

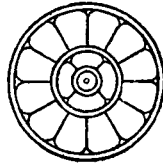
# MOTHER INDIA

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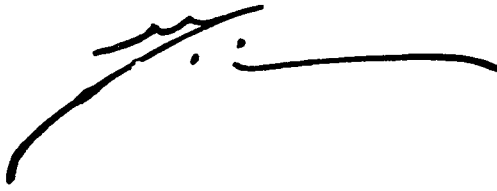


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

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. 10

*"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"*

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## THE MOTHER'S VICTORY

THE Mother's victory is essentially a victory of each sadhak over himself. It can only be then that any external form of work can come to a harmonious perfection.

12-11-1937

SRI AUROBINDO

## THE MOTHER'S ACTIONS

Those who constantly doubt and criticise and blame or attribute her actions to the most common and vulgar human feelings and motives and yet pretend to accept her or to accept myself and my Yoga, are guilty of a stupid and irrational inconsequence.

6-11-1929

SRI AUROBINDO

## THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

I HAVE seen all the experiences that you have written down, and sent to me and received yours and B's letter. It is no doubt true as you say that your Sadhana has gone on different lines from that of the others. But it does not follow that you are entirely right in insisting on your own ideas about it. I shall tell you briefly what I have observed about your experiences.

The first things you sent were very interesting and valuable psycho-spiritual and psycho-mental experiences and messages. Later ones lean more to the psychic-emotional and have in them a certain one-sidedness and mixture and there are also psycho-vital and psycho-physical developments of a double nature. I do not mean that all is false in them but that there are many strong partial truths which need to be corrected by others which they seem to ignore and even to exclude. Besides there are suggestions from the intellect and the vital being and also suggestions from external sources which you ought not to accept so easily as you seem to do. This mixture is inevitable in the earlier stages and there is no need to be disheartened about it. But if you insist on preserving it, it may deflect you from your true path and injure your Sadhana.

As yet you have no sufficient experience of the nature of the psychic being and the psychic worlds. Therefore it is not possible for you to put the true value on all that comes to you. When the psychic consciousness opens, especially so freely and rapidly as it has done in your case, it opens to all kinds of things and to suggestions and messages from all sorts of planes and worlds and forces and beings. There is the true psychic which is always good and there is the psychic opening to mental, vital and other worlds which contain all kinds of things good, bad and indifferent, true, false and half true, thought-suggestions which are of all kinds, and messages also which are of all kinds. What is needed is not to give yourself impartially to all of them but to develop both a sufficient knowledge and experience and a sufficient discrimination to be able to keep your balance and eliminate falsehood, half-truths and mixtures. It will not do to dismiss impatiently the necessity for discrimination on the ground that that is mere intellectualism. The discrimination need not be intellectual, although that also is a thing not to be despised. But it may be a psychic discrimination or one that comes from the higher supra-intellectual mind and from the higher being. If you have not this, then you have need of constant protection and guidance from those who have it, and who have also long psychic experience, and it may be disastrous for you to rely entirely on yourself and to reject such guidance.

In the meantime there are three rules of the Sadhana which are very necessary in an earlier stage and which you should remember. First, open yourself to experience but do not take the *bhoga* of the experiences. Do not attach yourself to any particular kind of experience. Do not take all ideas and suggestions as true and do not take any knowledge, voice or thought-message as absolutely final and definitive. Truth itself is only true when complete and it changes its meaning as one rises and sees it from a higher level.

I must put you on your guard against the suggestions of hostile influences which attack all Sadhakas in this Yoga. The vision you had of the European is itself an intimation to you that these forces have their eye on you, and are prepared to act if they are not already acting against you. It is their subtler suggestions, which take the figure of truth, and not their more open attacks, that are the most dangerous. I will mention some of the most usual of them.

Be on your guard against any suggestion that tries to raise up your egoism, as for instance that you are a greater Sadhaka than others or that your Sadhana is unique or of an exceptionally high kind. There seems to be some suggestion of this kind to you already. You had a rich and rapid development of psychic experiences, but so precisely have some others who have meditated here and none of yours are unique in their kind or degree or unknown to our experience. Even if it were otherwise, egoism is the greatest danger of the Sadhana and is never spiritually justifiable. All greatness is God's : it belongs to no other.

Be on your guard against anything that suggests to you to keep or cling to any impurity or imperfection, confusion in the mind, attachment in the heart, desire and passion in the *prāna*, or disease in the body. To keep up these things by ingenious justifications and coverings, is one of the usual devices of the hostile forces.

Be on your guard against any idea which will make you admit these hostile forces on the same terms as the divine forces. I understand you have said that you must admit all because all is a manifestation of God. All is a manifestation of God in a certain sense but if misunderstood, as it often is, this Vedantic truth can be turned to the purposes of falsehood. There are many things which are partial manifestations and have to be replaced by fuller truer manifestations. There are others which belong to the ignorance and fall away when we move to the knowledge. There are others which are of the darkness and have to be combated and destroyed or exiled. This manifestation is one which has been freely used by the force represented by the European you saw in your vision and it has ruined the Yoga of many. You yourself wished to reject the intellect and yet the intellect is a manifestation of God as well as the other things you have accepted.

If you really accept and give yourself to me, you must accept my truth. My truth is one that rejects ignorance and falsehood and moves to the know-



ledge, rejects darkness and moves to the light, rejects egoism and moves to the Divine Self, rejects imperfections and moves to perfection. My truth is not only the truth of Bhakti or of psychic development but also of knowledge, purity, divine strength and calm and of the raising of all these things from their mental, emotional and vital forms to their supramental reality.

I say all these things not to undervalue your Sadhana but to turn your mind towards the way of its increasing completion and perfection.

It is not possible for me to have you here just now. First because the necessary conditions are not there and secondly because you must be fully prepared to accept my guidance before you come here. If, as I suppose you must under the present circumstances, you have to go home, meditate there turning yourself to me and try to prepare yourself so that you may come here hereafter. What you need now is not so much psychic development, which you will always be able to have (I do not ask you to stop it altogether), but an inner calm and quiet as the true basis and atmosphere of your future development and experience, calm in the mind, in the purified vital being and in the physical consciousness. A psycho-vital or psycho-physical Yoga will not be safe for you until you have this calm and an assured purity of being and a complete and always present vital and physical protection.

*January, 1923*

## TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

*(These talks are from the Note-books of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others, after the accident to his leg in November 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were : Dr. Manilal, Dr. Becherlal, 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-second 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 16, 1939

N : In the *Hindustan Standard* there is a remarkable story about some Somesh Bose. His wife, dead for twenty years, has been brought back bodily to him, alive again, and is doing sadhana with him. The man who performed the miracle is a Yogi named Bhola Giri. This Yogi also comes every evening to bless the pair. The paper asks: "What will Western Materialists say to this ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : They will say it is all humbug.

S : What does Yoga have to say ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There are many possibilities.

N : But is it at all possible to create like this in new flesh and blood ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What is meant by flesh and blood ? Does Somesh Bose's wife live all the time with him or come only for a few hours and then go away ? If the latter, it looks like a temporary materialisation, and that is quite possible. Bhola Giri obviously knows how to do it and has done it for his disciple. As to permanent materialisation, theoretically it is not impossible, but I haven't heard of any case. Well, if stones can be materialised, as in the famous incident of our Guest House, I don't see why human beings cannot.

When materialisation takes place, it is most often immediately before death or after. The man in question visits some friend or relative, and if the dying condition or the death is not known to them or the man is not known to be living far away, people mistake his appearance for actual physical presence. There are many such well-attested cases.

My brother Manomohan used to say he had heard from Stephen Phillips that the latter's mother visited him when she was on her death-bed at a distant place. But my brother was a poet, you must remember—very imaginative. And, moreover, he was a friend of Oscar Wilde. (*Laughter*)

People say that one telepathises a mental idea and this makes the person appear. It can't be a mere projection of form by the mind only. There is also the vital-physical part that materialises.

P : Paul Brunton writes that when he was in Egypt he met near a hill an ancient Egyptian who had died thousands of years ago and had been mummified. Brunton talked with him.

SRI AUROBINDO : What happened afterwards to the Egyptian ?

P : I believe he went back to the hill.

Sri Aurobindo : Then one can't say what exactly happened. The Egyptians held that at the time of death the Ka or vital being goes out of the body and after many years can return to it if it is preserved. That is the tradition behind mummification. Perhaps Brunton materialised the tradition ? (*Laughter*)

P : Brunton cites the instance of a dead sparrow being revived by an Egyptian.

N : He says that of Vishuddhananda also. The sparrow was killed in his presence and it was revived. Is that possible ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Quite possible. Can't you revive a drowned man up to a certain time by physical devices ? So, if one knows how, one can restore life in other cases too. One reintroduces the power and sets the organs to action. There are two ways : the first is to bring back the same spirit which is still not far away, and the second is to bring another spirit which wants to enter earth-life.

At this point the Mother came in with a telegram which wanted Sri Aurobindo to send "ashes" for the marriage of somebody's daughter. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo could not make out what was meant.

P : It may be the Indian word "ashis", meaning "blessing".

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, I see. I was wondering how I was supposed to carry ashes about with me—perhaps on my head. Of course I can give them some from Champaklal's mosquito coils. If I had not given up smoking, I could have given some cigar ash.

MULSHANKER : Telegraphic misrepresentations are common. There is Chand's recent wire.

N : Yes, the telegram read "Nirodasram" instead of "Nirodbaran".

C : When is Chand coming here ?

N : Soon after "arranging his affairs".

SRI AUROBINDO : Is he still "arranging" ?

C : Has he much property ?

N : He has lost everything.

SRI AUROBINDO : And yet he is “arranging” it ? He is a phenomenon.

Now the Mother left for meditation.

SRI AUROBINDO : N, do you know the name of the man who apologised to us for having written a book against us ?

N : Apologised ? Who’s that ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Some relative of X, I think.

N : Oh, yes, I remember. The father. He criticised the Ashram in that book.

SRI AUROBINDO : Merely criticised ? Didn’t he attack my character and say that I was taking money from people ? That charge, at any rate, won’t do with people, for they know I gave up everything for the country and I couldn’t have fallen so low now. The writer seems to have gathered all sorts of false information.

This sort of public attack doesn’t have any effect, for nobody knows the writer. But if someone well-known, say, Radhakrishnan, attacked my philosophy, it may attract some attention. Talking back may be effective for a time, but the best thing is to leave the attackers alone. They get soon forgotten. Anilbaran has criticised the book we are speaking of.

N : Have you read the book ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I glanced through it. The author had sent a typed copy. I don’t think more than half a dozen copies of the book could have sold. He seems to have lost all his money.

P : Some Gujaratis are also attacking the Ashram.

SRI AUROBINDO : But why ? what is their grievance ?

P : They say we are not doing anything for the country or for humanity.

SRI AUROBINDO : Since when has the Ashram been expected to do such things ?

N : The Ramkrishna Mission and Gandhi’s Ashram are doing social or political work.

SRI AUROBINDO : Gandhi’s Ashram is not an Ashram for spirituality. It is a group of people gathered to be trained in some work or other. But are we attacked because we are not doing anything for the country and humanity or because I who did national work once have left it now ?

P : Perhaps more because of the latter reason.

N : Subhas Bose also attacked the Ashram on the same plea. He said to D that some of the best people were going away to the Ashram.

SRI AUROBINDO : Did he include D among the best people ?

N : I don’t remember whether he said “best people” or just “good people”. But he was much grieved at losing them.

SRI AUROBINDO : But D was not doing political work. He was doing music.

N : Subhas said he could go on with music for a certain time, but when the hour struck he must be prepared to give up everything.

SRI AUROBINDO : I see—and one can't give up everything for God, suppose ?

P : He must have meant "give up everything and go to jail".

SRI AUROBINDO (*shaking his head and looking at the ceiling*): Jail ? I can picture D in jail. (*Laughter*)

P : The two don't go well together.

S : Perhaps he would have written some novels about jail afterwards.

SRI AUROBINDO : Many things don't go well together and yet they do happen. One could hardly think of Oscar Wilde in jail and yet he went there. The only thing such people do is to write immortal books in jail. There is Wilde's *De Profundis*, for instance.

When the French heard of Wilde's imprisonment, they said about the English people : "Comme ils sont bêtes !"

At the time of the Gandhi movement, someone asked Abanindranath Tagore to give up painting and take to politics. He answered : "I am also serving the country through my art. Painting is at least something I know well but I would be a very bad politician."

Now P brought in the topic of new buildings going up at Baroda near the Station, etc.

SRI AUROBINDO : The thought of Baroda (*pause for a time*) brings to my mind my first connection with the Gaekwar. It is strange how things arrange themselves at times. When I failed in the I.C.S. riding-test and was looking for a job, the Gaekwar happened to be in London. I don't remember whether he called us or we met him. We consulted an authority about the pay we should propose. We had no idea about these things. He said we could propose Rs. 200, but should accept even 130, for that was quite a good sum. He was calculating according to the pound which was equivalent to Rs. 13 ; so he took £10 as a quite good sum. I left the negotiations to my eldest brother and J. Cotton. The Gaekwar went about telling people that he had got a Civil Service man for Rs. 200. (*Laughter*) But Cotton ought to have known better.

N : How much were your monthly expenses ?

SRI AUROBINDO : £ 5. It was quite sufficient at that time. What is the expense now ?

N : £10 is the bare minimum in Edinburgh.

SRI AUROBINDO : Our landlady was an angel. She was long-suffering and

never asked for money. For months and months we didn't pay. I wonder how she managed. It was from the I.C.S. stipend that I paid her afterwards. She came from Somerset and settled in London as a landlady.

My failure in the I.C.S. riding test was a disappointment to my father, for he had arranged everything for me through Sir Henry Cotton. He had arranged to get me posted at Arrah which was regarded as a very fine place and near Sir Henry. He had requested him to look after me.

I wonder what would have happened if I had joined the Civil Service. I think they would have chucked me out for laziness and arrears of work.

Here the topic changed to Gandhism.

SRI AUROBINDO : Gandhi's demilitarisation doesn't seem to meet with much success.

P : Exactly. Nana Sahib also spoke against non-violence the other day while presiding over a Conference of young men at Baroda. Do you know him ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, yes. I know him very well. He, Madhav Rao and I were the first revolutionary group and wanted to drive out the English.

P : It's good he protested against demilitarisation.

SRI AUROBINDO : Has Gandhi succeeded in disarming the Frontier Pathans ?

P : When he went there, he objected to armed volunteers keeping guard over him.

SRI AUROBINDO : But what should they do in case of attack ? Stand simply ?

P : No, they have to die resisting non-violently.

SRI AUROBINDO : This idea of passive resistance I have never been able to fathom. I can understand an absolute non-resistance to evil, what the Christians mean when they say, "Resist not Evil." You may die without resisting and accept the consequences as sent by God. But to change the opponent's heart by passive resistance is something I don't understand.

P : I agree with the *Modern Review* that by this method one allows evil to triumph. It seems foolish to expect that a *goonda's* heart will melt in that way.

SRI AUROBINDO : Precisely. Gandhi has been trying to apply to ordinary life what belongs to spirituality. Non-violence or *ahimsā* as a spiritual attitude and practice is perfectly intelligible and has a standing of its own. You may not accept it *in toto* but it has a basis in Reality. To apply it in ordinary life is absurd. One then ignores—as the Europeans do in several things—the principle of *adhikārbheda* and the difference of situation.

P : Gandhi's point is that in either case you die. If you die with arms you encourage and perpetuate the killing method.

SRI AUROBINDO : And if you die without arms you encourage and perpetuate passive resistance. (*Laughter*)

It is certainly a principle which can be applied successfully if practised on a mass-scale, especially by unarmed people like Indians. I understand this principle, because you, being unarmed, are left with no other choice. But even if it succeeds, it is not because you have changed the heart of the enemy but because you have made it impossible for him to rule. That is what happened in Ireland. Of course, there was armed resistance also, but it would not have succeeded without passive resistance side by side.

What a tremendous generaliser Gandhi is ! Passive resistance, Charkha and celibacy for all ! One can't be a member of the Congress without oneself spinning ! I wonder how many of Gandhi's followers do it.

P : Now they have removed the demand. Nobody took spinning seriously.

SRI AUROBINDO : How do you expect anyone to take it seriously ? If I were asked to spin, I would offer passive resistance myself—complete Satyagraha. (*Laughter*) I wonder what Abanindra Tagore and D would have done.

N : It seems Nandalal Bose did spinning.

SRI AUROBINDO : Isn't he a man of an ascetic temperament ? There was somebody who even wrote that the Chakra referred to in the Gita is really the Charkha !

P : There are many ascetically minded enthusiasts whom people look up to as Gurus. About one of them a friend told me, "He can attain the Supermind." I replied : "No objection. Let him try."

SRI AUROBINDO : These people will stumble at the very first step to the Supermind. They have to give up all their fixed ideas.

JANUARY 17, 1939

S showed Sri Aurobindo some photographs of Pagal Haranath, the Bengali saint, and his wife. Below one of the photos of his wife was written that she was the Supreme Power and he was one of her forces.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is the Tantric doctrine.

S : He was a Vaishnava.

SRI AUROBINDO : Maybe, but the doctrine is not a Vaishnava one. It is Tantric.

In principle the doctrine is true, for the Supreme Shakti is the Divine Consciousness and all the Gods come from her. It is said that even Shiva cannot act unless She gives him the power.

S : Haranath had an interesting life. He underwent a complete change of colour at Kashmir. It is said that Gauranga came to him in a vision and gave him his mission. But his later disciples consider him equal to Gauranga.

SRI AUROBINDO : Where is the contradiction ? If the consciousness is ultimately and essentially divine, why should not both be one in consciousness ?

S : They want to prove him an Avatar as great as Gauranga.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, competition for Avatarhood ? But did he proclaim himself an Avatar ?

S : No, Sir; but he behaved like one.

SRI AUROBINDO : Gauranga is regarded as an Avatar of Krishna, and if Haranath is an Avatar of Gauranga, naturally both are Avatars of Krishna. Then why quarrel ?

S : There are cases of very rapid progress among people who have met Haranath.

SRI AUROBINDO : I have found that Vaishnava bhakti leads to very intense and rapid progress.

S : There is a line of sadhus in Gujarat who have bhakti for the Impersonal God.

SRI AUROBINDO : Bhakti for the Impersonal God ?

S : They don't have devotion for any personal God but for one who is everywhere and beyond all 'personalities.' Kabir and some other saints believe like that. Even when they take a particular name, they mean by it something more than the name. They will say "Rama" but believe in various aspects of Rama : for example, one Rama in Dasaratha's house, one in each heart, one pervading all and another beyond all.

P : That is one who is the Transcendent.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, the Supreme Absolute. That is the same thing as the Gita's idea of Vasudeva who is in all and Vasudeva who is the Supreme Absolute. Both are the same.

The bhakti for the Impersonal Divine may not be so powerful for change of nature; it tends to be more etherealised. Nor does it seem to be very powerful as regards Knowledge. Here the bhakti predominates over the Knowledge.

S : I have seen many instances of bhakti and knowledge combined.

SRI AUROBINDO : I am not speaking of exceptions.

S : We have heard that you had guidance from Sri Krishna. Was it the Brindavan Krishna or the Kurukshetra Krishna ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I should think it was the Kurukshetra Krishna. I had an experience of Krishna-Kali in Alipore Jail. It was a very powerful vision.

P : These distinctions between the personalities of Krishna seem to be of later growth : I mean, later Vaishnavism.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, they regard Bala Gopal as the delight-aspect or delight-consciousness, but there are other older schools, who regarded Krishna as an Avatar of Vishnu, and they were also Vaishnavas.

S : It is the Kurukshetra Krishna who spoke the Gita.

SRI AUROBINDO : The one who spoke the Gita is the Vishnu aspect. In



the Vishnu Purana all these aspects are very finely described. The Vishnu Purana is the only Purana I have carefully read through. I wonder how it has escaped general notice that it is also magnificent poetry.

There are also some very humorous passages. In one a disciple asks his Guru whether the king is on the elephant or the elephant on the king.

P : The king must be a Ram Murti if the elephant were to be on him.

SRI AUROBINDO : The Guru jumps upon the shoulders of the disciple and asks, "Am I on you or you on me?" (*Laughter*)

S : The description of Jada Bharat is also fine. Was there such a person as Jada Bharat ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't know. But he sounds very real in the Purana.... This Purana is most anti-Buddhist.

