you that Shankara came over here with his disciples. Soon they ran short of provisions. But from the neighbouring villages nobody turned up to offer hospitality to them. It was after some days that a few pundits came to meet them. The disciples of Shankara flew into a rage. They said to the pundits: "Are you not ashamed of your indifference ? Are you so ignorant of the Shastric



injunctions on hospitality to guests ? Did you care to know that we have been without food for some days ?” The pundits too got down to the same level with the disciples and asked : “How on earth could you expect us to know this ?” Then they turned to Shankara and said that if he had any spiritual power he could have easily fed his disciples. Thereupon Shankara said : “I don’t believe in Shakti. The world is an Illusion.” The pundits cried out : “No, never, the world is real. It is Reality itself. The world is neither illusion nor hallucination.”

AURO : The pundits are right, absolutely right.

MAHARAJA : Ah, but let me complete the story. I have come to the end. The miracle begins. One of the pundits invoked a Goddess by chanting some mantras and placed his right palm on the ground. Lo, jets of water began springing up from below the very spot. Poor Shankara had to admit the existence of Shakti.

AURO : I fully believe in the power of such mantras.

MAHARAJA : So do I.

### Scene 2

*(Calcutta. Grey Street House. Mrinalini Devi reads out a letter which she has just received from Aurobindo.)*

“Dearest Mrinalini,

...You have, perhaps, by now discovered that the one with whose fate yours is linked is a very strange kind of person. Mine is not the mental outlook, the aim of life and the domain of action which the generality of people in this country have at present. It is quite different in all respects, it is uncommon. Perhaps, you know by what name the generality of people call extraordinary ideas, uncommon actions, unusually high aspirations. They label all these things as madness, but if the mad man succeeds in the field of action then instead of calling him a lunatic they call him a great man, a man of genius.”

MRINALINI *(saying to herself)* : I fully agree with you, my Lord. I am sure your efforts will be crowned with success.

*(She continues reading.)*

“.. It is my firm faith that whatever virtue, talent, higher education and knowledge and wealth which God has given me belongs to Him.”

MRINALINI : O Merciful God, Thy Grace knows no bounds. I bow to Thee with all my heart and soul for giving me a husband who has no equal on earth.

*(She continues reading.)*

“...I know I have the strength to uplift this fallen race ; it is not physical strength, I am not going to fight with the sword or with the gun, but with the power of knowledge. The power of the warrior is not the only kind of force, there is also the power of the Brahman which is founded on knowledge. This is not a new feeling within me, it is not of a recent origin, I was born with it, it is in my marrow, God sent me to the earth to accomplish this great mission.”

*(She is thrilled with joy and jumps up.)*

MRINALINI : I know, I know, you are not an ordinary human being. You are a Godlike man. Your great mission must succeed.

*(She goes on)*

“...You should always offer to Him this prayer : ‘May I not come in the way of my husband’s life and his ideals and his path to God-realisation ; may I become his helper and his instrument.’ Will you do it ?”

MRINALINI : My Lord, I fail to believe my eyes. How could you imagine that I might come in the way of your life and your ideals and your path to God-realisation ? I have no existence without you. I am entirely yours, within and without.

### Scene 3

*(Baroda. The Maharaja of Baroda and Sister Nivedita.)*

NIVEDITA : Maharaja, I am driven by necessity to ask for your help.

Maharaja : Yes, I am at your service, if possible.

NIVEDITA : I strongly feel that the revolutionary movement will be considerably effective if you lend your powerful active support to it.

MAHARAJA : My help ! Good Heavens ! I am sure I am of no use to the movement. The spirit of Revolution is lacking in me. But that does not mean that I don’t want freedom. Nivedita, you are the spiritual daughter of Swami Vivekananda. You are surcharged with his indomitable Will. India is proud to have you.

NIVEDITA : I pray, Maharaja, do not laud me to the skies. It is my Master’s Will that has brought me to India, the country of my heart and soul. What I have done for India is nothing and what I may do may count for nothing. That I have been able to dedicate my life, my everything to serve our Bharatmata is a source of great joy to me.

MAHARAJA : Nivedita, Swamiji's Nivedita, truly you are Nivedita, the offering, to the whole country. Now, you want my help in your revolutionary work. Please give me some time to make up my mind. I should like to discuss the matter with Arvind Babu.