S : Then it must have been very late.

P : Buddha was born 550 B.C.

SRI AUROBINDO : This Purana is not so early as that. All the Puranas in fact are posterior to Buddhism. They are a part of the Brahmanical revival which came in the Gupta period as a reaction to Buddhism.

P : They are supposed to have been written about the third or fourth century A.D.

SRI AUROBINDO : Probably. In the Vishnu Purana Buddha is regarded as an Avatar of Vishnu who came to deceive the Asuras. He is not referred to by his own name but called Mayamoha. The Purana says "Buddhasya, Buddhasya", which evidently refers to Buddha.

S : It is said that the Tantras are as old as the Vedas.

SRI AUROBINDO : The principle of Tantra may be as old as the Vedas, but the known Tantras are a later development.

P : The Vedas are regarded as the highest authority in India. So everything wants to peg itself on to the Vedas.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why is there this passion for antiquity ? Truth is Truth whenever it may be found.

S : The Vedas are considered eternal.

SRI AUROBINDO : Because the source of their inspiration is eternal.

S : Somebody has said that the Eternal Veda is in everybody's heart.

P : You are quoting Sri Aurobindo to himself. (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO : The Upanishads came after the Vedas and they put in more plain language the same truth that was in the Veda. In the Veda it is in symbolic language. But the Upanishads, of course, are equally great. Even in the Veda there are passages which clearly show that the Vedantic or Upanishadic truth was contained in it. It is surprising that scholars miss the meaning. For instance, the Veda says, "Hidden by your truth is the Truth that is constant for ever where they unyoke the horses of the Sun. There the ten thousands stand together, That is the One : I have seen the supreme Godhead

of the embodied gods.” It is clear that this refers to the Vedantic truth. Similarly the Upanishads speak of the Sun, *Sūrya*, and Fire, *Agni*, which are Vedic symbols, and the significance of these expressions in the Upanishads is the same as in the Veda.<sup>1</sup>

S : The Europeans can't think the Vedic Rishis were so advanced in those primitive times.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, they are so satisfied when they find a historical interpretation that they don't care for many obvious indications. In dealing with these deeper things they make an awful muddle. But some of our Indians are not far behind. You must admire one Indian writer's interpretation of the Gods as Gases—magnificently ingenious !

P : Many Riks of Dirghatamas are untranslated even today by European commentators.

SRI AUROBINDO : You can't understand or translate them unless you have the key to their symbolism.

P : In several Riks he speaks of the largest or highest step of the cow.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is certainly symbolic. Everyone knows that the cow is a symbol of divine light and consciousness, and its highest step is their highest level.

P : Dirghatamas is to me a great stumbling-block on the whole, though some of his Riks are clear in their symbolism.

SRI AUROBINDO : He has justified his name which means : “Long in the darkness.”

P : There was an article about Saraswati in a magazine, saying that it was a river that flowed both into the Bay of Bengal and the Bay of Cambay.

SRI AUROBINDO : What ? Saraswati going through both Bengal and Cambay ? That would be possible only if the inspiration ran riot.

P : I have tried to show that Saraswati of the Veda may after all be the flood of inspiration. Dirghatamas requests the rivers to become shallow and they comply with his request.

SRI AUROBINDO : They would be funny rivers if they were material ones. And remember what they carried in them—all sorts of things, the rays, the sun, the Soma-wine, wisdom, wealth.

P : Do you remember a Madras Departmental Commissioner of Police trying to prove that Christ was a Tamilian ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, and also that the Tamilians were Jews ! Do you know that now the Germans claim Christ as a German ?

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo has often emphasised the Isha Upanishad's parallel passage : “The face of the Truth is covered with a golden lid : O fostering Sun, that uncover for the law of the truth, for sight. O fosterer, O sole Rishi, O controlling Yama, O Surya, O son of the Father of creatures, marshal and mass thy rays : the Lustre that is thy most blessed form of all, that I see, He who is this, this Purusha, He am I.”—Nirodbaran.

P : But I thought Hitler and Ludendorf were trying to give up Christianity and go back to the old Norse religion.

SRI AUROBINDO : That's because they found Christ inconvenient in many ways. The Turks also tried, when they became free, to go back to everything of old Turkey. It was Mustapha Kemal who modernised Mohammedanism.

N : Poor Amanullah of Afghanistan attempted to follow him and got kicked out.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the case of a weak man imitating a strong one. Kemal was a liberator of Turkey with an army to back him up.

P : Indian Muslims praise Kemal but don't learn anything from his life and the reforms he introduced.

SRI AUROBINDO : In Turkey now they enter the mosques with shoes on and the Muezzin has been abolished.

P : Coming to Europe, I want to ask you if it can be said that there was an inrush of forces from the subtle worlds at the time of the French Revolution and in Napoleon's time, changing the course of history.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, there was. It changed the course of European history and gave the world new political and social ideas.

N : Aldous Huxley says Napoleon and Caesar were bandits.

SRI AUROBINDO : Nonsense.

N : He also says all evils, economic and otherwise, of the modern age are due to Napoleon.

P : That is going too far.

SRI AUROBINDO : If he does say so, it shows a mind that is of a pedant and without plasticity.

P : Anatole France, though not an imperialist, says Napoleon gave glory to France.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not only glory. He gave peace and order, stable government and security to France. He was not only one of the greatest conquerors but also one of the greatest administrators and organisers the world has seen. If it had not been for him, the whole ideal of the French Revolution would have been crushed by the European Powers. It was he who stabilised the ideals of the Revolution.

The only trouble was that he was not bold enough. If he had pushed on with the idea of unification of all Europe, which he had at the back of his mind, then the present Spanish struggle would not have been necessary, Italy would have united much earlier and Germany would have been more civilised. If instead of proclaiming himself Emperor he had remained the First Consul, he would have met with better success. But he was not like Hitler, he could not carry out things in a ruthless fashion. Even after his overthrow, the Germans on the Rhine were unwilling to give up the *Code Napoléon* and the institutions he had brought into existence.

S : They say his Russian campaign was a proof that he was not a military genius. It is Tolstoi who belittles him in his *War and Peace*.

SRI AUROBINDO : *War and Peace* is a novel after all.

S : There Tolstoi says that Napoleon blundered by burning Moscow.

SRI AUROBINDO : But history says that the Russians themselves burnt Moscow to deprive Napoleon of the gains of his victory. He conquered Moscow though he couldn't conquer Russia. Even his retreat at Leipzig is regarded as a feat of military genius. But there is now a tendency to belittle even his military genius. They say it was his generals who were the military genius of his campaigns and not he. In the same way they belittle Genghis Khan and call him a cut-throat. He organised the whole of Asia and part of Europe and made commerce safe. He was successful because he was supported by all the trading agencies who wanted badly the safety of the commercial highways along the banks of rivers.

It was true about Napoleon that his physical capacity failed towards the end owing to his disease.

N : Napoleon had a pituitary tumour, as a result of which his mental powers declined.

SRI AUROBINDO : History says it was cancer of the stomach. But who says he lost his mental powers ? It is an historical fact that his mind remained clear and powerful up to the last. All talk of his mental decline is nonsense.

N : Yesterday we spoke about materialisation. But is it possible to materialise even ten years after death ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, if the spirit has not gone far away from the earth. Generally up to three years it remains near the earth, they say. The Guru's power can materialise the subtle body more easily. Sometimes another force can take up a vital form.

## A BACK-LIGHT FROM THE KOREAN WAR

*(One of Sri Aurobindo's last letters was about the war in Korea. It was written on June 28, 1950 in reply to K.D. Sethna's request for some indication for his editorial in "Mother India". Originally a private letter, it was published all over India in the August of the same year. We quote it in full as it throws Sri Aurobindo's light on the world situation today.)*

I DO not know why you want a line of thought to be indicated to you for your guidance in the affair of Korea. There is nothing to hesitate about. The whole affair is as plain as a pikestaff.

It is the first move in the Communist plan of campaign to dominate and take possession first of these Northern parts and then of South Asia as a preliminary to their manoeuvres with regard to the rest of the continent—in passing Tibet as a gate into India.

If they succeed, there is no reason why domination of the whole world should not follow by steps until they are ready to deal with America. That is, provided the war can be staved off with America until Stalin can choose his time.

Truman seems to have understood the situation if we can judge from his moves in Korea, but it is to be seen whether he is strong enough to carry the matter through. The measures he has taken are likely to be incomplete and unsuccessful, since they do not include any actual military intervention except on sea and in the air. That seems to be the situation, we have to see how it develops.

One thing is certain, that is, if there is too much shilly-shallying and if America gives up now her defence of Korea she may be driven to yield position after position until it is too late. At one point or another she will have to stand and face the necessity of drastic action even if it leads to war.

Stalin also seems not to be ready to face at once the risk of a world war and if so, Truman can turn the tables on him by constantly facing him with the onus of either taking that risk or yielding position after position to America. I think that is all that I can see at present. For the moment the situation is as grave as it can be.

SRI AUROBINDO

## THE WAR BEHIND THE WAR

*(This article first appeared in "Mother India" on the fourth anniversary of the end of World War II. Both from the spiritual and the material points of view, the present is a most appropriate moment for its reappearance, when Totalitarianism has run amok from Red China.)*

Now that Hitler is past history and there is the threat of a new World War we are liable to forget the true significance of those six years of sweat and tears and blood which were required to beat Nazism to its knees and how the newly threatening calamity may be really of a piece with the nature of that terrible period.

The truth about the last war will not be grasped simply by looking at the material surface or even by examining the ideological forces at work. The New Order of Hitler, in the aid of which his Panzers and Luftwaffe went out to battle and the Gestapo and the Fifth Column of Quislings spread everywhere their tentacles, was not a mere man's conception. Its origin was occult, lying in the mystery that the world has always felt vaguely as the background against which the mundane drama is enacted. The truth, therefore, about the last war will best be grasped if we consider the support given to the Allied cause from the very outset and in its darkest hours by one who has stood in the modern world as the greatest explorer of the occult background—SRI Aurobindo.

The support was given with an extreme decisiveness that cut down to roots deeper than a difference between one human way of life and another, between even a human civilisation and a human barbarism. That extreme decisiveness coming from a master of spirituality like SRI Aurobindo pointed to a vision of Hitlerism as the arch-enemy not just of Britain's or France's or America's outer dominion and of their type of culture but also of all that Sri Aurobindo himself has made it his mission to accomplish. He saw much more at stake than a political, social or cultural issue. He saw an issue beyond the human, the growth of God in man opposed from regions occult to our normal consciousness. And he saw that secret opposition as the most colossal in history and not confined to a brief outbreak.

Many people believed that Nazism would be a temporary phase and its enormities would pass and the true Germany automatically rise to the fore and there would again be lovely music and great literature and towering philosophy. SRI Aurobindo never subscribed to this sunny view. On the contrary, he held that Nazism, in the form in which we then saw it, was, in spite of its terrible ugliness, no more than a small and slight beginning of a darkness of which we had no idea ! It was to him the spearhead of an all-out offensive from the Pit. Its success would not be a passing phenomenon which would exhaust itself and let human life return to its old way of understandable frailties relieved by admirable strengths. Its success would herald the beginning of an age in

which the diabolic would reign over the human and make the advent of divine forces impossible for untold centuries and render the fight for the Spirit, whenever the fight did manage to come, a far more difficult and doubtful Armageddon than anything we could know during those days. Nazism, in Sri Aurobindo's opinion, had to be struck dead : there could be no tolerance of it, no sitting on the fence comparing it to the savageries of past times and hoping for a swing-back to normal humanity.

From the occult standpoint, Nazism is the exact opposite pole to the Aurobindonian dynamic. It is no brief outbreak touching the superficies of material life or a few domains of it but an attempt at total supremacy because the Aurobindonian dynamic is also bent on an all-comprehensive integrality of effect on earth. Sri Aurobindo's spirituality is not a grand escape from life's riddle: it is a radical solution of it. If his work were meant to be nothing more than a going inward and upward from the material plane to a hidden soul-status unborn and unmanifest, he would not bother about the Hitlerite colossus striding over mankind. Sri Aurobindo is for creating *lebensraum* for the Spirit here and now. And what is finally determinative of his being the upper pole to Hitler's nether is that he is for divinising the material consciousness and substance and form no less than the subtle parts of our nature—a transformation never clearly envisaged by the saints, sages and prophets of the past despite their intuition that the material world has come originally from the Divine. The Yoga of those saints, sages and prophets, even when not thoroughly escapist, would not be completely baulked if its function of manifesting the Divine on earth were checked or nullified, for its ultimate goal is still a fulfilment in some Beyond at the end of earth-life. But a unique Yoga insisting on fulfilment by an integral divine manifestation in matter itself and not proceeding to an unearthly hereafter, a Yoga aiming to lay hands on every side of us for the creation of a new race would have its bottom blown clean away by the triumph of Nazism. Conversely, if the Aurobindonian New Order were allowed to make headway, the powers embodying themselves in movements like Nazism would suffer definite defeat and their hold on earth be fundamentally loosened. So, against this divine march upon the terrestrial plane with the purpose of basing there for good the Truth-consciousness, there is the counter-march from the occult home of Falsehood to gain a permanent grip. Because Sri Aurobindo knew what he himself was luminously labouring at, he perceived in one flash the whole character and menace of Nazism.

To gauge that character and menace we must look through Sri Aurobindo's eyes at Nature and her evolution towards the Spirit. Nature on earth starts with an involution of the Divine, an immense "Inconscience". Out of this, life and mind and soul emerge, by slow purblind groping through the potentialities of life and mind and soul involved in matter and by a strong guiding pressure of these things from the planes above the material, where

they have their own occult organised activities. Spirit and Supermind are the highest terms involved, holding in themselves the key to an entire fulfilment of all the others in a perfected physical frame. The difficulties of evolution lie, in the first place, in the pervading unconsciousness which is our base in Nature and the separative half-consciousness which crystallises out of it. These are undivine factors, posited at the beginning of a special form of manifestation of the Divine, the working out of a particular possibility, the possibility of the Divine's emergence from what seems at the outset the very negation of Him. But there is another factor at work which derives from beyond material Nature. This is not merely undivine : it is also anti-divine. The undivine resists by sheer inertia, the anti-divine by a various strategy of attack. And the attack comes from occult dimensions of being.

Behind the evolutionary earth-scene there are typical worlds fixed in a certain order and harmony of their own. These worlds are of darkness as well as of light. There is no progress on their own levels, they are content with their own types, possessing their peculiar nature fully expressed and deploying it in diverse fashions. But that contentment with full self-play does not preclude their desire to extend the play of their satisfaction from the occult to the material. They make the earth-scene their battlefield. And, as the earth-scene starts with an involution of the Divine, a concealment of the spirit, the occult worlds of darkness find an easier role than those of light. "On the black rock of the Inconscience" they build their edifices with greater immediate success. That is why evolution is not only aeonic but chockful of stupendous setbacks, demolitions of half-achieved good, perversions of delicately established beauty. That is why man in spite of his Godward urge makes so little advancement and centuries see him but grandiosely shifting from tweedledum to tweedledee, remaining pitifully the same in his heart under all variations of outer form. That is why every truth gets twisted in the long run and becomes actually a species of untruth, religion grows an obscurantist blight and art a decadent saturnalia, philosophy a riot of sophisms and politics a huge machinery for exploiting the many in the interests of the few. O so slow is the journey of the Gods ! Always the path is clogged and broken by jagged masses of influence from mysterious worlds where brutality and blindness are the principles on which existence is founded in a non-evolving immutable mould.

Three kinds of beings dwell in the hideous harmony of those worlds. The Indian terms are : Asura, Rakshasa, Pishacha. In English they may be translated : Titan, Giant, Demon. Each has his special function. The Asura is a being who comes with great powers of thought, not a beautiful and systematic thought but a formidable vehemence of it. He has also great "moral" powers, he can be self-controlled, ascetic and chaste in his own life, a sort of inverted Yogi, but all his gifts of *tapasyā* he uses for selfish and violent ends. His aim is to pluck civilisation from the roots, destroy all humane and progres-



sive impulse, regiment the spontaneous diversity of life into a ruthless movement of robots, drink the exultation of triumph by breaking with an iron heel the dreaming heart of man. The Rakshasa is a devourer without brains, the ravager who builds nothing save a pyramid of skulls. He ploughs up the world into a myriad graves and leaves it a chaos of corpses. He is pure greed run amok. The Pishacha fouls and pollutes all things, he is the wallower in dirt and the necrophage, the inventor of obscene tortures, the mutilating maniac. The Asura is the General, the Führer of the army of darkness ; the Rakshasa is the lieutenant, the henchman ; the Pishacha is the private, the storm-trooper.

They are no symbols or imaginary figures by which man visualises his own imperfections and evil instincts. Rather the evil instincts are the signs in him of the subtle presence of powers and personalities that have their habitat in non-human and preternatural spheres. It is because these spheres are of a perverse bliss in which the wry, the cruel, and the filthy are hideously harmonised for ever to yield enjoyment, that man feels a pleasure in his own basenesses, an attachment to his crookedness and suffering, a reluctance to give up his blindness and lust in spite of all the misery his higher self sees and feels in them—a reluctance as if blindness and lust were things to be cherished, precious components of the life-drama, indispensable art-elements of the cosmic scheme. But man's love of the base and the torturesome becomes not just one part of his nature but almost his whole being when the Asura, with his attendant Rakshasa and Pishacha, so clutches human nature that it becomes one with that occult and rigid reality. Then we have an incarnation of adverse forces, the dark deities, and they shape out a collectivity, a nation, a State with the purpose of goose-stepping on the world and smashing the entire fabric of civilisation. Such a catastrophic invasion has taken place in our own times and with a thoroughness proportionate to the thoroughness with which the spiritual Light has sought embodiment and outflowing.

Hence the last war was not like any other war and Nazism was not a recrudescence of man's ignorance but the beginning of a new era of changeless horror and terror, the most monstrous onslaught made from Preternature to found here the empire of Satanism. The human consciousness has well-nigh died in those who embody the preternatural hierarchy—for the simple reason that the human has become as good as possessed. And because the possession is so extreme, the task of defeating the Asura and his band was both so imperative and so arduous. It is no wonder a large number of combatants as well as neutrals kept asking : Can Hitler be defeated ? Yet the very enormity of the invasion called forth the hidden powers of Light from behind the veil. And though it is harder for the human instrument to be a channel of the Divine than to be a medium of the Diabolic, we must remember that the Divine is the infinite while the Diabolic is nothing save the immense. If the Diabolic finds an easier role, the Divine brings a vaster capacity—and slowly, step by step,

the forces of Light were mobilised and trained and hurled against the foe. There could be no parleying, no compromise, no appeasement. The Asura cannot be converted : he has got to be broken.

However dimly, this truth was seized by the Allied nations. Churchill gave it the most dynamic push possible, short of direct occult and spiritual vision. When France lay prostrate and Hitler announced that on the fifteenth of August that year he would address the world from Buckingham Palace and the endless Luftwaffe over Britain seemed a goddess of winged victory for him, Churchill knew that there could be neither turning back nor knuckling under. Whatever his defects in colonial policy, he was magnificent under that day-to-day rain of high-explosive, and his instinct of the superhuman truth at stake marked him out as an instrument *par excellence* of the Divine in the war. In far-away India was raised a voice guided not by instinct but by a shining insight. Strangely enough, the voice was of one whose day of birth was the fifteenth of August, the exact day on which Hitler hoped to celebrate the death of all that mankind valued. It was the sole clear and clarion-like voice amidst a chaos of political quarrels that was confusing India's mind *vis-à-vis* the occult conflict which has made our world its stage. India, who had known God as no other country in the past, was weak, fumbling and hesitant, obsessed by her political animosity against Britain and oblivious of the wider and deeper call to which Churchillian Britain had responded. Sri Aurobindo stood alone in his sun-bright seeing of the war's inner significance. He declared his unrestricted sympathy, his unconditional support—"no matter what may happen", as his own words had it in his message to the governor of Madras in connection with the Viceroy's fund. At the back of those words was the whole mystical puissance of an integral Yoga, a puissance that worked secretly like a dynamo sending out world-currents, driving a vast invisible inspired strength into the armies and navies and air-forces ranged against Hitler.

When history-books are written, these armies and navies and air-forces together with the men at the head of the Allied governments figure large in them. The praise they get is amply deserved by their idealism, courage, perseverance and skill. But whoever understands the profound meaning of the war and senses the incorporeal clash of which it was the outer reverberation will surely recognise, as the active antithesis to the occult evil that threatened utterly to engulf mankind through Hitler, the occult good that promises to lift mankind utterly to the heights through Sri Aurobindo.