NIVEDITA : You mean Aurobindo, I am sure he will press you to join and help the revolutionary movement. He himself will plunge before long into the vortex of the Indian National Independence Movement and stand in the forefront of the struggle.

MAHARAJA : My Arvind ! He will leave me ! I was quite in the dark about it all. Alas, he will come to unnecessary grief. I must meet him at once.

*(To be continued)*

CHINMOY

## LEONARDO DA VINCI IN MILAN

1497

### Scene 1

*(The scene is the studio workroom of the Master. It is more like an Alchemist's laboratory, as indeed an old Alchemist friend of Leonardo's uses it, than a studio. It is full of queer bottles and retorts, colours and smells ; Art and apparatus go hand in hand and the glow from the furnace creates the focal point of a picture which lights up the face of the old Alchemist as he bends over his work.)*

ALCHEMIST : What mischief are you up to now, Pepito ? I thought you were to sleep at the convento to see that none of these thieving friars steal the Master's colours ?

PEPITO : Bruno is there tonight. I have come to see Francesco to tell him what we overheard the friars saying about the Master.

ALCHEMIST : And what do they say about Messer Leonardo ? The rogues !

PEPITO : They say that the Prior is in a passion with the Master for not finishing the mural, and threatens to arrange for him to be sent to Rome where they will put him in prison.

ALCHEMIST : Ho ! Ho ! Put him in prison will they ! Ha ! Ha ! Why, he would show them such magic as would make their blood run cold in their veins and their eyes roll out of their sockets.

PEPITO : Magic ! Is he really a great magician as they tell in the market square ?

ALCHEMIST : Why, surely, am I not his first assistant in the ancient art ?

PEPITO : I knew that you mix his colours with secret juices which you get from bats and lizards and forest flowers but...

ALCHEMIST : Colours ! Colours ! Is that all the magic we know ! !

Come closer, child, and I will tell of something I have done and seen ; of places I have visited, which others see in dream. And surely there are more things on earth, more wonders to be found than in your dreams.

I have watched on the top of a mountain

When the moon rose up from the sea

And caught at the wing of a night-owl

To make my alchemy—

I have waited on graves of the dying,

In the gardens of the dead

And stolen their heart and their liver

To make a sunset red.

I have dared the bite of a serpent

To take its venom for wine—  
 I have dared old gods and their anger  
 And called my Master Divine.  
 I have reached into deepest Inferno,  
 I have visioned the Heavens above—  
 I have laboured and lived in the passions  
 Of a great enduring love.  
 But the rabble, the herd of the gutter—  
 These humans who fear the Light,—  
 Fear also the progress of science  
 As children fear the night.  
 Bah ! to their superstitions,  
 Bah ! to their fancies and fears  
 I have known only one man who matters  
 Through all these earthly years.

*(There is a mutual silence...then Pepito speaks)*

PEPITO : Why are so many people against the Master here in Milan ?  
 Why was there such a crowd shouting against him when they stoned the  
 windows of the house last week ?

ALCHEMIST : Fear ! Fear and ignorance, fear of the unknown ! Your Master  
 is a great painter and a great Alchemist—perhaps the greatest of his day. No  
 one man has gone along so many unknown paths of knowledge, and knowledge,  
 Pepito mio, is *magic* to the common herd of the market place—and all those  
 who think they know and do not know.

PEPITO : Does the Duke of Sforza know ?

ALCHEMIST : Know what, Infante ?

PEPITO : The magic...the knowledge of the Master.

ALCHEMIST : Would he even *be* the Duke of Sforza without Meser  
 Leonardo ?

Who creates the Duke's war machines ? Who plans his battles and builds  
 his defences ?

Who amuses his courtiers and visiting princes, paints their portraits as  
 well as those of their mistresses ? Who but he could think of this latest advice  
 of building a system of drainage in the castle which will keep away pestilence  
 and disease ?

Knowledge, Infante mio, is the Pearl of Great Price which commands the  
 respect of kings and princes.

It is the envy of the few, but also the force that stirs the superstitions of  
 the stupid to anger and revolt. Knowledge is ever the Call of the Unknown.  
 Therefore to men it is Magic—But to gods, it is Light and Power.

Pepito : Is then knowledge the Truth of the world ?

Alchemist : It is a key to one of the doors that lead to Truth, my son, like love and devotion, work and sacrifice.

PEPITO : I have heard the Christian preachers say that Love is the only Truth ?

ALCHEMIST : Love, Infante mio ?