And whoever understands the war's profound meaning will also realise that Nazism, though defunct in its Hitlerite shape, may yet prepare a new attack and that it would be an error to regard all enemies of Hitler as having been children of Light. In the world of the Titan, the Giant and the Demon there are many principalities and the wrestle among them is part of the hideous harmony in which evil exists independently behind the earth-scene. Hence,

against one principality trying to precipitate itself upon earth, another doing the same may be pitted side by side with the resistance-movement of evolving man. As soon as that principality has been crushed, those who were comrades because of a common enemy may break up and once again evolving man may confront man acting under the spell of the Titan, the Giant and the Demon. Some element of the anti-Nazism of the past may itself be dyed with essentially the same darkness. The future must learn to see behind the masks. The outward political structure may vary. There may not be any talk of the Master Race, of discrimination between white man and black or brown or yellow. But there may be an ideological colour that seeks to make all men "Red" and smear out of great slogans like "Equality" and "People's Democracy" all their true and deep shade of meaning. The face of the same evil can show itself in different circumstances as Nazism or as Communism. The deceptive exterior must be pierced and the one dreadful reality identified through a combination of four signs—the denial of God and of the divine spark in man, the totalitarian freedom-stuffing grip on the individual's mind and body, the acceptance of aggressive violence as basic to self-expression, the conspiracy to spread by all available means discontent and disorder in every country whose government pursues the ideal of political democracy.

K. D. SETHNA

## A BACK-LIGHT FROM THE INVASION OF TIBET

*(In an editorial in "Mother India" on November 11, 1950, these views, approved by Sri Aurobindo, on China's invasion of Tibet were expressed.)*

...YES, the basic significance of Mao's Tibetan adventure is to advance China's frontiers right down to India and stand poised there to strike at the right moment and with the right strategy unless India precipitately declares herself on the side of the Russian bloc. But to go over to Mao and Stalin in order to avert their wrath is not in any sense a saving gesture. It is a gesture spelling the utmost ruin to all our ideals and aspirations. Really the gesture that can save is to take a firm line with China, denounce openly her nefarious intentions, stand without reservations by the U.S.A. and make every possible arrangement consonant with our self-respect to facilitate an American intervention in our favour and, what is of still greater moment, an American prevention of Mao's evil designs on India. Militarily, China is almost ten times as strong as we are, but India as the spearhead of an American defence of democracy can easily halt Mao's mechanised millions. And the hour is upon us of constituting ourselves such a spearhead and saving not only our own dear country but all South-east Asia, whose bulwark we are. We must burn it into our minds that the primary motive of Mao's attack on Tibet is to threaten India as soon as possible.

24TH NOVEMBER, 1926.

ON the 24th at about 4 p.m. I had gone to the Ashram and was meditating in Bejoy Nag's room (now the office-room of Prithwi Singh). A great Power was trying to descend but it seemed to me that I should be broken into pieces—so intense was the pressure of the Higher Force over my head and so great the resistance in my head. The result was that I could not receive the Power, although I tried to do so.

At about 5 p.m., Amrita was called upstairs and he came down with the Mother's express direction that all the disciples were to assemble in the upstairs verandah for Sri Aurobindo's blessings.

As soon as I heard this I went to Barinda's room and told him that the long expected Descent must have taken place.

The Mother's wishes were communicated to all the disciples including those staying in the Guest House. But many had gone out to the sea-side for their evening stroll and some had gone to play football.

So messengers were sent to call them and, when all of us had assembled in the Ashram, we went upstairs at about 6-30 p.m. Those present were :

- |                   |                  |                      |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Amrita         | 9. Kshitish      | 17. Purani           |
| 2. Bejoy Nag      | 10. Lilabati     | 18. Purushottam      |
| 3. Barin Ghose    | 11. Moni         | 19. Rajangam         |
| 4. Champa Ben     | 12. Nolini Gupta | 20. Rajani Palit     |
| 5. Champak Lal    | 13. Nanibala     | 21. Rambhai          |
| 6. Chandra Sekhar | 14. Pavitra      | 22. Rati Palit       |
| 7. Datta          | 15. Pujalal      | 23. Satyen           |
| 8. Kanai Ganguly  | 16. Punam Chand  | 24. Upendra Banerjee |

On the wall, near the central door, was hung a black silk curtain with a Chinese Dragon in gold lace-work.

The bent-wood chairs in which we used to sit for meditation etc., were all removed and replaced by mats spread on the floor.

Absolute silence prevailed and the verandah was full of Spiritual Light. Automatically we got into a state of meditation, waiting for the arrival of the Master.

A few minutes after, at about 7 p.m., the door behind the curtain opened and the Mother and the Master appeared—the Master with his majestic gait and the Mother in her queenly bearing. The Master was dressed in a silk dhoti

and chaddar, and the Mother in a silk sari. The Master took his seat in his usual low cushioned chair and the Mother on his foot-rest which was placed on this day a little to the left.

The Master looked absolutely grand, omniscient, omnipotent, *Samrāt*, as if Emperor of the Universe, head lion-like, eyes wide-open as if looking from far beyond, detached yet supporting the entire universe; absolutely powerful, yet compassionate and kind to all, the supreme Godhead, absolutely *Svarāt*, one who had conquered himself entirely and had established his Ananda and light in every part and each cell of his body, from head to foot, his whole body radiating light and love and bliss to all creation.

The Mother was the embodiment of Love, Compassion, Purity, Beauty, Youth, Grace and Rhythm. She also looked majestic, her beaming eyes full of compassion for the earthly creation, Mother of the universe, Shakti of the Master.

It was a very auspicious day, since on this day Sri Krishna, who is the Anandamaya and who supports the evolution, descended into the physical. Sri Aurobindo embodied the Supreme Godhead on this day.

The Master held out his left hand a few inches above the head of the Mother and he blessed the disciples who had assembled with his right hand as they bowed down to him and the Mother, one by one; some of the disciples bowed more than once.

There was absolutely no talk, no sound. Neither the Mother nor Sri Aurobindo spoke a word, the atmosphere was charged with utter calmness and peace and bliss, perfect silence reigned throughout the function. Then after about half an hour or so, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother withdrew and went within.

Now Datta came out, inspired, and declared, "The Master has conquered death, decay, disease, hunger, and sleep." We were spellbound and unable to move for some time. We felt as if we had been transported to heaven. Then we came down stairs, probably one by one.

Regarding myself, I spoke to Barinda for a special interview with the Mother, since the Pressure was very great, more than I could bear.

The Mother saw me at about 9 p.m. and I bowed down to Her and told Her about my difficulties. She assured me that it would be O.K. and blessed me.

Then there was the usual distribution of "Soup" by the Mother.

Sri Aurobindo "retired" either on the following day or one or two days after.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 24TH NOVEMBER, 1926.

ASKED by the editor of *The Pioneer*, I wrote an article on the significance of the *Siddhi* attained on the 24th November, 1926, in which I quoted the following from *The Life Divine* :

“In order that the involved principles of overmind and supermind should emerge from their veiled secrecy, the beings and powers of the superconscience must descend into us and uplift us and formulate themselves in our beings and powers; this descent is a *sine qua non* of this transition and transformation.”

I concluded with the comment :

“This is referred to in the Vedas as the birth of the gods in men, *devānām janimāni*; Sri Aurobindo regards it as indispensable for supramental realisation on earth. It was this that occurred on the 24th November, 1926, and it is only then that Sri Aurobindo started his Ashram, being sure that with the cooperation of the gods the supermind can descend upon earth.”

Sri Aurobindo himself corrected this comment as follows :

“What happened on the 24th November prepared the possibility of this descent and on that day he retired into seclusion and entered into deep and powerful meditation.”

This correction was made on the 20th November, 1950 and it was the last one that Sri Aurobindo made on any article. He passed away on the 5th December, 1950.

ANILBARAN

## REMINISCENCES

### IX

*(Here is a pen-picture of what happened on the 24th November 1926, the day known in the Ashram as the Day of Siddhi of which a fuller account appears in a preceding article. The author adds a few details that are new, but the main interest of his narrative is in what followed : how for some time after that date there was in the Sadhana an exclusive concentration on inner growth and how there has now been a swing in the opposite direction and the necessity of harmonising the two apparent extremes.)*

NOVEMBER 24, 1926

EVEN before that date, for some time past, Sri Aurobindo had been more and more withdrawing into himself and retiring within. An external sign of this became visible to us as his lunch hour shifted gradually towards the afternoon. We used to have our meal together and the Mother too ate with us, at the Library House, in the room now used by Ravindra as the fruit-room. There used to be about eight or ten of us. On the previous day, Sri Aurobindo came down to lunch when it was past four. We would naturally wait till he came.

Then the great day arrived. In the afternoon, it was in fact already getting dark, all of us had gone out as usual. I was on the sea-front. Suddenly, someone came running at full speed and said to me, "Go, get back at once; the Mother is calling everybody." I had not the least idea as to what might be the reason. I came back running and went straight up, to the verandah facing the Prosperity room. Sri Aurobindo used to take his seat there in the evening for his talks with us or rather for answering our questions. As I came up, a strange scene met my eyes. Sri Aurobindo was seated in his chair, the Mother sat at his feet, both of them with their faces turned towards us. I looked round to see if all were present. Satyen was missing and I said, "Satyen has not come. Shall I call him in?" The Mother spoke out, "Yes, all, all." All were called in, everybody was now present. We took our seats before Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, both of whom were facing us. The whole scene and atmosphere had a heavenly halo.

Sri Aurobindo held his left hand above the Mother's head and his right hand was extended to us in benediction. Everything was silent and still, grave

and expectant. We stood up one by one and went and bowed at the feet of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. After a while, both of them went inside. And then, Datta who had been among us, suddenly exclaimed at the top of her voice, as though an inspired Prophetess of the old mysteries, "The Lord has descended. He has conquered death and sorrow. He has brought down immortality."

From this time onwards, Sri Aurobindo went into retirement, that is to say, did not come out any more for his evening talks. The Mother made her appearance and it was with the Mother that we started our contacts.

The Mother would now sit down daily for her meditations with all of us together, in the evening after nightfall. That was the beginning of collective meditation. She made a special arrangement for our seating. To her right would sit one group and to her left another, both arranged in rows. The right side of the Mother represented Light, on the left was Power. Each of us found a seat to her right or left according to the turn of our nature or the inner being. I was to her right, Amrita sat on her left.

A strange thing used to happen every day at these meditations. Purushottam was one of our number in those days. He used to sit directly in front of the Mother a little apart from the rest of us. As soon as the meditation began, he would begin to sway his body and even move about with his eyes closed while still meditating. He would come and get hold of some of us, give them a thorough kneading and would not even hesitate to tear at the hair on their head or face. In those days, almost all of us sported a beard and a moustache and wore our hair long. He used to say that this was his allotted work, this work of purification and helping in the purification. Not only did any one never raise an objection to this kind of molestation, it was accepted by all with perfect equanimity, with joy almost; it was considered to be a necessity, a sign of the Mother's Grace. But these attentions were reserved only for two or three people. During this process, the Mother of course remained silent and engrossed in meditation. All was done, no doubt, under her control and guidance. But from an inner poise. One day, Purushottam proclaimed to the Mother in a loud voice, "Mother, I do not mean it as a boast, I mention this to you in utter humility : Mother, just as you are the highest Force of the Supreme, even so I am the lowest force of this earth-nature. You have given me the privilege of being a collaborator in your Work." He used to say that Sesha-naga, the primal energy that sustains the material world, had manifested in him, that he was Sesha-naga itself. He was the spirit of the Inconscience, of the Force in the nether world; his task was to work in that darkness, sweep it clean and make room for the Light, the Higher Forces of the Mother. This manner of working continued for some time; then it came to a halt, and we had only meditations.

The Mother's endeavour at that time was for a new creation, the creation here of a new inner world of the Divine Consciousness. She had brought



down the Higher Forces, the Gods, into the earth atmosphere, into our inner being and consciousness. A central feature of that endeavour was that she had placed each of us in touch with his inner godhead. Every individual has what may be described as his line of spiritual descent and also ascent; for into each individual consciousness has come down from the supreme Maha Shakti an individual divine being, a particular godhead following a particular line of manifestation of divine power, *vibhūti*. To bear inwardly the touch of this divinity and found it securely within oneself, to concentrate on it and become one with it, to go on manifesting it in one's outer life, this was the aim of the *sādhanā* at the time. This was a period of extreme concentration and one-pointedness, a "tortoise phase" of the *sādhanā* one might call it. Like the tortoise one had to gather oneself in, limbs and all, and hide as in a shell by cutting oneself off from all outward touches. This was a temporary necessity in order to maintain the consciousness of the individual and the collectivity always at a high level and keep it unsullied and unchanged. Our give and take with the outside world was very little indeed and it was carried on under the strictest vigilance. All around us there had been fixed a cordon, an iron curtain almost. Even among ourselves, personal contacts like meeting one another or the paying of visits had been reduced to the barest minimum. To use the poetic language of Tagore, we seemed to be blossoming forth

Like a flower in the air, stemless  
And sufficient unto itself...

But after following out this line for some distance, the Mother could see that the new creation, even if it came about, would be something narrow and confined to a limited circle, and for the most part effective only for an inner action. But that has not been her aim. The new creation must embrace the entire human race, a new race of men must be created and not merely a small select group. And in that new creation must be included not only the inner being of man but also his vital and physical life. In other words, we have to come down to the lower levels and work for the purification there, in order to raise them beyond themselves by the infusion of the higher consciousness and make them fit instruments for the higher things. We are still continuing with that work, through the "ups and downs of an uneven path."

Let me just illustrate, from my own experience, to what extent we had become self-gathered and indrawn. One day, for some reason or other, I happened to have come out of the Ashram precincts and away from its atmosphere; that is to say, I was going about the town and through the market area. Suddenly I began to feel rather queer, as if I were not walking on the ground. There was no weight in my legs, I floated on air through a mist as in a dream and there was no solid ground or a settled path. I felt terribly uneasy, almost like a fish

out of water. I hurried my steps back and it was not till I had reached the Ashram precincts that I could heave a sigh of relief.

We have left that stage far enough behind us now. We have in fact reached the opposite end perhaps. We have taken a plunge outwards, identified ourselves with the outer being, a tendency against which the Upanishad has used a word of warning : *parāñci khāni vyātrṇot*, our senses have a natural pull towards the outer things. But this too was necessary and still is. We form part of the world, we are united with it and inseparable. We are an image of the entire world, its symbol and representative. We have to share in its work and suffer its deeds. Even Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have not spared themselves this, but that is another matter. Whatever changes we succeed in effectuating in ourselves here will initiate similar changes all the world over. Therefore, not to become wholly externalised, a tendency which is uppermost here in our collective life today, but to keep the path open for the inner *sādhanā*, this should be our endeavour. We have to harmonise the two extremes, for not to disjoin but to unite, that is Yoga.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

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

## A COMMENTARY ON THE SECOND SUKTA OF RIGVEDA

THE upward spirit, the conscious energising power, the aspiration-fire that resides at the root of all spiritual disciplines as their fount and primal inspiration has been invoked in the first sukta. The present sukta throws light upon the different steps and rungs of that upward spiritual discipline.

The Vedic spiritual discipline aims at Truth, the Rhythm of Consciousness and the Vast. The ordinary life consists of body, life and mind. The trivial work, the insignificant inspiration and enjoyment of life, the limited knowledge of the mind—man is aware of nothing beyond. But there is something above the body, life and mind. When one reaches that higher plane, one becomes full of truth-consciousness, that is to say, one owns the nature and the law of conduct of the Gods. Body, life and mind stand in the way of the aspirant to the realm of the Gods. However, for that we are not to deny the existence of or do away with body, life and mind. What is actually needed is the purification and transformation of these three instruments. There are three stages of purification and transformation; accordingly the present sukta has been divided into three parts each containing three riks.

The first three riks deal with the purification and transformation of life-energy. Vayu is the presiding Deity of life-energy. "Vayu is life," says the Mundaka Upanishad. In the Rigveda too there is a clear indication of it. It says, "Vayu came into existence from the Supreme as Life." This Vayu or life-energy is the *raison d'être* of all the activities of the ordinary human life. Life abounds with desires and enjoyments for earthly objects. The ordinary life is blind and ignorant. It hankers after the satisfaction of desires. It gets satisfaction even in fleeting pleasures. But what an aspirant needs in life is to taste the pure and unalloyed nectar which is the perpetual divine delight inherent in each object.

The *Somarasa* is the transcendental Delight, and this Delight is nothing other than Immortality. It is also an immensely conscious and luminous exhilaration of the divine existence of the Gods. Truth must be revealed with the rhythm and words of direct knowledge, and the delight of the realised truth must be made manifest in life. Those who have done it are called "Aharvida". It means they have now the light of the day. No more do they crave for trivial enjoyments. All the parts of the being are vibrant, conscious and filled with the immortal delight.

Luminous delight in profusion must be established in life. And for that the mind must be purified and made perfect first. Indra is the presiding Deity

of pure and perfect mind. Indra gives pure intelligence and with that pure intelligence the aspirant establishes a pure enjoyment of the quintessence of truth, rich delight and fulfilment in life. Therefore in the second three rikṣ Indra and Vayu are invoked together.

The last three rikṣ deal with the full realisation and the goal of the aspirant. When life is purified, when mind is purified, the aspirant will be established in that vast and luminous Heaven. Varuna is the presiding Deity of vastness. The harmony and the union that came into existence from the infinite expanse of Varuna are the gifts of Mitra. Lord Varuna drives away the limitation, isolation and disunion of our ordinary knowledge. He tears away the hostile force that compels us to remain narrow and small. Hence he is called *Rishadasam*. And Mitra is our divine Guide. With his clear vision he unites all the objects together in perfect harmony. When an aspirant attains to the level of indivisible harmony in the infinite, in the limitless, he arrives at the fundamental Truth and his action then becomes the infallible manifestation of that Truth. Indra possesses pure intelligence. Behind him stand the two powers, Varuna and Mitra, of the Infinite Mother. It is they who turn intelligence into the divine Knowledge and Action. They are also called poets, *i.e.*, the seers of Truth. It is because of their infinite expanse, eternal rhythm, and inborn power of truth that the aspirant is able to draw the stupendous inspiration of energising power and an unobstructed pure genuine capacity to carry on all his activities in life.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

*(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali)*

## TWO LETTERS FROM AMERICA

Dear Mr. Nahar :

### THE MOTHER'S WORK !

I need hours and hours, alone with the knowledge you shared with me ; hours and hours of letting the useless, impeding dross of my thoughts fall away. I need a lifetime at The Feet of The Mother, completely silent and completely adoring. It is eternity I want, so filled with Her Divine Shakti that there is no more personal self or will, only the identity of surrender so complete that Her Will becomes my will ; Her Command, my joy ; Her Work, my devotion.

I shall not write to The Mother. Instead, Mr. Nahar, when next you visit The Samadhi and stand listening to "the winds of silence", please tell The Master of my love for Him and for The Mother ; and having told, repeat it all over again, and again.

When the essential unity of life is once gripped by the human mind, man's oneness with Life, both in its temporary phases and in its eternal continuity, must begin to emerge in a pattern of knowledge, of love, and of right action. The moment of recognition of this fundamental unity, however fleeting the moment may be, is when the vista of the long, long road ahead flashes before the mind's eye and the individual is inexorably on the way from that point on. There is no turning back. Loneliness and longing enter the heart but to spur the mind and the will to see and to know the Light and to grow towards It.

The way is unbelievably chaotic and hard; the loneliness, an inky-black blinding night; the longing, an unbearable ache.

Just as the study of Tantra gave my mind the concept of the Divine Mother as harmony of Power and Energy, Sri Aurobindo gave the Divine Mother to my heart as Love and Divine Shakti. Then the Divine Mother proceeded to give both my mind and my heart The Mother, OUR MOTHER, as the Divine Adagio where ALL ARE ONE. It is both my mind and my heart that would become "so open to The Mother's Force".

Mr. Nahar, I am sharing with you three separate thought episodes, not unrelated nor yet together. The present, the NOW of The Mother's monumental Work renders me deeply cognizant of where I am, the first thought then becoming the immediate cry of my own yearning heart.

The second thought mirrors my own travail, in great part still with me; the third tells you how The Divine Mother and The Mother entered my life as a Divine Adagio of gentle Force on November 24, 1955.