Christ knew of the Love of God, no doubt. His teachings have come down to us on the stream of that Power and with intention. But these preachers of today ! These religious fanatics, these ascetic martyrs that shout and proclaim their virtue in the market square !

What do they know of love? The love of man, Infante, is as the animals'. It is mixed with the passions and greed of human desires ; full of violent emotions and excitations; full of the froth of life which lives only to destroy.

ALCHEMIST (*continuing*) :

There is no love that seeks life to destroy ;  
 There is no love which does not grant to man  
 That right to worship where he finds his God  
 Within the scope of his intelligence.  
 There is no love or simple tolerance  
 Which says : 'This *only* is the Way of Truth.  
 For plainly God exists for one and all  
 And He alone has made the universe.

There was, Infante mio, a painter once  
 Who knew the Love of God, the Love divine,  
 And in his love a certain knowledge bloomed  
 Into the light and truth of common day.  
 He was the first to paint just what he saw  
 In colour, form, in distance, light and shade  
 That made his paintings live in every heart  
 And in that heart one saw the Love of God.

PEPITO : Who was he ?

ALCHEMIST: Lorenzo the Magnificent had carved on the tomb of this man:

"O I am he...to whose right hand  
 all was possible, by whom  
 dead painting was brought to life,  
 by whom art became one with nature.  
 For I am Giotto."

And the greatest painters of Italy, of which our Master is one, have followed in his footsteps. I am no preacher, child, but I have heard your Master say :

"Love without knowledge begets death,

But a knowledge of death begets immortality.”

*(Enter Donna Furiosa)*

DONNA FURIOSA : Well, old man, have you not yet mended that pot? Do you think of nothing but weaving stories of your wicked past into the innocent head of this child?

PEPITO : Oh, no ! Donna Furiosa, he has been telling me of the Master, that I should come to know his will.

DONNA FURIOSA : He who does not know the Master's will shall be beaten with a few stripes ; but he who does know it will be beaten with many—if he neglects it.

ALCHEMIST : Here is your pot, woman. See that you do not neglect your cooking or I'll translate you into a hen to fill it for dinner.

DONNA FURIOSA : Avaunt, you old wizard, avaunt !

A murrain on your magic ! A murrain on you !

ALCHEMIST : Avaunt yourself woman !

And see that your cooking does'nt suffer from your scolding.

DONNA FURIOSA : It may rain magicians and pot-menders but my cooking will be the same !

ALCHEMIST *(rising with mock anger)* : Pot-mender ! Pot-mender !

DONNA FURIOSA *(urging Pepito before her)* : Come, child ! If you would have food before you sleep we'll escape this titan tinker for the kitchen.

*(Exeunt)*

ALCHEMIST *(shouting after them)* :

Tinker ! Pot-mender ! Bah !

Is youth a ball to be tossed between Knowledge and noodles ? Man is merely a pot for food.

Food for the belly ! Food for the brain !

And for some, food for the soul !

*(Continuing)* :

Oh man ! thou endless, bottomless pit sublime

Into which flow the treasures of heaven and earth !

What mysteries make up thy Alchemy ?

What ecstasies and sorrows fill thy frame !

What dreams and wonders, plucked from other worlds,

Enter through thee into this vast array !

What flame-powers come to life and flicker out

In one brief moment of Eternity !

What pettiness, what possibility  
Beats equally within one human heart !  
In thee alone are battles fought and won ;  
In thee alone lies that Authority  
To challenge matter and the universe  
And find a measure with the gods above—  
To wrest from them the secrets of the earth  
And find the key to Immortality.

*Curtain*

NORMAN DOWSETT



## MRIDU

*On the 22nd of September 1962 Mridu passed away*

UNWARNED by the Grim Reaper, unweighted with years  
In silence off she shuffled her mortal frame.  
A ceaseless fount spraying pure joy was she,  
Her heart all sweet with the zeal of a daring flame.

Her heavy boat plied from shore to shore unrhymed  
Of blooming, quiescent or withering souls.  
A snow-white train of humour with rosy thrill  
Her presence called forth in persons of varied roles.

She served her Father divine, the Lord of the gods,  
With earthly manna savoured with her soul's delight.  
Her heart's up-brimming transport she shared with all.  
Mridu, His dove, flew quick to his golden Height.

She bodied forth a climbing, sleepless love,  
Her Parents blessed her life with bending Grace.  
A unique prayer\* the child from Him received ;  
Behold, ecstasy's emblem grew her face.

CHINMOY

\* Sri Aurobindo wrote for Mridu the following to be used by her as her prayer :

“I pray to be purified from self-will and self-assertion so that I may become docile and obedient to the Mother and a fit instrument for her work, surrendered and guided by her Grace in all I do.”

5-11-1942

## AMRITA

(*On his birthday, 19-9-1962*)

### I

WHAT we understand easily we believe we understand rightly,  
We make a confusion between the face and its mask.  
We think the horizon line is the finishing line,  
We forget that a blue sky stretches still beyond.

The world is built with the tears and smiles of the gods...  
A child is at play on the sandy beaches :  
He is never to be met in the crowd...  
A jewel knows not itself, nor does a pearl know that it is a pearl !

The goal fixed for ever, for ever he goes on,  
The path offers no bar, no call reaches from behind :  
Lo ! The eternal voyager, eternally free,  
Eyes ever turned to the dawning East, never to the setting West.

He hides behind a veil and moves on...  
Is it the stream ? Is it the ocean vast ?

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(*Translated from the Bengali of Robi Gupta*)

### II

The Creator in his dreaming has created  
This immortal thing in creation,  
Figuring as a common creature,  
forgetful of his self :  
A mystic reason makes him hide  
his own form and nature,  
Ever at labour in working out  
the Impossible :  
To transfigure Nature, to establish the Transcendent  
Here on the bosom of material Earth,  
To feed the divine sacrificial Fire  
with this human body,  
with this bounded frame.

Lo, the timeless hero worker  
 with this flaming faith,  
 Indifferent to the rude impacts of Reality,  
 Dreaming the victorious Mother's  
 wonder dreams,  
 Shaping in his heart of hearts  
 the golden garden of Paradise—  
 A faultless, sleepless, pure  
 self-dedication  
 Has built this life into a piece of  
 IMMORTALITY.

NOLNI KANTA GUPTA

*(Translated from the Bengali of Chinmoy)*

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### TO MY POLE-STAR

My Hope in the silence of the deepest grave,  
 O Lord of the ageless sun !  
 Show me, Gold Star, the way to brave  
 The storms of life fiery or dun.

You are infinite through the roll of ages,  
 In blind abysses your shadow is thrown.  
 There in the darkness your miracle blazes  
 To crown the mortal on eternity's throne.

With the bloom of a flower so shy on earth,  
 With the life of the dews of early morn,  
 In the certain death of creation's birth,  
 Your Vision-Will in secret was born.

In the sadness of a weary noon  
 When the murmur of brooks no more is heard ;  
 In the doleful hush of a night without moon,  
 Your Joy still wanders like a soaring bird.

ABHIJIT GUPTA

## SANSKRIT SIMPLIFIED

### BOOK I

#### LESSON V

1. We have already dealt with the विभक्तis of words ending in अ, masculine and neuter. Now we come to those of words ending in आ and ई which are as a general rule feminine in gender. Let the student remember the fact that words with different endings will have in many cases different विभक्ति forms ; but on the whole most of the forms would be of the same pattern.

	बाला --स्त्री. girl—Paradigm			नदी—स्त्री. river		
प्रथमा—	बाला	बाले	बालाः	नदी	नद्यौ	नद्यः
द्वितीया—	बालाम्	बाले	बालाः	नदीम्	नद्यौ	नदीः
तृतीया—	बालया	बालाभ्याम्	बालाभिः	नद्या	नदीभ्याम्	नदीभिः
चतुर्थी—	बालायै	बालाभ्याम्	बालाभ्यः	नद्यै	नदीभ्याम्	नदीभ्यः
पंचमी—	बालायाः	बालाभ्याम्	बालाभ्यः	नद्याः	नदीभ्याम्	नदीभ्यः
षष्ठी—	बालायाः	बालयोः	बालानाम्	नद्याः	नद्योः	नदीनाम्
सप्तमी—	बालायाम्	बालयोः	बालासु	नद्याम्	नद्योः	नदीषु
सम्बोधनम्—	बाले	बाले	बालाः	नदि	नद्यौ	नद्यः

Decline similarly the feminine nouns माला garland, शाला establishment, house, school, लता creeper, सभा court, assembly, सेना army, उमा goddess Parvati, सती saintly and virtuous woman, दासी maid servant, नारी woman, सरस्वती goddess of speech, पृथ्वी or पृथिवी earth, पत्नी wife, वैजयन्ती name of the garland worn by Krishna, etc.