I sit in silence at Sri Aurobindo's Feet; and I kneel just as silently before The Mother, waiting. I know you understand the full import of the things I am saying; and I place my gratitude to you and for you, before The Mother.

Sincerely yours,

March 28, 1962

CÉCILIA

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My dear Friend, Mr. Nahar :

Your letter of May 16 with its enclosure of the April 13 Victory message is the most important piece of mail I have ever received.

Man, whether he knows it or not, is now tied forever to the wideness, the height, and the depth of Our Lord's vision and of Our Mother's ultimate mission. How fortunate, how blessed, and how loved !

I had never succeeded in reading any portion of SAVITRI with any degree of ease since I did not seem to get hold of it properly in my mind. Yet, you handed me the "key" to it in your last letter and whole portions have already become clear with almost luminous understanding of The Mother's work springing from lines which flow with the force of a mountain torrent and the majesty of the Lord's Eternal Self.

Has a translation of SAVITRI into French ever been done ? I found myself following your directions to Book VI, Canto II, and backing a bit from the lines you quoted, to

As a star, unaccompanied, moves in heaven  
Unastonished by the immensities of space,

and having the following lines spring into life,

Comme une étoile, seule, voyage le ciel  
Non surprise des immensités de l'espace,

it seemed to me then that SAVITRI was both English and French and I was reading it with a different kind of mind and a different kind of understanding. It was entrance into new territory and a new joy.

...It is a fact, however, that things seemingly incomprehensible one moment take on lustre and light and meaning the next. With an accelerated process, and it seems so with me, it would be helpful to ask a timely question or two on occasion.

Your prayers reassure me. Even though I live about as far away from the Ashram as it is possible to, I am beginning to suspect at least an identifica-

tion with its people and happenings which is even deeper than I seem to know. My own deep, nameless, undefined "vigil" from April 7 through mid-afternoon of April 13 ended when The Mother's fiat reached me quite suddenly in a single word flashed with lightning sharpness and clarity across my tired brain. There was no faltering, no fear, no doubt, just the certainty of prayers answered. As you have said, "it is not a matter of nearness, or distance, or of time even—only The Mother knows and all prayers reach to Her according to the force of aspiration."

I am offering a white rose from our garden to The Mother for you; it is still partly bud, so completely beautiful it could be named SAVITRI ÉTOILE.

June 1, 1962

Sincerely,

CÉCILIA

## THE MOTHER ON TREE-LIFE

### Some Reminiscences

THERE is a "Service" tree in the courtyard of the Ashram, whose botanical name is *Pelto Forrum Ferrugeneum*. It yields yellow flowers. During the spring season, with the round-the-clock fall of flowers, the entire courtyard is decked as if with yellow stars. After the passing of Sri Aurobindo, the tree has served as a cover and canopy over his Samadhi. The longer side of the Samadhi is just near the base of the tree and the thickest part of the branches is bent at the top of the main trunk, serving the Samadhi with its cool shade.

Near the base, the trunk takes a rugged expanding curve around itself and, along with the swollen roots, presents an interesting view.

Once the gardener-in-charge wanted to cover these roots with soil. He asked the Mother whether he could do it so that only the clean-rising trunk might remain in view on the surface. The Mother came and saw the tree.

"Because of the exposure of these roots above the earth," she explained, "they have become habituated to the outer atmospheric climate and to the sun; if they are covered now it will affect their growth."

The truth is that she could identify herself with the consciousness of the tree and the way of growth which the tree had naturally chosen.

Also, this accounts for the Mother's standing order to the gardeners that no tree should be cut down without her permission. It holds good not only for a tree but also for any branch of a tree which one may find unseemly or disturbing for any reason. Because even though one may find that certain trees do not grow or do not yield fruit any more, yet one does not ordinarily know what their inner processes are. She can know what the prospects are of even a withering tree or of a tree which does not bear fruit.

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When in Japan, the Mother had a kitchen-garden of her own. There she used to grow vegetables. When she would go to the garden, the vegetables which used to be ripe or ready for the use of the table, would say, "We are ready, we are ready", while others, the unripe ones, would speak out, "Not yet, not yet".

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Once a gardener was sent to the Vigie House to clean the banana trees by removing their dry leaves and saplings. Without the permission of the supervisor, he cut down some banana suckers. The supervisor brought this matter to the notice of the Mother who asked him to fine the gardener, a thing which she rarely does.

“When these plants are cut down like that,” she said, “they come and complain to me.” Knowing her departure from her usual kindly and benevolent ways towards all hired labour, not to speak of sadhaks—she added, “What can I do, if the plants come and complain to me?”

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There were about a hundred mango trees in the Ashram's Cazanove Garden. They were not bearing fruit or were yielding only an inferior quality of mangoes and that too in poor numbers.

The sadhak-gardener asked the Mother whether they could be cut down and the field turned to a more useful purpose. She did not allow their being cut down, for, she said, there were certain spirits which had been living in those trees for a long time. As they were harmless, she said, she would not like to disturb them.

It was only after some years that she allowed these trees to be cut down as the spirits had since left them.

*Reported by* HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## A COUPLET OF HAFIZ

Kai dihad dast in gharaz yā rab ki hamdastan shavand  
Khātir-i-majmoo-i-mā zulf-i-pareeshan-i-shumā.

Translation : When will, O God, this aspiration of ours meet fulfilment,  
that they will join hands—our unified soul and Thy dishevelled  
tresses?

This couplet has been taken from a ghazal of Hafiz. A ghazal is written in the form of couplets. The unity of the ghazal springs from the strict observance of the same rhythmical pattern which is a quantitative metre with the rhyme and refrain coming at the end of each couplet. The opening couplet is called matla and in this the two hemistichs rhyme but in the rest of the ghazal the rhyme and refrain appear only in the second hemistich. In this ghazal, for instance, the word *shumā* meaning 'your' is the refrain and "*pareeshan*" is the rhyme—others being *rakhshān*, *mastān*, *darakhshān*, etc. The metre in which the ghazal is written follows this quantitative pattern:

- U - - | - U - - | - U - - | - U - |

The last couplet is known as the maqta and in this the poet introduces his nom-de-plume either apostrophising himself or mentioning it in the third person often indulging in self-adulation. 'O Hafiz, thy fame has spread far and wide reaching the Kingdoms of Rum and Rai' or 'O Hafiz, what a ghazal hast thou composed, each couplet is a pearl in a necklace'. This self-indulgence is not deprecated by the audience because its facetious nature is well-understood by everybody.

The chief excellence of this form lies in its compactness, the utmost distillation of some deep experience in two lines and the subtle musical effect of the rhyme and refrain. Each couplet is quite a separate entity and has no bearing on the succeeding lines. Even when the poet wants to bring home at times a recondite idea of his by means of a simile he must not overflow beyond the second line of the couplet. The phrase that the Persians use for a perfect rounding off of the successful couplet is 'the ocean in a bowl'. Often the poets feel very much frustrated by the labour demanded by this narrow cadre.

Now let us try 'to fathom the unfathomable and unscrew the inscrutable' as a negro priest put it.

The spiritual man's greatest difficulty, after the realisation of his divine soul, arises when he has to come in contact with the external reality. The soul in us is something divine, ever-pure and ever-blissful, untouched by the ignorance of the dark material life. When the spiritual man plunges into the depths of his soul he finds all the divisions created by the ego vanishing away and all

the lusts, passions and hatreds that rack human life appearing as things foreign to his true self—thus Savitri :

Akin to the eternity whence she came,  
 No part she took in this small happiness  
 A mighty stranger in the human field,  
 The embodied Guest within made no response.  
 The call that wakes the leap of human mind,  
 Its chequered eager motion of pursuit,  
 Its fluttering-hued illusion of desire,  
 Visited her heart like a sweet alien note.

But as soon as he comes out of this state he finds the outer world buzzing with things undivine and the least contact with it sullies his purity, robs him of his spiritual bliss and that is for him a condition of unbearable agony. The result is he has again to withdraw himself from the outer world. As Sri Aurobindo says,

“Herein lies the difficulty of a satisfying solution and the source of that lack of finality which pursues all mere compromises between Spirit and Matter. A compromise is a bargain, a transaction of interests between two conflicting powers; it is not a true reconciliation. True reconciliation proceeds always by a mutual comprehension leading to some sort of intimate oneness. It is therefore through the utmost possible unification of Spirit and Matter that we shall best arrive at their reconciling truth and so at some strongest foundation for a reconciling practice in the inner life of the individual and his outer existence.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the difficulty that the poet is experiencing in his spiritual life. But he does not take the two as irreconcilable antinomies; for, in that case the solution would lie in cutting the Gordian knot. On the contrary there is in him a deep certitude that at some time though in a far distant future the wistful aspiration must materialise and soul and the world join hands in perfect unison. Something approaching what Sri Aurobindo describes in his poem *Descent*.

All the world is changed to a single oneness;  
 Souls undying, infinite forces, meeting,  
 Join in God-dance weaving a seamless Nature,  
 Rhythm of the Deathless<sup>2</sup>

The two must embrace, but how ? According to Hafiz, by seeing God as the supreme Beloved and this dark universe as his tresses veiling his sun-face so that as soon as you gaze behind the dark tresses you behold the face of the All-Beautiful, the All-Beloved. But how to achieve this state ? By fully re-integrating your life by the alchemic soul influence which will purify our nature in

<sup>1</sup> *Life Divine*, vol. I, chap. IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Collected Poems & Plays*, Vol. 2 p. p. 368

such a way that our response, though 'passionate in surge', will have "no turbid wave". Hence we have not to shun the world as something dark but psychicise integrally our own unregenerate nature. Then each contact with the outer world will inundate us with the pure delight of the soul.

Elsewhere Hafiz says,

The mystery of God is hidden behind the veil of secrecy. O Sufi, come ! we will tear the veil from his face by the intense ardour of our love.

This world is neither an illusion nor an inexorable steam-roller but a dire veil by which God the Beloved hides Himself so that we may love Him with an ever intenser love.

So we see how the problem of reconciling the inner life of the spirit with the external activities of life has been ubiquitous in its nature and the Persian mystic approach has been to love the Universe as one of the beauties of the Beloved's body.

This trend in Persian mystical verse is echoed with full force and vigour in Iqbal's poetry. One of his famous ghazals opens with the couplet :

Fursat-i-kashmakash madeh in dil-i-bequarār rā  
Yak do shikan zyada kun gesu-i-tābdār rā.

(O Beloved ! do not give this restless heart of mine the time to wriggle out of Thy captivity. Make haste to add one or two more curls to Thy lustrous tresses.)

The meaning is clear. The lover's heart is held captive in the chain-like curls of the beloved's locks. He wants to come out of this web of Universal Maya and the only way to keep him ensnared is to go on manifesting ever-new beauties.

Another famous couplet of Hafiz runs,

Dilbur-i-dilruba-i-man mee kunad az bara-i-man  
Naqsh-o-nigār-o rang-o-boo tāza ba tāza no-ba-no.

(My heart-ravishing beloved for my sake paints figures ever fresh and ever new.)

So we will end with these words of Sri Aurobindo :

Matter is but a form of consciousness, nevertheless solve not the object entirely into its subjectivity. Reject not the body of God, O God-lover, but keep it for thy joy; for His body too is delightful even as His spirit.

RAVINDRA KHANNA

## THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LITERATURE OVERSEAS

(Continued from the previous issue)

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

(2)

I HAVE spoken at great length about the modernising influence that a study of English literature has exercised overseas. But this does not mean that one has to subscribe to the theory of 'excess' put forward by Dr. Holloway. The 'excess' that he speaks of is not, after all, the 'fine excess' that Drayton wrote about. It makes our approach to literature utilitarian in the extreme and leaves out those "brave, translunary things" which constitute the essence of literature. Literature is as much an expression of Universal Man, of 'eternal verities', as it is of the manifold stages in the life of a society or nation. To the soul-gaze of man, when he stands face to face with Reality, the earth is Adam's paradise, hell or heaven and not England or India, Egypt or Lebanon. It is the theatre set for the evolution of the individual, of humanity, through the ages. It is, as Keats said, the vale of soul-making. We go to English literature because it is a great literature, because it offers to us for study some of the great classics of the world's literature. We have our own treasure of many ancient and some modern classics. But English literature has a variety of modern world classics—works which concentrate on the fundamental problems of human life in a modern or contemporary manner: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Fieldings's *Joseph Andrews*, Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*, Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*, Hardy's *Two on a Tower* and *Tess*, Galsworthy's *The Man of Property*, Conrad's *Victory*, Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria*, Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan*, Barrie's *Peter Pan* and T. S. Eliot's *The Four Quartets*—to mention only a few that come casually to my mind. These and other works put us in touch with some of the choicest things of the human spirit. We love them because they throw open a window through which we are privileged to see the drama of man's eternal passion, eternal pain and eternal delight. In this sense English literature ceases to be English. It is simply literature which enables us to scale some of the highest heights and dive into some of the deepest depths of the human spirit. One can enjoy a masterpiece like *Macbeth* without knowing anything about medieval Scotland. Very little of the background material that I have dealt with in this paper is necessary for understanding many great poems, plays and novels, since it is their universality

which is the greater part of their value. What does need to be explained about them should be done simply, without the assumptions of an English cultural background, and in a way which is unobtrusive and leaves the text as the major point of interest. This approach should be the primary approach of a non-British student to English literature. He should realise and enjoy the universality of reference before he begins to tackle the local particulars of a civilization.

Dr. Holloway's statement does not do justice to this universality of reference that characterises a literature. I also think that his formulation of the utilitarian values of the study of a foreign literature itself needs to be modified. As a friend pointed out to me in this connection, any worthwhile evolution in a nation is surely spontaneous. The observation of some other nation's cultural evolution cannot do much to further one's own except by encouraging writers to try out other people's literary genres in their own languages or by facilitating a study of their own evolution by a study of some other well-recorded evolution. In spite of all that I have said so far about the sociological impact of English literature on the non-British student, it is easy to see that if our primary aim is to study the conditions of life, at a utilitarian level, of a western nation, this can be done best from films and newspapers, not 'literature'. So little of modern English fiction seems to have any point of reference to the generality of the nation. Dr. Holloway thinks that the process of knowing what a modern "westernised" community is like is secured, not merely by the content of literary works but by getting to know how society received it. But we do not go to literature for a knowledge of modern 'western' society. This would make it impossible for us to distinguish literature from films and newspapers. Society generally lags behind the teachings of its prophets, even if it does not quite stone them while they are alive. The message of Shakespeare in *The Tempest* cannot be obscured by any number of world wars, unless *The Tempest* itself is destroyed along with its readers and the world into which it was born. We go to literature for the total impact that it has on our being and becoming and not for the additions that it makes to our knowledge of sociology and anthropology.

I have already said that the interchange of literary experience and values is not one-sided. English literature brought to the Afro-Asian an impact which facilitated the modernisation of his own literature. But the Asian literatures have also exercised a significant influence on the West from very early times. If Arabic gave Europe her form of the sonnet, the beast fables of La Fontaine and other writers were ultimately derived from India. More than in the field of literary genres, the Asian influence is active in another aspect of literature—its universality of appeal, its delineation of the imperishable quality of the human spirit. It has added a new measure of depth to English literature. It cannot be denied that this was the kind of influence that Indian thought had

on the German transcendentalists and on Coleridge, Shelley and Keats through them. It would not perhaps be quite relevant to refer here to Emerson, Thoreau and Walt Whitman. But one has only to read A.E., W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot and Aldous Huxley to realise how the Indian impact is shaping, in an increasing measure, this aspect of English literature—its presentation of the complexities, the depths and heights of the human spirit. If a study of English literature helped to modernise Afro-Asian writing, the Afro-Asian impact has been steadily deepening the depth of and universality of English literature. It would be somewhat crude in this context to speak of the 'something in excess' that a study of English literature offers to Afro-Asian students. There is no one-way traffic on the high roads of literature.

I would therefore redefine the utilitarian values of the study of a foreign literature. I am indebted to a friend for a part of this statement :

- (1) A widening and deepening of skills in the language.
- (2) A deeper understanding of the people who produce this literature, not so that emulation can take place but so that there can grow up some mutual trust, regard, respect...and hence some peaceful co-existence. This is what has come from many decades of good English literary study in India. The bad aspect was the uncritical swallowing of the West as it was evolving.
- (3) The classification into three groups of the countries in which English literature is studied helps us in literary study only from one viewpoint—the evolutionary or sociological. This cannot be regarded as the primary approach to a foreign literature. It also obscures the fact that there is a mutual interchange of experience and literary values. The primary approach is from the standpoint of its universality of reference. This should be placed at the very centre while defining the values of the study of a foreign literature.
- (4) As for guiding and expanding local demand overseas, a conference of this kind is the best agency for the purpose. The demand is always guided by the inner attraction that a people experience towards English literature. But the attraction itself can be deepened or illumined in a number of ways through participation in such a conference.

The study of a foreign literature enables a people to understand the soul of another and add to its own intensity of perception and extensiveness of experience. It is an incentive to a nation's own self-exploration and evolution. When one nation falls away from its height into a state of exhaustion and repose, another makes it aware of itself and inspires it to pursue new lines of its own creativity. When a nation climbs the giddy heights of the cosmic whirl and is about to lose its balance and fall, another awakens it to the wisdom of the voice

that is heard in the depths of its own silence. This is the give and take which enriches the life of humanity. This interchange is ceaselessly active through the centuries and to overlook the past and future and think only of a fraction of the present is to take an extremely limited and partial view of the matter. It is this mutual enrichment that justifies all the seven approaches, outlined in this paper, to a foreign literature. It is in the light of these assumptions about the study of a foreign literature that the study of English literature overseas has to be examined by us.

## (3)

The overseas student needs to supplement his approach to English literature by a study of several allied or auxiliary disciplines. He cannot afford to ignore the writings of Aristotle, Dryden, Dr. Johnson, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, Pater, Yeats, I.A.Richards, T.S.Eliot, Herbert Read and other modern critics. The various critical approaches referred to in the preceding paragraphs, comparative criticism, a study of imagery and of craftsmanship—all these are of great interest to the overseas student. An integration of all these approaches and their application in terms of critical evaluation to individual writers and works of art deserves to be cultivated more than ever before. A few others may also be mentioned in this connection :

- (1) The prosodic analysis of a poet's work or the history of a form like blank verse, the sonnet or free verse.
- (2) A description of modern or contemporary English usage.
- (3) Philology : the history of the English language.
- (4) Textual criticism.

The English language introduces the overseas student to another literature—American literature. Until we have our own translation of world classics in our languages in large numbers, we shall also have to study Greek, Roman, French, German, Italian and Scandinavian classics in English translation for purposes of comparative criticism. Nor can we afford to neglect Anglo-Indian, Indo-Anglian and Indo-English literature. It has a special significance for Indian students.

Suggestions have been made in the preceding paragraphs towards a revision of overseas objectives in connection with literary study. Our different categories of work with English literature will have to be redefined if this analysis is acceptable. We shall, in particular, have to be guided by the following considerations :

- (1) Modern English literature from the Age of Elizabeth onwards will arouse more interest than the literature of the earlier periods. These periods can be selected by a post-graduate student for study if he so desires.
- (2) The linguistic equipment of the student should be considered when one is prescribing a course of readings for him in English literature. For example, the pupil in the non-English medium school can only be given simplified sum-



maries of the plots of great novels. Nor can a Shakespeare play be prescribed for the compulsory English course for the first Degree.

(3) At various stages of the study of English as a second language, the student should be introduced to different varieties of language—narrative, dramatic, scientific, discursive, etc. It is only in the optional under-graduate courses in English that the aesthetic approach should be encouraged. Literary criticism may be introduced at the advanced optional stage. Courses of study in the allied disciplines should be distributed between the special courses for the first and second degree and the research degree.

(4) The student's knowledge of the background of English literature should be taken into account. Thus the texts for non-English medium schools in India should have reading matter partly of Anglo-Indian or Indo-Anglian origin and partly of English origin, but not burdened with local particulars. The first degree student should be enabled to approach literature mainly from the linguistic, aesthetic, psychological and evaluatory angles. He can take up the historical, sociological and philosophic approaches at the post-graduate stage.

(5) English world classics would naturally be the books for adult reading, the approach being mainly psychological.

(6) A content course in English literature for teacher trainers, at least in India, should consist of recent English literature and an elucidation of the general principles of aesthetics. Early modern English literature can be prescribed for study when the present syllabi for university courses include more of modern literature.

In conclusion, I should like to say a word about research in English literature being done overseas. Research work is a good discipline and is valuable, to some extent, for its own sake, irrespective of the results achieved. No work on source materials, except with regard to the Indo-Anglian sector, is possible in India with reference to English literature. But it is possible to think originally on critical problems and first-rate evidence of this fact has already been given by some Indian writers. One can also break new ground in comparative literature and aesthetics and in the teaching of English as a second language. But our Ph.D. theses, based on critical interpretations of writers, forms or periods, tend to be collations of various critical points of view rather than original interpretations. We have to consider whether we can encourage any other kind of contribution to knowledge by recognising for the Ph.D. Degree work which may be described as Restoration if not Research in the strict sense. Should not a creative translation of an Indian or Arabic classic, edited with a critical introduction bringing out its milieu and its literary significance, be considered a contribution meriting a Ph.D. degree in English? There are a number of masterpieces in Indian languages and in Arabic which are locked-up treasures to readers who do not know the language. Only students who have specialised in English language

nd literature are capable of translating these writings adequately into English. One can choose either ancient or modern masterpieces, verse or prose, according to one's own predilection and capacity. The critical abilities which are called forth by any genuine piece of research in English are also involved in an activity of this kind. Wide scholarship is needed to select a work which bears translation and deserves the honour. The critical insight of the student and his capacity or organisation of material is tested in his introduction to the work—explaining its milieu, placing it in its proper context in world literature, evaluating the tradition to which it belongs in its own literary setting and assessing its intrinsic qualities of form and substance. It may be objected that all this will have to be done with regard to a literature other than English. But there are two facts which, if they are given careful consideration, are sure to invalidate this objection. One is that the critical judgement which the student is called upon to exercise is pre-eminently the product of his training as a student of English literature. The students and teachers of English literature were the pioneers of the Indian Literary Renaissance precisely because the students and professors of the Indian languages wandered in the maze of an antiquated rhetoric and lost their way, being incapable of sensing the quickening influences around them. I would say that a recognition of this fact should enable us to regard the critical introduction I spoke of as the legitimate concern of an overseas student of English literature.

Another is that the work of translation brings into play the creative abilities of the student as well. This is even more relevant because, if the translation is successful, it is an achievement of creative expression in English. One does not expect every research student to be an incipient poet or novelist. But it is expected that only students with a creative as well as critical turn of mind will choose to work in this field. There are courses in creative expression in several leading American universities and creative work is, in some cases, accepted as legitimate work in lieu of one or two course units. One can translate prose romances, novels, plays, essays and travelogues, if not poetry. Even moderate success in translation will mean a significant contribution to the library of world literature in English.

All that I contend is that, along with other areas of research work, it should be open to an advanced student of English language and literature to place his critical and creative abilities at the service of such an enterprise and look for suitable recognition from his university. This may not be Research in the strict sense. But it is Restoration—the restoration of a classic to the level of recognition at which it would have easily stood but for the barriers of language. This is as much a contribution to knowledge as any piece of laudable research.

*(Concluded)*

V. K. GOKAK

## MEDITATION ON GROWING PADDY

THE long-dreaming shadows  
Crawl across the sunlight  
Revealing  
Earth-darkness, earth-stillness  
And the reaching roots  
Quiet  
In the rich, coiling densities  
Of soil.

Through the dragging seep of darkened life  
An unformed urge, unchanted creed,  
A flow to light  
Of green-gold souls  
Succoured by the fruitfulness  
Of earth-thought, earth-action—  
By the dark nectars :  
Seed-liquid browns, soil-blood reds  
And deep mineral orange-silvers :  
A mead of love.

ANURAKTA (TONY SCOTT)

## A PRAYER

WIDEN, O consciousness, with the years  
And pass beyond earth's joys and tears.  
Live in soulscapes of infinity  
Beyond our life's intransiency.  
Cast off from thee the ego's gains  
And all the wealth Desire rains.  
Nude of gifts, be whole in God,  
Fulfilled at last, O earthen clod !  
Time here can slay and time here yields  
The riches of the golden fields.  
In actions large or calm repose  
Clasp with joy God's wondrous Rose.  
Like a starry dome of brilliant light  
That smites the darkness of the night,  
O consciousness, expel from thee  
The gloom that bars Infinity.

PRITHWI SINGH NAHA

## TRANSFORMATION

AN atom of the eternal obscurity  
Entreats, "Make of me an atom of the sun !  
Let me be the silver Himalayan height  
Where, immaculate, moon-browed, I shall brood !"

The serpent of the endless darkness prays,  
"Make me the lightning flash that never dies,  
Make me the ocean which is sun-pregnant,  
Let me be the Mother of light, O Light supreme !"

Piercing the tenebrous space shine out and smile  
Isles of stars and planets and the milky way,  
Rapturous flame-winds run across the sky,  
Out of the ashes soars the Phoenix reborn.

Roots of the clay-born plant now in lotus bloom.  
The sun in Hades. And waves beyond waves surge on !

PRITHWINDRA

## IT RAINS...

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
Now surges up a sweet melodious lore;  
And the far wind at last breaks loose from its chains,  
On the sordid earth comes now a heavy downpour.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
At last the long-lingering clouds melt away;  
And swept off from Nature are all pangs and pains,  
A joy unknown casts upon earth its golden ray.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
Over the tremulous leaves the wind-wing sweeps;  
Each drop a friendly note strikes on the window-panes,  
Stirring silence to a music of the deeps.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
It washes clean to set aflame the earth and sky  
That a day may dawn which treasures untold gains;  
Lo, the rainbow rings of wonder multiply.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
It sings of sun and flowers and the hasty flight  
Of hooded thieves whom the secret Day disdains...  
Into the sombre gloom creeps slowly the light.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
The swelling roar of the ecstasied ocean says :  
“Sad notes shall cease with all their burdened strains,  
Hundredfold the earth shall shoot its regal rays.”

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
Across hills and meadows the plashing water flows;  
Sing, O soul, while the dense cloud its thunderous voice maintains,  
Engrave in thy secret shrine the Face that ever glows.

It rains, it rains, it rains...  
It sings of the hour ripe for a new sun to appear;  
The lightning-flashes shall end the dark the sky yet sustains,  
And the gold of the Morn with heavenly hue shall all besmear.

ROBI GUPTA

## A BEING OF ALL-LIE

A BEING of pit-perversions once broke through  
My sacred deep seclusion set in God,  
Lured, snared my faith, into me gathered and grew  
Its tentacles of most pernicious fraud :  
Its fierceness of beast-vengeance, red and blue,  
Flaming in wait to strike its hid dire goad,  
Disrupt my spirits, drive me to eschew  
My brooding balance and calm, with wings abroad.  
A demon falsehood closer and closer drew  
On my drowsy nature, while the Godhead's nod  
Set seal to it, though the core-truth He knew.  
To train in me the humility of sod,  
To wheel me round through the world's labyrinth-view,  
Its ways, selfishness-twisted, ill will-ploughed,  
To rouse my slumber and my soul subdue,  
God through this Demon's dynamite-powered rod,  
This Falsity's Face, my world-sleep blew  
And paved towards my Goal a God-speed road.  
What living Lie it sculptured, Hate it could hew !  
From a Workshop wide of Fabrications flowed  
Lies evil-inspired, words wild, pit-plucked, askew,  
All labelled "God-confirmed" and "God-avowed".  
What ill relentless, grovelling it could spew !  
Men's minds it turned turtle, hearts to false pity thawed.  
No jugglery turns, no peacock feats, no hue  
Of falsehood could my faith in Him corrode.  
"Not My Compassion I from thee withdrew,  
But wheeled on thee My Grace's steam-roller load,  
Obstinate self-will, will-less sloth It slew.  
My own great Love, God's tempest-power shod,  
Panther-fire, vampire-face, masked mad yahoo,  
Doubt-router, treachery-smiter, over thee trod,  
Stooped from My highest Heavens thy heart to woo,  
Digging into thy life's dull dismal mode,  
To mould thy crude will by My Will, imbue  
Thy fervours with My God-dethroning Laud,  
Not thy past's burning, nature's churning rue;  
Faith-firmed to victory thy pathway plod.  
Soon comes My Hour, thy future sweet and new;  
Ceaseless My lightning Love-throbs shall pursue  
Thy child-grown self, all stripped of nature's gaud,  
Blazing thy heart to be My bliss-abode."

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

## THOUGHTS

A CLEAN mirror reflects the whole grace of our body ; the transparent water of the lake shows even the fluttering of the birds that are wheeling overhead. Then how should not the mirrorlike mind of the great-souled Yogis reflect our soul's beauty and how should not their hearts which are transparent like the lake waters show the least flutter of our good and evil thoughts ?

He who can shoot down a bird by merely gazing at its reflection in water is a true marksman. And he who by gazing in the heart's lake at the reflection of our winging thoughts bred from our lower nature can shoot them down is a true Yogi.

\*

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If I can behold Thy feet, then I need not go to see the faces of other gods. If I can live in the Ganges of pure consciousness, then ablution in the earthly Ganges at Prayag, however holy it may be, is not necessary.

But what does this phrase *Thy feet* signify ? I mean those feet of Thine which trampled underfoot the Titan Bali in Hades ; the feet that could dance on the hood of the Hydra.

\*

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Here is the incompellable lordship but also the incomparable humility. Here is the sense of oneness always present but also the many senses to enjoy fully all the diversities.

Where ?

High above the summit of the human body where the upper and the lower hemispheres meet, where unity first broke itself into duality before gradually breaking itself into multiplicity.

GIRDHARLAL

(Translated from the author's Gujerati book 'Uparāma')

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

### THE PROPHEPIC QUALITY

...THE modern world with its rapidity and depth of change requires this approach, yet among its scholars or within its great institutions finds it too seldom. ...We have learned in the past century or so that the past does not repeat itself; we are not inclined, in the manner of certain philosophers, to search for cyclical repetitions, nor like lawyers to stand on precedent. What we must now gain is something more radical and difficult: a realization that the present does not repeat itself. It cannot be extended by analogy nor projected by mathematical measurements so as to make a future in which we shall be easily at home. The new age will be new in every sense; it can be entered into only by an act of the will and the imagination.

This is not the imagination of dreams and reveries; this act is not an intellectual exercise, but the positive comprehension of the world in its full nature and dimension, as it is and as it is becoming. Seeing the world thus with the eye of the prophet (and perhaps also with the eye of the poet), we cannot assume that the future will be made by the play of blind forces, by technological imperatives or scientific compulsions. For we are not merely isolating trends and envisioning more of the same. We are envisioning a process of change in which men—men with their desires and needs and values—play a determining part. What we are at any given moment shapes the moment to be born. And the “we” includes us all—the observer, the detached scholar, along with those who are being observed and studied.

AUGUST HECKSCHER,  
Director, the Twentieth Century Fund.  
(*From Editorial in 'Science', 20 July 1962, Vol.137 No. 3525*)



## A WINDOW ON ITALIAN LITERATURE

'WOMAN COUNTRY', says Browning of Italy :—

Woman country—wooded, not wed,  
Loved all the more by earth's male hands,  
Laid to their hearts instead...

The passionate and the essentially feminine nature of Italy cannot be phrased better. She, indeed, lives more intensely than any other country.

The Italy of Dante captures and holds our imagination by its exaltation of the human passion of love to the heights of the spirit. Dante's religion enabled him to sublimate his passion and 'follow the comedy of the soul's progress towards heavenly wisdom from the *selva oscura* of ignorance and sensuality'. He did not care to portray the actual life of the soul 'with its phantom fears and inexplicable yearnings—all that intricate history which every one of us is compiling day by day'.

The Italy of the Renaissance, of course, concentrated on Man and produced 'the Prince' of Machiavelli who stressed the need for *Craft* in rulers—men being what they are. It is however to the Italy of Pirandello, Svevo, Silone and Moravia that we must go to see 'naked human passions' at work, to see some of our everyday psychological conflicts so clearly portrayed.

The writers of the late XIX century and the early XX century are just 'regional' and 'historical'. *The Viceroy*s of De Roberto and *The Leopard*—'an amalgam of novel and family record'—by Lampedusa are instances in point.

Luigi Pirandello also started as a writer of fiction and short stories rich in local colour. He is however truly 'modern' in his plays where he defines forcibly some of the problems that torment us—'the problems arising from the conflict between life in its Protean flux and the forms in which men desire or find it necessary to constrain it'—in other words, the problem of appearance and reality. All his plays may be looked upon as variations on the same theme. *It is so if you think so*, is for instance a clear statement of his relativism. The play tells us the story of the struggle of a number of persons to know the truth about a certain family—the family of Ponza who is living with his mother-in-law in a fashionable apartment in town but keeps his wife in an apartment on the top floor of an old house on the very outskirts of the same town. Everyone wants to know the truth but nobody can, for everyone is only seeking for a con-

firmation of what he thinks must be the truth. Truth is thus relative and subjective. This however does not mean that Pirandello is cynical. Through the suffering of the individuals who are the centre and through the periphery of busybodies—this is always the spatial pattern of his plays—he conveys two truths. First, our so-called love of truth is only a form of that idle curiosity—Mrs. Grundy's nosiness—which causes so much unhappiness in society. Secondly, you can't believe a thing which you don't wish to; and so life is but a series of deceptions of various kinds, and individuals are protected against society only by illusions.

Italo Svevo's novels explore the depths of human consciousness. The subject of his novels is himself—the hypochondriac uneasy young lad given to unending self-analysis. *Senlita* and *The Confessions of Zeno* are studies of introverts who are useless in practical life but come to accept life as buffoonery and laugh at themselves and their surroundings. Svevo's interest in psychology and his conception of life as irony and introversion make him in many ways a modern novelist—anti-romantic and realistic.

To the common reader Alberto Moravia is a more familiar figure among the modern realists. It is easy to dismiss him, saying that his novels and short stories are all about sex. Yet the stories can and do give us some truth about human relationship which we cannot learn from our everyday life—'the inherent instability of it—the gulf between two human beings that they hope to bridge with an embrace—the false ideals, the false notions each has about the other'. Moravia's chilly objectivity and gift of irony save him from becoming sentimental. And he succeeds in giving us a vivid picture of Rome—crowded, humid, modernized and mechanized but very much alive. *The Woman of Rome* depicts the life of a prostitute called Adriana who finds that she has to choose to become a prostitute because of her poor home life and strongly sensual nature. She has her hours of anguish but she gives up the struggle as useless. *The Conformist* is the story of a sadistic young man who would be normal. The collections of short stories, *Roman Tales*, *Bitter Honeymoon* and *Wayward Wife*, are all studies in eroticism relieved by irony and humour. *Hot Weather Jokes*, *Poor Fish*, *The Go-Between* are perhaps the most humorous in *Roman Tales*. In *Bitter Honeymoon* the title story shows the 'incapacity of man to fathom the sensations, moods, the turns and twists of a woman's inner life'. *A Sick-boy's Winter* in the same collection shows the weakness of the flesh—a weakness at its worst and most pathetic in adolescence. *Crime at the Tennis Club* in *Wayward Wife* illustrates best a passionless eroticism and sadism. *Contact with the Working Class* is certainly the most ironical.

*A Ghost at Noon* which resembles *Conjugal Love* recounts the estrangement between Molteni the script-writer and his wife Emilia. The man loves the woman but he does not see why she despises him after he has sacrificed all his artistic ambitions as a playwright for her material comfort. He imagines that

he has discovered the cause but the truth eludes him and the book vividly presents the agonising self-analysis of the lover.

There is thus a note of sadness—nay, despair in Moravia—caused by the tragi-comedy of existence. But it does not destroy the will to live or the capacity for life. It is challenged, bruised, but not destroyed. This is seen not only in the calmness with which the woman of Rome accepts her fate and the serenity with which she reconciles herself to defeat : ‘Indeed I welcomed it with greater affection as one embraces a foe one cannot defeat; and I felt liberated.’ It is seen also in the resolve of Cesira in *Two Women* : ‘We had begun once again to go forward in our own life—a poor life full of uncertainty and error, but the only life we had to live.’

The novels and stories of Ignazio Silone preach in the words of R.W.B. Lewis ‘the politics of charity’. Silone started as a Communist but became soon disillusioned. *Fontamara* is the story of the life and death of a village which suffers a series of invasions until ultimately it is destroyed by the investigation by the Fascist militia men who make an investigation and find every villager ‘refractory’. *Bread and Wine* and *The Seed Beneath the Snow* trace the career of a young well-to-do Marsican who comes on a mission of political propaganda and organization, feels the futility of politics and dies a true saint confessing to a crime he has not committed. The novels are picaresque in character and in the course of a ruthless self-examination we find him putting himself questions which best outline the theme of the novels. He asks :

‘Is it possible to take part in political life, to devote oneself to the service of a party, and remain sincere ?

‘Has not truth for me become party truth, justice party justice ?

‘Have not party interests ended by deadening all my discrimination between moral values ?

‘By putting politics before everything else, have I not impoverished, sterilized my life ? Has it not meant that I have neglected deeper interests ?’

But Spina is only seeking an answer to these questions in *Bread and Wine*. In the *Seed Beneath the Snow* we get an answer. The answer is true of any political organization. But it is particularly true of a Fascist organization. Here is a Fascist orator speaking to his friend :

‘Your error, my friend, is one of the most fatal and dangerous possible : you take as a point of departure the individual if I may be allowed to call the Devil by his right name. In a totalitarian state one should no longer be allowed to ask whether or not an individual can get on without plasters and poultices but on the contrary whether plasters and poultices can get on without the individual. In the same way...the fact has been established by appropriate police methods that public speaking does not exist for listeners but listeners for public speaking; so, too, the school does not exist for pupils but pupils for the school, and the railway not for travellers but travellers for the railway.’

Only true Christian 'charity' can make for happiness in this political context and in the words of Silone,

'In the sacred history of man on earth it is still, alas ! Good Friday.'

Other works equally profound there are; and among them mention must be made of Riccardo Bacchelli's *The Fire of Milan* which lays bare the truth that those who hold to their ideals must die because they are immovably centred and the world is only for turncoats 'with the life-preserving gene of adaptability', and Mario Soldati's *The Confession* which is an attack on the sadistic principles of Jesuitism. Brancati's *The Old Man with the Top Boots* shows how in a changing world you have to make your wary peace with whatever the victorious party of the moment is. Mario Tobino's *A Visit* is an excellent study of a doctor who finds that his brain cannot accept the fact of death. Tales like *A Family Scene* or *A Goatherd at Luncheon* may be looked upon as 'regional'. They nevertheless remain good psychological studies of individuals.

Here indeed is God's plenty for those who believe in the completeness and sacredness of man and believe as well in 'the sensual reality of a self-contained world'.