#### 2. Translate into English :—

१. इयम् (f. this) बाला संस्कृतम् पठति । २. उद्याने अहम् लताम् पश्यामि । ३. मण्डपः (m. bower) नमति । ४. इदम् (n. this) नैवेद्यम् (n. offering of food etc. to deities) वयम् देव्यै ( देवी—स्त्री. goddess ) समर्पयामः (verb. base समर्पय give, consign, consecrate) । ५. गङ्गायाः सलिलम् सुपवित्रम् (सु exceedingly —पवित्र holy) अस्ति । ६. ते यमुनायाम् (यमुना— name of

a river ) निमज्जन्ति (verb. base निमज्ज bathe, plunge) । ७. पार्वत्याः (पार्वती daughter of the king of mountains) प्रसादेन (प्रसाद-पुं. grace) यूयम् दुःखम् तरिष्यथ shall cross over ( future base तरिष्य) । ८. नद्यः समुद्रम् प्रति प्रवहन्ति ( verb base प्र-वह flow) । ९. कविजनाः देवीम् सरस्वतीम् सदा स्मरन्ति । १०. सतीनाम् शीलम् कदापि न भ्रश्यति ( verbal base भ्रश्य get corrupted, drop down ) ११. श्रीहरेः कण्ठे वैजयन्ती नाम (अ. by name) मालिका (माला) विभाति (verb.base वि-भा to shine forth, look beautiful) । १२. कौशल्या (name of the mother of Rama) दशरथस्य (दशरथ, name of Rama's father) ज्येष्ठा (स्त्री. eldest) पत्नी । १३. अस्य (पुं. of this) भूपस्य (भूप पुं. king) सभायाम् महापण्डिताः (great scholars) उपविशन्ति (verb.base उपविश sit ) । १४. कैकेय्याः (कैकेयी, Dasharatha's youngest queen) दास्याः नाम (नामन्-न. name) मन्थरा इति (इति here represents inverted commas) । १५. पृथिव्याः तले (तल-न. surface) तस्य (of that) नृपस्य (नृप पुं. king) महती ( f. great) सेना चलति (verb.base चल move) । १६. नाथः (पुं. husband, lord) एव नारीणाम् परमम् (वि.) great आभूषणम्-(न. adornment) । १७. कुमाराः कन्यकाः (कन्यका—कन्या—स्त्री. maiden) च पाठशालायाः (पाठशाला—स्त्री. school ) उद्याने विचरन्ति (verb.base वि-चर walk about) १८. बालयोः भगिनी (sister) अपि अत्र आगच्छति (verb.base आ-गच्छ come) । १९. महेश्वरे महेश्वर्याम् (महेश्वरी the great goddess Parvati) च मम महती श्रद्धा (स्त्री. faith) । २०. सतीनाम् नारीणाम् शुभः (वि. auspicious, good) आशीर्वादः (पुं. blessing) फलति (verb. base फल bear fruit) ॥

Translate into Sanskrit :—

1. Great men (महाजन-पुं.) sit in the courts of kings. 2. Poets write poems by the grace of Goddess Sarasvati. 3. (There) is fire (पावक-पुं.) in the interior (गर्भ-पुं.) of the earth. 4. Why (किमर्थम्) don't you bring (verb. base आनय) flowers from the creepers of the (two) gardens? 5. Goodness (सद्भाव-पुं.) spreads about (verb. base प्रसर spread about) from the tender (मृदुल-वि. ) hearts (हृदय-न. heart) of holy women (साध्वी-स्त्री. holy woman) 6. The love (प्रेमभाव-पुं.) of Radha for (प्रति with द्वितीया) Krishna is pure (विशुद्ध-वि.) and perfect (परिपूर्ण-वि.) 7. Ganesh (गणेश-पुं.) the son of उमा and शिव gives (verb.base वि-तर give) success (सफलता) 8. Heroes mount (verb.base आरोह mount) horses (अश्व-पुं. horse), elephants (गज-पुं. elephant) and chariots (रथ-पुं. chariot) in the king's army. 9. Heaven (स्वर्ग-पुं. heaven) is the world (भुवन-न.) of gods

and goddesses. 10. Man lives (verb. base जीव live) not without (विना to be used with द्वितीया, तृतीया or पंचमो) hope (आशा).