V. SETURAMAN

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

(Classified Excerpts)

(Continued)

## SECTION VI — THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

### (iv) DIVINE SOUL

It (the divine soul) would be pure and infinite self-existence in its being; in its becoming it would be a free play of immortal life uninvaded by death and birth and change of body because unclouded by ignorance and not involved in the darkness of our material being. It would be a pure and unlimited consciousness in its energy, poised in an eternal and luminous tranquillity as its foundation, yet able to play freely with forms of knowledge, forms of conscious power, tranquil, unaffected by the stumblings of mental error, and the misprisions of our striving will because it never departs from truth and oneness, never falls from the inherent light and the natural harmony of its divine existence. It would be, finally, a pure and inalienable delight in its eternal self-experience and in Time a free variation of bliss unaffected by our perversions of dislike, hatred, discontent and suffering because undivided in being, un baffled by erring self-will, unperverted by the ignorant stimulus of desire.<sup>1</sup>

It (the divine soul) will itself always be concentrated in oneness in the essence of its being, always manifested in variation in the extension of its being. All that takes form in itself will be the manifested potentialities of the One, the Word or Name vibrating out of the nameless Silence, the form realising the formless essence, the active Will or Power proceeding out of the tranquil Force, the ray of self-cognition gleaming out from the sun of timeless self-awareness, the wave of becoming rising up into shape of self-conscious existence out of the eternally self-conscious Being, the joy of love welling for ever out of the eternal still Delight.<sup>2</sup>

In its relations with its supreme Self, with God, the divine soul will have this sense of the oneness of the transcendent and universal Divine with its own being. It will enjoy that oneness of God with itself in its own individuality and

with its other selves in the universality. Its relations of knowledge will be the play of the divine omniscience, for God is Knowledge, and what is ignorance with us will be there only the holding back of knowledge in the repose of conscious self-awareness so that certain forms of that self-awareness may be brought forward into activity of Light.<sup>3</sup>

...granted all this (the elements of division), still there is a free identification from moment to moment which only the inalienable self-knowledge of the divine soul prevents from fixing itself in an apparently rigid chain of separation and Time-succession such as that in which our consciousness seems to be fixed and chained.<sup>4</sup>

#### (v) THE SOUL

The true soul secret in us—subliminal, we have said, but the word is misleading, for this presence is not situated below the threshold of waking mind, but rather burns in the temple of the inmost heart behind the thick screen of an ignorant mind, life and body, not subliminal but behind the veil,—this veiled psychic entity is the flame of the Godhead always alight within us, inextinguishable even by that dense unconsciousness of any spiritual self within which obscures our outward nature. It is a flame born out of the Divine and, luminous inhabitant of the Ignorance, grows in it till it is able to turn it towards the Knowledge. It is the concealed Witness and Control, the hidden Guide, the Daemon of Socrates, the inner light or inner voice of the mystic. It is that which endures and is imperishable in us from birth to birth, untouched by death, decay or corruption, an indestructible spark of the Divine. Not the unborn self or Atman, for the self even in presiding over the existence of the individual is aware always of its universality and transcendence, it is yet its deputy in the forms of Nature, the individual soul, *caitya puruṣa*, supporting mind, life and body, standing behind the mental, the vital, the subtle-physical being in us and watching and profiting by their development and experience.<sup>5</sup>

There is indeed a soul-personality, representative of this (psychic) entity, already built up within us, which puts forward a fine psychic element in our natural being : but this finer factor in our normal make-up is not yet dominant and has only a limited action. Our soul is not the overt guide and master of our thought and acts ; it has to rely on the mental, vital, physical instruments for self-expression and is constantly overpowered by our mind and life-force : but if once it can succeed in remaining in constant communion with its own larger occult reality,—and this can only happen when we go deep into our subliminal parts,—it is no longer dependent, it can become powerful and sovereign, armed with an intrinsic spiritual perception of the truth of things

and a spontaneous discernment which separates that truth from the falsehood of the Ignorance and Inconscience, distinguishes the divine and the undivine in the manifestation and can be the luminous leader of our other parts of nature. It is indeed when this happens that there can be the turning-point towards an integral transformation and an integral knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

...for as in us, so in the atom, the metal, the plant, in every form of material Nature, in every energy of material Nature, there is, we know, a secret soul, a secret will, a secret intelligence at work, other than the mute self-oblivious form, the Conscient—conscient even in unconscious things—of the Upanishad, without whose presence and informing conscious-force or Tapas no work of Nature could be done.<sup>7</sup>

...the growth of the soul is growth out of darkness into light, out of falsehood into truth, out of suffering into its own supreme and universal Ananda. The soul's perception of good and evil may not coincide with the mind's artificial standards, but it has a deeper sense, a sure discrimination of what points to the higher Light and what points away from it.<sup>8</sup>

In ourselves, behind our surface natural being, there is a soul, an inner mind, an inner life-part which can open to these heights as well as to the occult spirit within us, and this double opening is the secret of a new evolution ; by that breaking of lids and walls and boundaries the consciousness rises to a greater ascent and a larger integration which, as the evolution of mind has mentalised, so will by this new evolution spiritualise all the powers of our nature.<sup>9</sup>

#### (VI) SOUL-CONSCIOUSNESS

When we get back to soul-consciousness the obstacles to unity lessen and finally cease to exist altogether. The soul can in its consciousness identify itself with other souls, can contain them and enter into and be contained by them, can realise its unity with them ; and this can take place, not in a featureless and indistinguishable sleep, not in a Nirvana in which all distinctions and individualities of soul and mind and body are lost, but in a perfect waking which observes and takes account of all distinctions but exceeds them.<sup>10</sup>

*(To be continued)*

*Compiled by* NATHANIEL PEARSON

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## RAJA RAMMOHUN : FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

RAJA Rammohun Roy was the spirit of freedom incarnate. His was a life that knew no fear; he commanded a patience that knew no despair. His was the high resolve to brave all the storms of life, to turn all curses of destiny into blessings. Verily he is one of those great souls who are hooted in their own age and supremely honoured in the next. Equal-minded towards scorn and praise, he fought his battles all alone. His life-history is a message of freedom and a gospel of luminous works.

A versatile genius was he. He was at home in Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, English, French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. No hyperbole, he could pass with the utmost ease from one language to another. As his learning was varied and profound, even so his achievements were vast and wonderful.

It was the Raja who inaugurated the Modern Age in this great sub-continent. His personality was at once many-sided and perfectly balanced. By virtue of his freedom of spirit he dynamised our national being. He was the pioneer path-maker who removed teeming obstacles that impeded our steady progress within and without at every step. It was he who for the first time understood the true significance of the Modern Age. He fully realised the truth that an isolated independence can never be the ideal of human civilisation. No sphere of our national existence he left untouched. The spirit of self-assertion in the light of the all-pervading Brahman was his slogan. Right from his adolescence he sacrificed his life, his everything, to bring to the fore the true gems of India's civilisation which were scattered, unnoticed and uncared for. He gave the death-blow to the idolatry of our ancestral faith. Also he clearly observed that blind superstition was reigning supreme in Hindu society. Naturally this rebel soul became a cause of worry to his venerable father. Soon his father could not help asking the son to quit his house. The proud son did not listen to his father. He undertook a fateful journey, crossed the Himalayas and found himself on the Tibetan soil to learn the significance of Buddhism. Strangely enough, here too he had to face the same problem of idolatry. With his indomitable will he criticised it downright. Soon his life fell under the shadow of a grave danger. But for some kind-hearted Tibetan ladies he would have been put to death by the Lama-worshippers. Throwing dust in the eyes of his foes he returned home safe.

Rammohun had three kinds of friends : friends who wanted to honour themselves by association with the Raja, so distinguished a personality; friends who frequented his residence in season and out of season and have his advice and

get their desires fulfilled; and the rare ones who came to sympathise with him and his highly elevating principles.

The Raja had already become an object of contempt in his country for his anti-idolatry attitude. And when he opened the "Brahma Sabha" ("The Theistic Association") and brought about the anti-Sutee agitation his antagonists simply let loose the full flood of abuse on him. But history bears witness to the fact how Rammohun, the hero of heroes, with the help of Lord Bentinck came out successful in abolishing the dreadful custom of Hindu widows burning willy-nilly on the funeral pyres of their husbands.

It was quite natural that the misery and degradation of women in Bengal should have appealed strongly to the ever-sympathetic heart of the Raja. Both his genuine sympathy and high admiration for the women of Bengal were striking :

"Women are in general inferior to man in bodily strength and energy; consequently, the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable of acquiring those merits... You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised; for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency in point of resolution."

Tagore's admiration for Rammohun is unique. He describes the Raja as 'a Universal Man.' The world-renowned scholar Max Muller addressed Rammohun Roy as the Father of Comparative Religion. Vivekananda calls him 'the first man of the new regenerate India.' "Rammohun Roy," says Sri Aurobindo, "was a great man in the first rank of active genius who set flowing a stream of tendencies which transformed our national life."

The politician and the philanthropist in the Raja too deserve ample praise :

"If religion is from God, is politics from the Devil?"

"The true way of serving God is to do good to man."

The Raja was almost consumed with the desire to visit Europe. After his arrival in England he met William Roscoe, the historian of the Medicis, Jeremy Bentham, the Utilitarian philosopher. Roscoe is reported to have observed after seeing him, "Deeply grateful am I to God for keeping me alive to witness this blessed day." Bentham addressed him as his "intimately admired and dearly beloved collaborator in the service of mankind."

The Raja had an intense longing to visit America. America too sincerely wanted him. Dr. Kircland, ex-President of Harvard University, exclaimed : "The Raja was an object of lively interest in America and he was expected there with the greatest anxiety."

Rammohun had cherished a great admiration for France. Hence he did not fail to visit that country. According to him, France is a "country so favoured by Nature and richly adorned by the cultivation of the arts and sciences and, above all, blessed by the possession of a free constitution." Napoleon had conquered his heart even when he was in his teens. The French King, Louis Phillippe, invited him to dinner more than once.

It was at Bristol that he breathed his last on May 27, 1833. His long Home in Arno's vale has been a hallowed place both for his eastern and western admirers. Rammohun's ideas were far ahead of his age, but by virtue of his tremendous toil in the cause of regenerating India he will live for ever.

Finally, let me conclude this homage of mine with the glowing tribute paid to him by Mary Carpenter, the author of *The Last Days in England of Raja Rammohun Roy* :

Thy Nation sat in darkness, for the night  
 Of pagan gloom was o'er it,—Thou wast born  
 Midst superstition's ignorance forlorn :  
 Yet in thy breast there glowed a heavenly light  
 Of purest truth and love, and to thy sight  
 Appeared the day-star of approaching morn."

CHINMOY

## I LOVE TO LIVE ON...

SOUNDS from all around... from home, from outside, from the street, from everywhere—sounds, sounds, sounds...

A brief stillness, that was only at dead of night...

Then no sooner did the first faint gleam break in the east than began the surge of sounds...

Bang ! someone, half-asleep, unbolts the main door...the maid comes in for work...The boy in the neighbouring house, an examinee, starts reading aloud even before dawn...and the girl, downstairs, a beginner in music, shouting the notes... the Government milk-van rushes by shaking the locality...along the near-by street the first tram speeds clattering away... Till now the sounds are distinct... In a short time they will melt into a swelling sea of sounds...

On the shore of this sea of sounds we, civilised people, live...

Sound and speed...speed and sound, like light and shade, have merged in one in our mind ...Unthinkable to us is soundless speed... Unknown to today's man is silence...he dreads it...

Out for a stroll in the stillness of nature, he carries with him his radio... carries his transistor-set slung from his shoulder... Sitting in the solitude of a forest, he turns round the button and draws to himself the bustle and clamour of the cities of the world...

Therein is his joy ! And away fly the lonely forest's *doels* and *papiyas* !<sup>1</sup>

(2)

This is the civilised man's sound-world...his speed-world...

But this sound is not continuous, innumerable breaks mar its rhythm... this speed is not ever-moving ; as an asthmatic patient, weighed down by its own movement, it falls exhausted.

Have you observed in the city an abrupt halt of this speed at midnight like a sickly, fatigued beggar fallen asleep on the footpath ?

(3)

The wheels of continuous motion make no sound...they know no fatigue, no interruption, they are ever on the move in their own joy...

<sup>1</sup> *Doels* and *Papiyas* are song-birds of Bengal.

Like a lute set to tune, like the poetry of a master-poet, the motion of its wheels is rhythmized and tuned...

Have you seen the manner of its motion ? perceived the soundlessness of its moving wheels ?

Unbolt the door...come along with me...

Do not speak, the *doel* is whistling...

(4)

Do you see in front the rows of dry *palās* trees ? Not a leaf, not a flower, the sun-burnt branches gone black... Come closer and look all over its body ; in its trunk , in every branch, in every knot something from within seems to be heaving up from moment to moment...

Within this dry immobile tree is going on an unceasing movement... going on a ceaseless creation...rhythmic and silent...no noise, no hurry and bustle ; ceaseless and unbroken goes on the work, the most wonderful work in the universe...the work of bringing forth blossoms and from blossoms, fruits...

Today you see before you the dry branches of the *palās* tree. A few days more, and you will see them ablaze with a thousand lamps putting forth blood-red tongues of flame...

No magic can achieve this...

Air, light, sap from the earth, with these goes on the effort from moment to moment, a tremendous effort...without sound, without strain...with such ease that there seems to be no labour in it...so calm that there seems to be no movement in it...

(5)

From time to time, coming away from the tumult of the city, I sit down beneath a silent tree...and try to see beneath its dry coating the silent stream of life flowing on...the sound of its ripples regales my ears...

I try to feel how, within dry branches, life goes on manifesting itself all the time in leaves, buds, blossoms, fruit, perfume, sweetness...

For a moment, in my own body I feel a throb of the great mystery...

Amid innumerable sorrows it is that one moment when consciousness becomes all Bliss...

And I love to live on...

NRIPENDRAKRISHNA CHATTOPADHYAYA

(Translated by Tinkari Mitra from the original Bengali in "Purodha")

## BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

**Purodha** (Separately in Hindi and Bengali), Youth-Quarterly, published by Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry - 2. Yearly Subscription either language : Rs. 5, Each Issue Rs. 1.25.

Children's is a world of wonder and mystery, a world of great hopes and incalculable scope for progress. An adventure into it is as fascinating as a probe into fairyland and as thrilling as a conquest of the inviolate mountain snow-peaks. With the spirit of such an adventure, there now enters into the youth-arena a group of enthusiastic young men with their loins girded and with their equipage of a New Light that is the one guiding Torch held up by the Twin-Avatars of the Age, Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

The "façade" illustration of this new ideal magazine symbolises the determination of the enlightened mind that guides the strong hand wielding the Flaming Torch.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad extending his hearty sympathies for the objects underlying this magazine says, "The importance of a magazine does not depend upon its form and appearance, but it is in the greatness of its thought and purpose that lies the greatness of the magazine."

This thought and purpose is displayed in the beginning of the magazine in these nutshell words of Sri Aurobindo : "The children should be helped to grow up into straightforward, frank, upright, and honourable human beings ready to develop into divine nature."

Although some of the leading and important features of this Quarterly which is published separately in Hindi and Bengali are common to both, each issue preserves a separate atmosphere and trend of language, with many independent features. We find behind the publication of this magazine a genuine ardour for expounding great cultural and spiritual values brought within the bounded reach of the youth-mind and youth-heart, so that without straining their growing world of imagination they may be able to relish easily digestible thought-food in simple yet luminous, elevated yet picturesque presentation.

This magazine, appearing on the birthday of Sri Aurobindo and India's Day of Independence, comes in to fulfil a great need and, in a manner fitting and equal to the task, build a bridge over the gap that lay untackled. It seeks to offer very interesting material under varying aspects, from prayer and poetry to play and physical education of all kinds, from stories of saints to magic

tricks, from historical incidents, stories, hunting, moral and spiritual truths to mental gymnastics and amusements through words, figures and paper-play.

In the first issue we come across such writer-names as Sri Aurobindo, The Mother, Lao-Tse, Nolini Kanta Gupta, Sumitranandan Pant, Ambalal Purani, Virendra Kumar Jain, Padma Shamsheer, Sumitra Kumari Sinha, Arsi Prasad Singh, N. Sethuraman, Ravindra, Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya, Narayan Prasad "Bindu", Asha Khanna, Jyotsna Milan, Nirodbaran, Sanat Banerjee, Pashupati Bhattacharya, Nishikanta, Ranjit Sarkar, Promod Kumar Chatterjee, Prithwindra Nath Mukherjee, Anuruddha Sarkar, etc., etc.

In an attractive get-up, the magazine contains coloured and plain pictures, illustrations and paintings which enhance its beauty. We wish the magazine God-speed and recommend it for any house, club, library or individual who wants to profit by serving the great cause of helping groping humanity.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

**Uttara Gita**, translated into Tamil by *S. Rajagopala Sastru* and into English by *Sri Subramaniam*. Published by Sri Rama Kosha Sthanam, 54 Apparswami Kovil Street, Madras 4. P. 119, Price Rs. 1.50.

Though the Uttara Gita claims to be a supplement to the Bhagavad Gita, purporting to be a subsequent discourse between Arjuna and Sri Krishna, we do not find it included in the existing recensions of the Mahabharata. The nature of the Teaching of this Gita—severely adwaitic in character—is also at variance with the all-inclusive, synthetic spirit that breathes in the Utterance of the Lord on the typical battle-scene of Kurukshetra. However, the place of this Uttara Gita in the philosophical lore of the land has been assured, as no less a person than Gaudapada, the Parama Guru of Acharya Shankara, has provided it with a lucid commentary. The present edition contains this commentary with text in Sanskrit, a crisp word-to-word rendering into Tamil and a neat paraphrase into English.

There are in all 119 verses divided into three chapters. In the first chapter, answering to the question of Arjuna as to how Brahman is to be realised for one's liberation, Sri Krishna describes the way of meditating on Brahman in the Heart. There are indeed more than one way of doing it and these verses throw them into the right focus :

'In the midst of the Space in the heart think of the atman and in the midst of the atman conceive of Space. Conceiving of the atman as identical with the Chidakasha, think of nothing else (as different from the atman). (10)

'See Brahman without parts, immanent, at all times in the outer space...and in particular at the tip of the nose where the outgoing breath

dissolves in space. Watching the breath outward flowing through both the nostrils, and locating the point where it disappears, one should hold the mind there and meditate on Ishwara' (11-12).

And when, as a result of meditation, "that which is to be known is seen seated in the heart" one arrives at a state of peace *in the body* and there is "no more need of yoga or *dhāraṇā*" (16). Knowledge now becomes a bar. When the river is crossed what use is there of the boat ? So too once you attain to the state of the awareness of Fullness of the Atman, of what avail is learning derived from books ? It is not merely unnecessary, but under certain conditions, even restrictive. Thus freed, one realises Brahman as the underlying essence of All ; as oil in the sesamum seed, as ghee in the milk, as smell inside the flower, like fire in fuel, shines the Atman. This self, though all-pervasive, is stationed at the centre of the body in the physical, stationed in the centre of the mind in the mental extension (30). Speaking of the mind, the Gita emphasises that though He is the core of all minds, He does not function through the mind ; in fact He awakens all minds.

In answer to another question : All letters with their *mātrās* merge into the *bindu*, the *bindu* penetrates into the *nāda* ; into what does the *nāda* merge ? (41), the striking answer is given :

'Inside *nāda* which is the supreme state of the *anāhata* sound, is hidden the self-luminous ; in that luminosity the mind is hidden ; and where that mind dissolves there is the Supreme station of Vishnu.'

The second chapter describes the various Nadis (said to be 72,000 in number) in the body and stresses the importance of the Sushumna, the path of the coiled energy, Kundalini Shakti. She is the creative energy of Brahman and what is in the *aṇḍa* is in the *pinḍa* as well, the macrocosm is in the microcosm. A process is described by which the macrocosm is superimposed on the microcosmic body and through Brahman in the heart the Universal and the Transcendent are realised.

In a remarkable passage describing how the body is to be related to the Universe, the text says :

'Below the foot is to be known as Atala loka, the foot as Vitala, the ankle as Nitala, the shanks as Sutala ; the knee is Mahatala and the thighs Rasatala and the hip Talatala ; thus have been signified the seven nether worlds.

The nether world below the navel is the fearful fire of hell called Mahapatala,...the region of navel is Bhuloka, the stomach is Bhuvarloka ; the heart is Svargaloka.... The Yogi should see these worlds in his heart...



In the heart is established the Maharloka, in the neck Janaloka, in the middle of the eyebrows the Tapaloka and in the head the Satyaloka.'

The correspondence borne by this system to the classification of the several planes of existence and their field of operation in the human body by Sri Aurobindo is too obvious to be missed.

Below the feet is the Inconscient with its deepening layers of obscurity. Bhuloka, the Earth, the Physical, is organised around the Muladhara, below the navel; Bhuvanloka, the Antariksha, the Life or Vital above the navel, covers the region of the stomach; and Svar, the purer expanses of the Mental and Maharloka, the luminous world of the Supermental Gnosis, are based on the Heart, the central core of the human body. In the neck which is the centre of creative expression is the locus of Janaloka, the world of creative Delight; in the forehead, the centre of dynamic vision and will, is the Tapaloka, the world of Consciousness-Power; and in the head, the highest centre of man, lies the highest world of Existence, the world of Sat, the world of Ultimate Truth, Satyaloka.

Tracing the course of the Dhyana Yoga towards the attainment of pure Brahman, the author states :

'Prithwi (Earth) merges in Water, Water is absorbed by Fire; Fire devoured by Air. The Air is quaffed by the Akasa and Akasa by the Mind. The Mind dissolves in Buddhi, Buddhi in Ahankara and Ahankara in Chitta. When the Ahankara is thus eliminated, there is the state of what is called *Unnambhāva*, where there is no sense of duality. Chitta merges in Jiva and Jiva rests in the Paramatman.'

The final and third chapter calls upon the awakened man to abandon the vain pursuit of book-knowledge, entanglement in the web of learning, Shastra-jala, preoccupation with pilgrimages and ritual, and take to single-minded meditation on the Divine. In a memorable verse it declares :

'To the twice-born God is in Agni; to those who meditate God is in the heart; to those of little intelligence God is in images; and to those of equal vision God is everywhere. (III.7)'

M.P. PANDIT

# 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

#### 1

IN talking of poetry from the subtle physical plane we took care to point out that the apparent lowest position of this plane in the hierarchy of worlds did not preclude its producing the greatest poetry. The excellence of poetry as such does not depend on the position of a plane : it depends on the intensity of vision and word and rhythm and on the faithfulness with which we transmit this intensity from whatever source.

Today, before proceeding to the next plane, I may point out that even mystical and spiritual poetry does not need to be from planes which seem proper to mysticism and spirituality : the Psychic and the Overhead. If there is a turn towards the Infinite, the Eternal, the Divine by a poet drawing upon any source for his inspiration, spiritual poetry will break forth. If one goes below the surface of things into the inner consciousness, mystic poetry will emerge with its subtleties and shadows from any level. No doubt, the Psychic will yield the sweetest secrets of the spiritual and the mystic, and the Overhead the amplest. But genuine stuff of intense mystic or spiritual power is possible to every plane.

The poets of the Rigveda drew their inspiration from the Overhead—often the highest Overhead from where the Mantra in its most divine form hails. But you must be aware that many Indian interpreters have had a very curious

attitude to them. The Rigveda has been regarded as a sacred book and its hymn-makers as Rishis—that is, seers and hearers of Truth. Yet these seers and hearers of Truth have been taken to be concerned all the time with material things. A ritual of sacrificial prayer to mighty supra-terrestrial Gods for the sake of cattle and gold and children and intoxicating drinks and the defeat of enemies : this is the essence of the Rigveda for Sayana and his school. Sri Aurobindo has swept away all this nonsense as well as the nonsense of the European scholars who look on the Rishis as mostly a crew of semi-barbaric Aryan priests deifying natural objects like the sun, moon, sky, water, fire and invoking them for physical benefits and for victory over Dravidian aborigines. Sri Aurobindo has proved the hymns to be the speech of an occult tradition and experience which veils its spirituality and mysticism with symbols that convey their true meaning only to the initiate. But, mark you, the symbols are such that the most external objects seem to attract the Rishis—objects that would bulk in the mind of a poet writing from the subtle physical plane. If there had been less externality in the symbolism, Sayana's interpretation would have been impossible.

In a letter to me, dated 20th October 1936, Sri Aurobindo wrote : "The Vedic times were an age in which men lived in the material consciousness as did the heroes of Homer. The Rishis were the mystics of the time and took the form of their symbolic images from the material life around them." What are we to conclude from this ? We may be sure of one thing : the Vedic poets, if they had not been mystics, would have written with the subtle physical plane as their common poise of expressive consciousness. From this we may hazard the guess that when the luminosity of the Overhead heights which Sri Aurobindo has found in them became vocal in their poetry it took up at times the same plane and transmuted its turns and tones into channels of revelation from those heights. We may also declare that if the Overmind luminosity had not worked directly in the mystics of the Vedic times, their mystical poetry itself would have grandly expressed occult realities with the inspiration of nothing else than the subtle physical plane, though certainly in a style different from Chaucer's or Homer's.

Just as mysticism can throb out from the subtle physical, so too it can erupt from the next plane, the vital. One of the literary prodigies of our Ashram, Nishikanta, is in his Bengali work a mystic poet *par excellence* of the vital, and in the boldness of his imagination he can match any Vedic seer just as in pure poetic quality he is not to be outdone by any Vishwamitra or Vasishtha. But his astounding apocalypses are not Overhead like theirs. Although these apocalypses pass over the head of many a reader they do not come directly from over the head of Nishikanta himself. When the Gods speak through him, it is through his beatific belly. Don't fancy that because you have to lower your eyes a little in looking at this belly, you can afford to look down on it.

The poetry that comes from this particular paunch and knocks you out by a blow on your solar plexus is not only wonderful mysticism but a most original and powerful literary creation. In sheer quality if not yet in quantity and in organised universality it can bump with absolute right against the creation by that most famous of belly-bards who is also the world's greatest poetic dramatist, Shakespeare !

We have already compared Shakespeare's speech of the Life Force with Chaucer's of the subtle physical and, *en passant*, with Dryden's of the poetic intelligence, but not with the last-named at its best, nor with the best the poetic intelligence itself is capable of. A time was when Shakespeare himself was hailed as a mighty thinker, a paragon of the poetic intelligence, because again and again he starts reflecting on things : the quotable passages in his work, serving as appropriate "messages" for life's various occasions, impressed the critics with what came to be called Shakespeare's "myriad mind". And with extreme reverence he was spoken of not as a bard but as The Bard. Perhaps the one man who brought about a reversal of the common verdict on him as a thinker is that other celebrated name in the English theatre—G. Bernard Shaw.

Not that Shaw can stand anywhere near Shakespeare as a creator of character or as a maker of imaginative literature. I would call him more playwright than dramatist, thus distinguishing his versatile cleverness and effective constructiveness from Shakespeare's kaleidoscopic vision and organic *élan*. But Shaw's plays and Shaw's personal criticism threw into clear relief Shakespeare's lack of intellectuality. Picking up the title "The Bard", Shaw coined the contemptuous term "Bardolatry" to designate the blind worship accorded to Shakespeare. Of course, Shaw never denied that the Elizabethan dramatist was a lord of language and a creator of figures charged with overabundant vitality. But Shakespeare's deficiency in thought as such was hammered into Bardolaters by Shaw through a piece of jocular impudence. He said in effect : "With the possible exception of Homer and Walter Scott, there is no writer to whom I feel so immeasurably superior in intellect as to Shakespeare."

Instead of accepting some amount of truth in the statement while deprecating its cheekiness, Englishmen fell upon Shaw much more angrily than they had done when he had flouted their conventional religious notions about God. They exclaimed : "This fellow was bad enough when he criticised Jehovah and his thunder and brimstone, but Blake and others had done similar things and in any case we can't exactly say that God is an Englishman. Nobody has uttered a cross word about Old Shakespeare, our English Shakespeare. This Irish heretic is going too far !"

We may smile at such a reaction as we may smile at Shaw's own exaggeration of Shakespeare's intellectual inferiority to him. But we must try to understand it no less than the provocative heresy. Shakespeare is both Godlike in his own self and Godlike in relation to the Englishman. Sri Aurobindo has

remarked : "More than any other poet Shakespeare has accomplished the legendary feat of the impetuous sage Viswamitra." You may recall that Viswamitra, in a fit of rage against Indra, created a rival universe. Well, the English dramatist has done something of the same sort. To quote Sri Aurobindo again : "His power of vision has created a Shakespearian world of his own." Not only that; this world is in a sense superior to the world which the Bible makes God create in seven days : it is, as Sri Aurobindo says, "a world of the wonder and free power of life and not of its mere external realities, where what is here dulled and hampered finds a greater enlarged play of beauty, curiosity and amplitude." Of course, this world of the wonder and power of life derives from the plane of the Life Force which no less than the material plane is the work of the Divine. But the average Englishman cannot be expected to look into the hierarchy of planes : to him the earth is the most concrete, almost the only, reality and Shakespeare seems to have made a more vibrant, more life-thrilled universe where even clowns have genius just as in the novels of Balzac even cooks have it. Shakespeare and Balzac are colossal creators—equal in so far as the putting forth of living beings in a complicated pattern of interrelations is concerned. But while every Frenchman, though excited about Balzac's creativity, does not feel entirely happy over this novelist's multifarious "Comédie Humaine", every Englishman is carried off his feet by Shakespeare's tragicomic-melodramatic pageant of humanity. And there is a sound reason for it.

The typical Frenchman is a blend of warm sentiment and cool intellect : a clear-seeing, accurately organising idea-force is an important part of his nature side by side with emotional enthusiasm and aesthetic feeling. So Balzac does not answer the whole or even the central need of his being. The typical Englishman in the matter of coolness is not guided by intellect but by a commonsense hold on solid earth: his extravert disposition gives him a kind of balance. In the matter of warmth, what leads him is not so much the heart's sentiment as some dynamic expansive life-instinct. And as the characteristic of instinct is to be at the same time forceful and practical, swift-flashing and concretely effective, it stands in very good relation to the extravert disposition, and even naturally produces it out of itself, so that we may consider the life-instinct the central thing in the Englishman. You must have recognised in the two elements the face of Chaucer and the face of Shakespeare and realised that Shakespeare can take up Chaucer into himself and serve as the one sufficient face. The life-instinct can even lose itself in externalities as it does often enough in much of Elizabethan drama outside Shakespeare. Shakespeare keeps the extravert disposition in its right place and sits in the life-core to create. He is the Englishman in the finest essence and because it is he who makes the Englishman's essence the Englishman has always the potentiality of a supreme poetry behind the rather stolid appearance of John Bull. But on the average it is not the poetic potentiality that distinguishes the Shakespearian Englishman : it is the sovereign

life-instinct. This sovereign life-instinct has helped him to create the greatest empire the world has known and to be a success in various spheres of activity not by a planned methodical manoeuvre but by a subtle energetic tact of things and of movements—a masterful muddling-through which produces, to the producer's own surprise, admirable structures by an almost magically thoughtless sweeping together of a multitude of striking separate parts : in short, as Shakespeare himself seems to build up his dramas. So Shakespeare answers almost the whole, at least the central, need of the Englishman's being, and any attack on him is tantamount to an attack on Englishness itself, and on Englishness too as seen in its aspect of Godhead.

Naturally, Shaw's "debunking" of the Bard was much resented, and there is indeed a touch of wrong-headedness in the importance Shaw attached to what he called the realistic and intellectual drama, the drama of social problems and their discussion. Ibsen and Strindberg were to Shaw more momentous dramatists than Shakespeare because they challenged conventional values and dealt with situations that could occur in contemporary life, whereas Shakespeare was a romanticist. The drama of ideas applied to problems of society was Shaw's ideal, and he exemplified in his own long string of plays what exactly he meant by it, plays in which every character—be it man, woman or child—is G.B.S. himself talking brainily in various voices. Extremely stimulating these plays are, for the brain finding tongue in them is an extremely brilliant one. But they have neither the imaginative adventurousness nor the verbal splendour nor the bursting vitality of the Shakespearian drama. A good deal of Shaw's braininess is rather cocky, too self-confident, as if he alone knew what was wrong with the world. There is also a fine and acute humbug-proof element in his cleverness, and this is excellent and salubrious, but the other thing—the "*Sab-jāntā*" attitude—is somewhat jading. The Bardolaters would be pleased to hear of a little passage of arms between Shaw's cockiness and his own wife's quiet irony. Once he was holding forth to a company of friends on the comparative merits of man's mind and woman's. The argument had arisen from a remark of his wife's. At the end of a coruscating monologue Shaw said that male judgment was always superior to female judgment. "Of course," Mrs. Shaw coolly replied, "after all, you married me and I you." It was the one time the old batterer was silenced. As Shakespeare's Hamlet would have put it : the engineer was hoist with his own petard.

It is doubtful whether Ibsen and Strindberg will last as long as Shakespeare: it is certain that Shakespeare will outlast Shaw. But Shaw is perfectly correct in thinking himself superior to Shakespeare in intellectuality. And this is not because Shakespeare is a poet and intellectuality has no place in poetry. The point is whether he has any intellectuality to leave out of his poetry. Men with intellects can be intense poets if they know how to put into their poems not their intellectuality but the passion of thought that often goes with it. Lucretius



Who would fardels bear  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life ?

with Wordsworth's

The heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world.

Wordsworth is speaking, as it were, from the grey cells : they are changing the urgencies of an oppressed existence to philosophic values. Shakespeare is speaking from his guts : they stir the brain only to render coherent the being's instinctive shout of recoil and rebellion. Again, Hamlet talks of passing away from the turmoil of life :

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil...

A quiver of the entrails is felt in the midst of the idea. How different is the accent of Keats talking of dying away with the nightingale's song a final music falling on deaf ears :

To thy high requiem become a sod.

Once more take Hamlet on release from the obstructive tangibilities of earth-existence by a dissolution of the body :

O that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew !

Respond now to Shelley's utterance of the thought of reaching safety from life's ravage :

From the world's bitter wind  
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.

Perhaps we can mark the most sustained distinction between the creative Life Force and the creative Intelligence in their intensities of reflection if we first tune in to two soliloquies from Shakespeare and then get the wave-length of a passage from Milton. Hamlet's most celebrated speech, out of which we have already detached that verse about "this mortal coil", contains the lines :

To die, to sleep;  
To sleep : perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come



When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
 Must give us pause. There's the respect,  
 That makes calamity of so long life...  
 The undiscovered country from whose bourn  
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of !  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought...

A vivid speech on death and after-life occurs also in another play : a character named Claudio is speaking :

Ay, but to die and go we know not where;  
 To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;  
 This sensible warm motion to become  
 A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
 In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;  
 To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,  
 And blown with restless violence round about  
 The pendant world.

Keep the typical turns and vibrations of these two speeches in your mind and appreciate their difference from those in the oration of Belial, one of Satan's followers, in *Paradise Lost* :

Our final hope  
 Is flat despair; we must exasperate  
 The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
 And that must end us; that must be our cure,  
 To be no more. Sad cure ! for who would lose,  
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity,  
 To perish rather, swallowed up and lost  
 In the wide womb of uncreated Night,  
 Devoid of sense and motion ?

## 2

Apropos of Shakespeare's repeated victorious seizure of the intuitive word with the leap of the *élan vital* in a vast variety of moods and situations, we may touch on a problem that has long vexed his scholars : "Was Shakespeare the real author of the dramas that now pass under his name ?" I believe that the solution can be found if we keep steadily our sense of this *élan vital* that is the creator of those dramas.

Let me sketch to you the problem in general terms and introduce the most notable name put up as a rival. We are told : "Shakespeare was comparatively an uneducated man. He had little Latin, less Greek and not much schooling even in his own language. He was also a man who never travelled abroad. At home he had no special occasion to be familiar with the higher circles of society. How then are we to explain not only the quality of supreme literature in his dramas but also their teeming versatile learning ? When we look around in the Elizabethan world there is just the man there who has a very powerful expressive genius, a consummate education and scholarship, a familiarity with all kinds of superior vocations : Francis Bacon. He is the author of the *Essays*, *The Advancement of Learning*, *Novum Organum* and several other works. He was Baron Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, parliamentarian and statesman, Lord Chancellor in Elizabeth's Government. If Shakespeare the man as we know him is unlikely to be the author of such dramas as are before us, nobody can be a better claimant to their authorship than this outstanding literary figure of the times."

Against this argument we have only to drag Bernard Shaw in. Not that Shaw has written on behalf of Shakespeare as the author of the dramas. But Shaw in his own way is precisely what Shakespeare could have been. Shaw has himself said that he had no efficient school-education, leave aside a university degree. In fact, when he was once invited to lecture at Oxford he said that the best suggestion he could make was the total demolition of the University and the use of the building-stones for a better purpose. Without academic training Shaw has shone out in the field of letters. Furthermore, he has not only written plays which are the delight of all acute minds : he has expressed himself scintillatingly as well as learnedly on an abundance of subjects. Playwright, dramatic critic, judge of the fine arts, authority on Socialism : all these roles he has filled with credit. He has also shown keen insight into the medical psychology, assimilated with a fine force biological science into his world-message, and even discoursed in a most competent vein on Education itself. Why should we refuse to Shakespeare a possibility that Shaw has proved under our very noses ? We know that Shakespeare had long experience of stage-life, and this could easily put him into contact with fellow-craftsmen acquainted with Classical plays and themes. The same stage-life could also make him rub shoulders with

money-grubbers and their calculating clerks who were haunting theatre-land from traffic with them he could pick up all sorts of legal points and write knowingly about them. In addition, he was an Elizabethan in the heart of London where the very air was astir with thoughts of colonial adventure, where all eyes were coloured by the constant processions of picturesque heroes and glittering courtiers, where every head was humming with diplomatic questions raised by unsettled thrones and touch-and-go balances of power in a Europe torn between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, well-established Spain and ambitious England. There was every opportunity for him to get an understanding of military science and court-life and political practice. Given an all-absorbing curiosity and an extraordinary genius, both of which any man could be born with if the Gods are kind to him, Shakespeare could undoubtedly develop into what the dramas prove their author to be. There is absolutely no inherent impossibility in his penning them.

On the other hand, there are three strong points against Bacon. He is well known to have felt extremely apprehensive about the lasting value of English : he wished all his works to be written in Latin. How then could he have spent years creating masterpieces in a tongue he underrated and even half-despised ? A more decisive and perhaps the strongest point is the difference of psychological make-up and of style-vibration. Shakespeare is, as we have seen, termed myriad-minded : he wrote like a book-worm, a lawyer, a commander-in-chief, a courtier, a politician : he wrote, it is said, even as if he were a woman ! But the one thing he could not do was to introduce into his works the genuine philosophical accent. Vital gusto and ingenuity are his characteristics while, if Bacon was anything, he was an intellectual. Shakespeare put into his dramas all that he was or knew : why is the typical Baconian note utterly absent, the note of intellectual contemplation, the note of philosophico-scientific thinking ? Surely, a writer creates out of himself : how is it that Bacon, in writing Shakespeare left his own essential nature out ? Some pressure of truly detaching intellect or of the search for a world-view through the eyes of the inspired reason should inevitably have got into the dramas. The absence of such pressure rules out Bacon completely.

The third and final argument is related to the second and it is phrased by Sri Aurobindo himself. "There is," he begins, "often more thought in a short essay of Bacon's than in a whole play of Shakespeare's." Then, referring to a poem that is known to have been composed by Bacon, Sri Aurobindo remarks : "As he showed when he tried to write poetry, the very nature of his thought-power and the characteristic way of expression of the philosophical thinker hampered him in poetic expression." The clear indication from the one poem admittedly from Bacon's pen is, according to Sri Aurobindo, conclusive against his authorship of the dramas. As Sri Aurobindo is so very positive, let us glance at Bacon's un-Shakespearean perpetration in verse :

## LIFE

The World's a bubble, and the Life of Man  
 Less than a span :  
 In his conception wretched, from the womb  
 So to the tomb;  
 Curs'd from the cradle, and brought up to years  
 With cares and fears.  
 Who then to frail mortality shall trust,  
 But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet since with sorrow here we live opprest,  
 What life is best ?  
 Courts are but only superficial schools  
 To dandle fools :  
 The rural parts are turn'd into a den  
 Of savage men :  
 And where's a city from all vice so free,  
 But may be term'd the worst of all the three ?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,  
 Or pains his head :  
 Those that live single, take it for a curse,  
 Or do things worse :  
 Some would have children : those that have them moan  
 Or wish them gone :  
 What is it, then, to have, or have no wife,  
 But single thralldom, or a double strife ?

Our own affections still at home to please  
 Is a disease :  
 To cross the sea to any foreign soil,  
 Perils and toil :  
 Wars with their noise affright us; when they cease,  
 We are worse in peace :  
 What then remains, but that we still should cry  
 Not to be born, or, being born, to die ?

The last couplet has some power, but the whole of its second line is virtually borrowed from a famous passage of Sophocles and cannot be credited to Bacon. In the rest we have two turns of a slight felicity : "Curs'd from the cradle" and "To dandle fools." In a couple of places there is a weak wit. All

else is coinage of the reflective prose-mind, a sort of poor anticipation of eighteenth-century semi-didactic verse. Not a trace of the *vivida vis* that breathes in any pronouncement on life and death we may pick out from the Shakespearian corpus.

Sri Aurobindo, in drawing his conclusion against Bacon, says that not even a hundred cryptograms could counterweigh it. This brings us to a species of argument that some Baconians have indulged in to the bewilderment of most readers. They have traced in the works of Shakespeare various hidden messages, several declarations of Bacon's authorship put in the form of ciphers. One cryptogram proved this authorship perfectly—except that by ill luck it did so in nineteenth-century English! Recently a book by two professional cryptologists, William and Elizabeth Friedman, went into a thorough examination of all the claimed ciphers and cryptograms and proved them spurious. Reading the reviews of this book I wondered if one particular cryptogram had been commented upon. At least no reviewer specifically alluded to it. It is the shortest of all and is evolved directly from a word occurring in Shakespeare. The word is "Honorificabilitudinitatibus."