N.B. Render the sentences into Sanskrit as you would do them in your own Indian tongue. First find out the subject, then the verb and render them ; then supply them with the object if there be any. Afterwards render other words in their proper case, gender and number. Adjectives will go with the nouns they qualify and adverbs with the verbs. Remember that an adjective agrees with the noun it qualifies in gender, number and case. In short, proceed phrase by phrase and arrange the phrases in their proper prose order which will usually be the same as in any Indian vernacular.

## संधि

### 3

We need to remember that the following are the 13 vowels :—  
अ, आ, इ, ई, उ, ऊ, ऋ, ॠ, लृ, ए, ऐ, ओ औ.

The following 13 are the hard consonants—

अघोषव्यञ्जनानि :—क, ख, च, छ, ट, ठ, त्, थ, प, फ, and श्, ष, स्.

The following 20 are the soft consonants

घोषव्यञ्जनानि :—ग, घ, ङ, ज, झ, ञ, ड, ढ, ण, द, ध, न्, ब, भ, म्, and य, र, ल्, व्, and ह्.

We have met with the following सन्धिस in our श्लोकः—

१. दीपको रविः=दीपकः रविः। २. दीपको धर्मः=दीपकः धर्मः। ३. साधवो नहि...=साधवः नहि...। ४. शिशिरो भयम्=शिशिरः भयम्। ५. दुर्जनो भयम्=दुर्जनः भयम्। ६. देवो महेश्वरः=देवः महेश्वरः। ७. स्वदेशो भुवनत्रयम्=स्वदेशः भुवनत्रयम्।

In each of the above-mentioned cases there occurs अ at the end of the first word, followed immediately by a soft (घोष) consonant. When it is like this the अ becomes ओ.

Sandhi Rule : Visarga, preceded by अ and followed by a soft consonant, is changed to उ which with the preceding अ becomes ओ.

Again we have १. दीपकश्चन्द्रः=दीपकः चन्द्रः। २. शिवभक्ताश्च=शिवभक्ताः च।

Here we find that the विसर्ग is followed by च् and has changed to श्(श्च). We may add that it undergoes the same kind of change i.e. changes to श् (श्च) when followed by छ् also. e.g.

१. विनीतः छात्रः=विनीतश्छात्रः। २. मूर्खः छागः=मूर्खश्छागः। ३. राज्ञः छत्रम्=राज्ञश्छत्रम्। ४. हरेः छविः=हरेश्छविः। (विनीत-वि. well-behaved; छात्र-पुं. student; मूर्ख-वि. silly; छात्र-पुं. goat; राज्ञः of the king; छत्र-न. umbrella)

Sandhi Rule : Visarga followed by च् or छ् is changed to श् (श्च).

Again we have कल्पतरुस्तथा=कल्पतरुः तथा । Here the Visarga of कल्पतरुः has changed to श्.

Sandhi Rule : Visarga followed by त् or थ् is changed to स्. (थ् rarely begins a word).

Other examples of this rule are :— १. हरिः तारयति=हरिस्तारयति । (verb. base तारय save) २. विष्णुः तुष्यति=विष्णुस्तुष्यति । (verb. base तुष्य be pleased) ३. कः त्वम्=कस्त्वम् । ४. रविः तपति=रविस्तपति । (verb. base तप shine hot) etc.

Then we have १. गुरुर्ब्रह्मा=गुरुः ब्रह्मा । २. गुरुर्विष्णुः=गुरुः विष्णुः । ३. विष्णुर्गुरुः=विष्णुः गुरुः । ४. गुरुर्देवः=गुरुः देवः ।

In these examples we find that the visarga has changed to र्.

But we would like to give some additional examples:

१. हरिः दयालुः=हरिर्दयालुः । (दयालु-वि. compassionate) २. लक्ष्मीः देवानाम्=लक्ष्मीर्देवानाम् । ३. वधूः आगच्छति=वधूर् आगच्छति=वधूरागच्छति । (वधू-स्त्री. a young married woman, daughter-in-law) ४. हरेः इच्छा=हरेर् इच्छा=हरेरिच्छा । (इच्छा-स्त्री. will, desire) ५. गुरोः उपदेशः=गुरोर् उपदेशः=गुरोरुपदेशः and so on.

Sandhi Rule : Visarga, preceded by any vowel except अ or आ, and followed by any vowel or a soft (घोष) consonant, is changed to र्.

श्लोकः ७.

जले विष्णुः स्थले विष्णुर्विष्णुः पर्वतमस्तके ।

ज्वालामालाकुले विष्णुः सर्वं विष्णुमयं जगत् ॥

मार्थपदच्छेदः—जले in water, विष्णुः Vishnu, the all-pervading Divine, स्थले on the ground (स्थल-न. ground, spot, place) विष्णुः Vishnu, विष्णुः Vishnu, पर्वत-मस्तके on the top of mountains; ज्वालामाला-कुले in a multitude of series of flames, (ज्वाला-स्त्री. flame, माला-स्त्री. series, garland, succession, कुल-न. assemblage, family etc.) विष्णुः Vishnu सर्वम् n. all विष्णुमयम् full of Vishnu, (मय-पुं. न. changing to मयी-स्त्री. is an affix indicating 'made of', 'full of', 'consisting of') जगत्-न. world.

Translation : He is in water, Vishnu the all-pervading Divine, He is on the ground, He is there on the top of mountains, in a multitude of series of flames (too) it is He ; (in fact) all the world is nothing but He Himself.

## श्लोक ८.

करारविन्देन पदारविन्दं मुखारविन्दे विनिवेशयन्तम् ।

वटस्य पत्रस्य पुटे शयानं बालं मुकुन्दं मनसा स्मरामि ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—कर-अरविन्देन with the lotus-like hand (कर-पुं. hand अरविन्द-न. lotus) पद-अरविन्दम् lotus-like foot (पद-न. foot), मुख-अरविन्दे in the lotus-like mouth, विनिवेशयन्तम् placing (agreeing with मुकुन्दम्) वटस्य of the banyan tree (वट-पुं. banyan tree), पत्रस्य of the leaf (पत्र-न. leaf, letter) पुटे in the cup-shaped hollow (पुट-पुं.न. cup-shaped hollow); शयानम् lying (agreeing with मुकुन्दम्) बालं child, मुकुन्दम् Krishna, the Deliverer, मनसा with the mind (मनस् न. mind), स्मरामि (I) remember.

*Translation* : I remember with (my) mind Child Krishna, the Deliverer, placing (his) lotus-like foot in (his) lotus-like mouth with (his) lotus-like hand, lying in the cup-shaped hollow of a leaf of a banyan tree.

## श्लोक ९.

त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव त्वमेव बन्धुश्च सखा त्वमेव ।

त्वमेव विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव त्वमेव सर्वं मम देवदेव ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— त्वम् thou एव alone, only, माता mother (मातृ-स्त्री. mother) च and, पिता father (पितृ-पुं. father) त्वम् एव, त्वम् एव, बन्धुः brother (बन्धु-पुं. brother relative), च and सखा friend (सखि-पुं. friend) त्वम् एव, त्वम् एव, विद्या-स्त्री. learning, द्रविणम्-न. wealth त्वम् एव, त्वम् एव, सर्वम्-न. all मम my, mine, देव-देव God of gods.

*Translation* :—Thou alone (art my) mother, Thou alone (my) father, Thou alone (my) brother, Thou alone (my) friend, Thou alone (my) learning, Thou alone my wealth, O God of gods ! Thou alone (art my) all (in all).

## श्लोक १०.

सर्वदा सर्वकालेषु नास्ति तेषाममङ्गलम् ।

येषां हृदिस्थो भगवान् मङ्गलायतनो हरिः ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—सर्वदा always, सर्व-कालेषु on all occasions (काल-पुं. time, occasion) न not अस्ति is, तेषाम् their, theirs, अमङ्गलम्-न. ill-luck, evil येषाम् whose, हृदि-स्थः staying in the heart, भगवान् the Divine (भगवत् -पुं. the Divine, glorious, venerable,) मङ्गल-आयतनः he who is the



abode of all auspicious things (मङ्गल-न. something good and auspicious आयतन-न. sanctuary, abode) हरिः God Vishnu.

*Translation* : Never on any occasion ill-luck befalls those in whose heart abides God, Hari, the abode of (all) auspicious things.

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Errata: Lesson III, page 85: 19 instead of समर्पयन्ति read समर्पयतः ।  
 page 86. श्लोकः ३ read सुपुत्रः । Lesson IV page 68 last line, read ओष्ठ्य instead of ओष्ठ । page 70. after गुरुः ब्रह्मा (अस्ति) read गुरुः विष्णुः (अस्ति) । after...the Creator, read Guru is God Vishnu.