In *Love's Labour Lost*, Act V, Scene I, you will find this verbal whale. In the Oxford edition it is in line 45. It is the semi-jocular form of a word which actually exists in English, though it is archaic, now: Honorificabilitudinitatibus. (The accent is on "-di-".) It means "honourableness". The semi-jocular form comes from the ablative plural of the Latin original of the English term. It occurs not only in Shakespeare but in another Elizabethan dramatist: Nashe. By the way, among monosyllabic words in English, the longest are: "strength" and "straight". Both have eight letters. Among polysyllabic words, the longest is "honorificabilitudinitatibus"—twenty-two letters. The form used by Shakespeare has been pounced upon by the Baconians and they have juggled out of its twenty-seven letters a variety of Latin sentences, the most plausible of which is: "Hi ludi orbi tuiti F. Baconis nati." The sentence translates: "These plays preserved for the world (are) born of F. Bacon." The Shakespearians are expected to be impressed into dumfounded defeat.

Unfortunately, they are not so easily cowed down. They may well ask: "What about the word's occurrence in Nashe? Should we make Bacon the author of all of Nashe's plays?" I suppose the Baconians would gnash their teeth on hearing this impertinent query. But there is more unpleasantness in store for them. The Latin form "Baconis" is the genitive case of "Baco". Now it is an extremely inconvenient fact that Bacon never wrote his name in Latin as "Baco": he always wrote "Baconus", whose genitive form would be "Baconi". So there will be an *s* going a-begging in the interpretation offered us.

All cryptograms are reeds to lean upon: they are bound to break in some part or other. But they make a fascinating game. I myself am tempted to set before you a cryptogram I have traced in Shakespeare. It definitely shows

that those great dramas could never have been written by Shakespeare for the simple reason that they do not belong to the time of Elizabeth. So Bacon too is put out of court. My cryptogram confers an unsolicited honorificabilitudinitatibus on a writer who would have protested vehemently against it.

I shall pick out the six best tragedies and the six best comedies and arrange their titles thus :

KING LEAR  
 MACBETH  
 OTHELLO  
     ROMEO AND JULIET  
     ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA  
     HAMLET  
 THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR  
 A COMEDY OF ERRORS  
 THE TEMPEST  
 THE MERCHANT OF VENICE  
 LOVE'S LABOUR LOST  
 ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

Now take the fourth letter of the first title and read off all the letters that come under it in a vertical line... So cryptograms can prove anything. And to this, even more than to the others, the most appropriate response from us should be :  
 "Pshaw !"

AMAL KIRAN (K. D. SETHNA)

## THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

### Scene 4

*(Baroda. Sri Aurobindo's residence. Morning. Sri Aurobindo still in bed.)*  
*Enter Barin in soiled and ragged clothes.*

AURO : Who is there ?

BARIN : Sejda, It is I, Barin.

AURO : O my goodness, how is it that you are in this state ? Go into the bathroom and wash up.

BARIN : Sejda, I have come...

AURO : Ah, you are so impossible. Go straight into the bathroom. I'll listen to you afterwards.

*Exit Barin*

*Sri Aurobindo sits up on the cot.*

*Enter Sarojini*

SARO : Sejda, Bari is come. Has he met you ? Where is he gone ?

AURO : He is in the bathroom.

SARO : Bari is very spirited. I am sure he will do much for the country. But, Sejda, he is not at all sweet towards me in his conduct.

AURO : But I am sweet to you. Am I not ?

SARO : I know, it is useless to tell you anything against anybody. You simply take it very lightly. And you never realise that your indifference cuts me to the quick.

*Enter Barin*

AURO : Bari, Saro has a severe complaint against you.

BARIN : Didi's complaint ! Has she anyone on earth whom she loves more than me ?

SARO : Very clever you are. Truth to tell, I hate you for your uncomely behaviour.

BARIN : Didi, you may hate Sj. Barindra Kumar Ghosh. But to hate your youngest brother Bari is beyond you. Sejda, do you believe that she looks down upon me ?

AURO : I can't think so. Saro, I am sorry that you have lost to Bari. And, I believe your surrender will be complete if you give him a cup of tea and a hot cake.

*Enter Mrinalini Devi with tea and sweets*

SARO (*in excitement*) : Ah, Baudi, you have come to my rescue. These two brothers are simply torturing me. (*Mrinalini Devi gives a smile.*)

BARIN : Now, Didi, allow me to have a serious talk with Sejda.

SARO : Who forbids you ? But, mind you, neither Baudi nor I am going to leave the room.

BARIN : No harm. Sejda, it is you who have infused into me the revolutionary spirit. Now you must tell me how to begin the revolutionary work. I can brook no delay.

AURO : You need not. That auspicious moment is well-nigh come.

*Scene 5*

(*Evening. Barin, with some of his friends, experiments with a Planchette. Aurobindo keenly observes it. They invoke the spirit of Ramakrishna. The Planchette moves.*)

BARIN : Thakur, Thakur, through your infinite kindness you have appeared before us. Please tell us whether our freedom movement will be a success or not.

*The spirit of Ramakrishna remains silent.*

BARIN : Thakur, pray give us your advice. We shall obey you.

*Ramakrishna continues silent.*

BARIN : It seems you are displeased with us. We are helpless, blind human beings. Show us the way to fulfil our ideal.

*The Planchette writes out the sentence:*

“*Mandir gaḍo, mandir gaḍo*” (“*Make temples, make temples*”).

*The spirit disappears.*

BARIN : Sejda, Ramakrishna has at last said, “*Mandir gaḍo, mandir gaḍo.*” What does it signify ?



AURO : I believe Ramakrishna Paramahansa wishes us to establish temples in our hearts.

BARIN : What for ?

AURO : Barin, have faith in Ramakrishna, He was the dearest child of Mahakali. He was God manifest in a human being. We shall in the years to come realise the significance of making temples in the inmost recesses of our hearts.

*Scene 6*

*(Sri Aurobindo's chamber. Sri Aurobindo and Barin.)*

BARIN : Sejda, to-day you must tell me when I should begin my revolutionary work.

AURO : Bari, to-morrow you may start for Calcutta. You will help Jatin Banerjee there in his work. I have asked him to work among the grown-ups and the educated. You and Abinash Bhattacharya will work amongst students.

BARIN : Sejda, if there be any disagreement between Jatin and me...

AURO : No, Bari, you must never think of that disheartening thing. I am there behind you all. Don't fear. I too will be coming to join you all.

BARIN : Sejda, there is only one leader in India to whom I can bow. You know who he is. It is you who are at once my guide and India's only hope.

*Scene 7*

*(Patkar and one of his friends. Both are Aurobindo's students.)*

FRIEND : Patkar, at times I see you go to our Professor Arvind Ghosh's place. I take it he has great affection for you.

PATKAR : As if he only has affection for me and I have none for him!

FRIEND : Who says that you have none ? Affection you have : in addition, you have great admiration for him.

PATKAR : My dear friend, you are right. I am all admiration for him.

FRIEND : Patkar, pray tell me something about the Professor.

PATKAR : It does my heart good to tell people about his high qualities. I'll tell you of an incident that actually took place yesterday. I had been to his place. He was deeply absorbed in his studies. A large sum of money was kept in a tray on his table. So I could not help asking him why he had kept his money like that. The Professor said, "Well, it is a proof that we are living in the midst of honest and good people." "But you never keep an account which may testify to the honesty of people around you?" I asked him. With a smiling face he said, "It is God who keeps account for me. He gives me as

much as I want and keeps the rest to Himself. At any rate He does not keep me in want, then why should I worry ?” Could you conceive such living faith in God and in His constant presence ? To my sorrow, he leaves for Bengal shortly, and is not expected to return.

FRIEND : True ?

PATKAR : Now that the Partition of Bengal has taken place he feels her call and goes to her rescue. He will certainly light a fire in the minds of the youths of Bengal and change the situation. We have seen the stuff he is made of, a hidden fire ! Don't you think so ?

FRIEND : I quite agree with you. I feel his fire will spread beyond Bengal to every part of his beloved land.

CHINMOY

*(To be continued)*

# LEONARDO DA VINCI IN MILAN

## SCENE II

*Scene—The Studio of Leonardo da Vinci in Milan*

*Time—An hour before dawn*

1497

*(The studio is in darkness. Enter Francesco with candles which he sets on a table, when he sees Pepito asleep. He wakes him.)*

FRANCESCO : What are you doing here, Pepito ? Do you not guard the Master's colours at the Convento ?

PEPITO (*rubbing his eyes*) : Oh ! Francesco, is it you ?

FRANCESCO : You see it is. Infanto, tell me, have you left the mural unattended ?

PEPITO : Oh no, Francesco ! Bruno is there. I have news for you.

FRANCESCO : News, or more gossip ?

PEPITO : No, news, Francesco. The Prior was in a fury last night and said he would visit the lazy good-for-nothing of a painter who thinks more of making war-machines than honouring his obligations to the Church.

He is coming here this morning, Francesco, and he says he intends to threaten Messr Leonardo with the displeasure of Rome.

FRANCESCO : Ho, so Priors are threatening now, are they ?

Pepito (*breathlessly*) : He said also, Francesco, that in Rome there were those who would be glad to see Messr Leonardo thrown into prison for his negligence. Is that possible, Francesco ? Is the Master really in danger of these people ?

FRANCESCO : The fool of a Prior exaggerates beyond the bounds of privilege. It is so that this Prior has powerful friends in Rome, but methinks the Master is more than a match for them.

PEPITO : But you will tell the Master ?

You will warn him of the coming of the Prior this morning, won't you, Francesco ?

FRANCESCO : There is no need for alarm, Infanto : the Master has an uncanny insight into the machinations of popes, priors and priests. He teases the soul out of them in spite of themselves. He'll know how to deal with this one.

Now you must go, it is less than an hour before dawn and I must set things aright here before he comes. Off with you, Infanto ! Tell that lazy Bruno to search for some better quality carbon sticks, those he brought yesterday were useless, we must have the best for his sketches.

PEPITO : Very well, Francesco, I'll tell him.

I feel happy now that you know everything. Good-bye, Francesco,  
Good-bye !

FRANCESCO : God be with you, Infanto ; all will be well. Good-bye !

*(The first light of dawn begins to appear, and Francesco snuffs the candles and sets about putting the studio in order. The light increases slowly, and Leonardo enters. ...He is here a man of forty-five, tall, noble, erect, dressed in the fashion of his day. His long hair is touched with grey. His hands are white and slender, aristocratic yet strong enough to break a sword or a horse-shoe. He is firm of step, a poet in search of Beauty, a philosopher in search of Truth.)*

Good morning, Maestro.

LEONARDO : Good morning, Francesco. I see that Donna Maria has arrived ; why did you not wake me ?

FRANCESCO : She arrived late last night, master, and would have been most distressed if I had wakened you.

LEONARDO : Her coming seems to be a good omen, Francesco. I already feel eager for work, impatient for the light of the day.

FRANCESCO : Young Pepito was here with news that the Prior of the Convento is to visit you this morning. He too, it seems, is impatient, but it is an impatience with your work at the refectory.

LEONARDO : The impudence of a Prior to be impatient with a painter ! May he frizzle himself in Dante's Inferno !

Did you get the carbon sticks ?

FRANCESCO : There are six left of the old quality, I have sent for some more.

*(Bang ! Pop ! Bang ! Bang ! Pop ! Bang !)*

*There is a noise of explosions off.*

*(Enter Donna Furiosa in disorder—breathlessly)*

Donna Furiosa : Santa mia delle convento !  
Madonna mia di Christo !  
Oh master Leonardo, save us, save us !  
Fire ! diablo ! inferno !  
Save us, master ! save us !

LEONARDO *(in a very calm voice)* : Donna Furiosa, what is the time ?

DONNA FURIOSA *(astonished)* : Th...the time M...Messr Leonardo ?...  
Did you ask the time ?

LEONARDO : I did, Donna Furiosa, what time *is* it ?

DONNA FURIOSA : W...well, indeed ! I...I... The house is falling down,

there is an earthquake of diablos about our ears, fire will consume us all, it may be the end of the world...and...and you ask me th... the time, Master !!!

LEONARDO : The explosions have stopped, it is quiet again. Did you see any flames, Donna Furiosa ? ...or even any smoke ?

DONNA FURIOSA : N...No, I...I did'nt *see* anything...(*quickly*) but I heard plenty of explosions, and the house shook, and I'm sure there is no glass left in the new windows.

LEONARDO : Exactly ! What you *heard* was the bursting entrails of a sheep which I blew up last night with air. Many of the inflations would be against the east window. They must have got warm by the first rays of the sun shining through the new glass. The warmth expanded the air and they naturally exploded.

FRANCESCO : Ha ! ha ! Ha ! ha ! I saw them last night, they nearly filled the work-room.

Is this another of your jokes, Master, for the court of Sforza ?

LEONARDO : Not at all, not at all ! It is merely a little experiment which you may take as a symbol of human virtue. When filled with hot air it is liable to burst when touched by the light of truth.

DONNA FURIOSA : Experimento ! studio, work-room ! diablos ! even my kitchen ! what next ! what next, Madonna mia ! Madonna mia !

*(She goes out shaking her head, leaving Leonardo and Francesco laughing.)*

LEONARDO (*putting his arm affectionately around Francesco's shoulders*). If Donna Maria is arisen, tell her I am here in the studio.

FRANCESCO : You haven't forgotten the Prior, have you, Master ?

LEONARDO : No, I suppose I must be resigned to that interruption when it comes.

*(The light streams through the studio window now and Leonardo sets an easel in position and then walks round the studio, contemplating the various statues and sketches of horses, birds in flight, a stoat, and sketches of heads. He gathers a few in his hands and comes over to the divan D.R. and looks through them meditatively.)*

LEONARDO : Where other men see God as highest Good  
 And see all heaven in religious rite,  
 So do I count all Beauty as my law  
 To guide me to an absolute of life.  
 'Tis no mere satisfaction of a sense,  
 No vulgar virtue of a mere desire,  
 But that pure essence of created art  
 Which lives within the very heart of things.

A saltus of the soul—a rise to Truth  
 Or some pure absolute of fashioned bliss  
 Which springs from the beginning of all life—  
 'Tis also that in man which answers life ;  
 The challenge to a world of ignorance  
 Defying death and human circumstance,  
 A faith, deep in the soul of higher laws  
 Which calls to the beginning of all Time.

O restless soul ! Be still, my beating heart !  
 List to the song of Truth that beats aloud  
 In the bosom of created loveliness !  
 These sculptured wings, these artist-fashioned limbs  
 That live again in portraiture and stone,  
 In beaten bronzes, gold and silver form,  
 Burnished metals born of liquid fire  
 To live again in images divine.  
 Ah ! was not beauty made for man alone,  
 That he might reach beyond his petty self  
 To those bright regions where the gods adore  
 The Radiant Bliss of Immortality ?—  
 O soul ! hast thou not also looked upon  
 The Golden Splendour yet unmanifest  
 For which our spirit-wings beat mortal air—  
 To capture here our lost divinity,  
 To wrest from Nature and the heights above  
 The secret Rapture of the undying Flame ?  
 Hast thou not looked into the eyes of Love  
 And seen The Mother of eternity  
 As Beauty's Face in every living thing ?  
 Then canst thou know how beats my human heart,  
 How yearns my soul for that ineffable Bliss  
 Which joins this being to the gods above.

*(A bell tolls in the distance; the shadows of the room disappear.)*

*Enter Donna Maria*

DONNA MARIA (*with obvious joy at meeting him*) : Leonardo ! Leonardo !  
 (*He takes both her hands in his and they regard each other with a mutual understanding.*) Do I disturb your morning meditations ?

LEONARDO : Not at all, my dear, come, sit with me here.

(*He takes her to a divan D.R.*)

DONNA MARIA (*half protesting*): But you have guests just arrived on the terrace. Francesco is talking to them.

LEONARDO: What! so early! Who is it? Is it that old fool of a Prior come to complain again of my continued absence from his august presence?

DONNA MARIA: It is indeed, Leonardo, and you know they say it is weeks now since you have given life to your colours or caressed with your brush the Christ mural.

LEONARDO: Is the inspiration of an artist to be bought and sold in the market place? Do the protestations of a Prior count for aught? He has yet to learn that his prayers go unanswered in heaven.

DONNA MARIA: Nay, Leonardo, 'tis not only he, we are all anxious to see the finished work.

LEONARDO (*slowly*): Yes, I know, I never finish anything... I never seem to realise in fact the divinity of my dream.

There is a world of perfection, Donna Maria, but it is not here on earth. Perhaps one day...

(*They fall silent*)

DONNA MARIA (*gently*): The whole of Milan is saying that you have left these two faces of Christ and Judas till the last so you may better bring out the contrast and so point an artistic moral to the world.

LEONARDO: Artistic priests and poppycock!

Tell the petulant-pated prior I'll put his own face on the shoulders of Judas if he doesn't leave me in peace! For surely he'd make an excellent Judas.

DONNA MARIA: But you do intend to finish the picture, do you not Leonardo?

LEONARDO (*very tenderly*): My dear Donna Maria, do I have to explain also to you that unless I have the inner sanction, unless...unless Christ comes himself into me—I cannot presume to paint his face?

Whether it is poetry or painting, sculpture or script,  
There must come within that Light of Truth from above.

True art must heed the Voice of the Divine  
And man, the instrument, must lend himself  
To that pure essence deep within his soul  
Which seeks to manifest in common things,  
Then Matter will arise from its long sleep  
To join the consciousness of higher worlds,  
And even Priors will lift their lazy lives  
Out of the dim hypocrisy of their days.

*(Enter Francesco with the Prior close behind him)*

*They stand at the doorway.*

LEONARDO : Ho, Francesco ! Is breakfast ready ?

FRANCESCO : It is, Master, and here is his reverence the Prior to join you. There are sun-ripe peaches this morning which Donna Maria brought from Florence. The table is laid on the terrace.

LEONARDO : Good, Francesco, show his reverence in.

*(Aside to Donna Maria)*

It seems I must choose between peaches and priors today.

*(Turning to the Prior)*

Good morning, your reverence, come in, come in ; I was just talking about you to Donna Maria...

DONNA MARIA : Oh, Ser Leonardo !!

LEONARDO : Yes, I was saying what a fine study your features would make in oils. Er...do you like peaches ?

THE PRIOR *(explosively)* : P...p...peaches ! peaches ! I detest them ! I have come to talk to you about painting, Messr Leonardo da Vinci. The position has become now serious. I demand, I demand that you give me the assurance that you will proceed with the work without further delay. There is talk that Vasari will report on the mural to His Holiness in Rome.

LEONARDO : Is His Holiness himself not to visit you any day now ? I understand he is to visit us here in Milan in the early spring...and the peaches are already ripe for the eating.

THE PRIOR *(now somewhat uncertain)* : I have heard nothing of the kind, Messr Leonardo. Heard you on good authority ? For indeed I do confess I am not at all prepared for such an august visit at the moment. I was under the impression he was to be in Parvia now and to come here in the summer. I am quite unprepared, quite unprepared.

LEONARDO : Unprepared ? impossible, my dear Prior ! It is well known how diligent you are with your duties ; how careful you are with the benefice of the Church and your collections at court are a consummation of coined coincidence. His Holiness will be well pleased with the efforts you have made on behalf of the Convento delle Santa Maria delle Grazie.

THE PRIOR *(now completely distressed)* : Oh, yes ! indeed, unprepared, well, I mean, ... that is to say ... you understand .... The Last Supper is a masterpiece, but...it, it is still incomplete. Surely, it must be finished before



His Holiness arrives...you will, I feel sure, see that the two faces are finished before...

LEONARDO : But that is precisely why they are left unfinished, my dear Prior. ...Christ and Judas, I must ask His Holiness' advice and seek his blessing before I attempt to paint those two countenances.

THE PRIOR (*now overwhelmed by the situation*): But, surely, y.....you have y.....your own ideas, yyy...your own inspiration aaa....about the ttt.... two figures?

LEONARDO (*stading back from the Prior in order to regard him as an artist, then, snatching up a piece of sketching board, he begins to draw rapidly—with his left hand—saying slowly*) :

Er...yes, I have, I have even selected one particular face out of all my acquaintances in Milan, one face that might well serve this mighty work.

The forehead is just right in proportion to the eyes,...The eyes, yes, the eyes tell the sorrowful truth.

The nose indicates determination for such an historical act which the lips indeed foretell...

Yes, it is, for the subject, a perfect face, truly a great opportunity.

THE PRIOR (*completely misunderstanding—breathlessly*) : You...you m...m ...mean me ! m...me for the Christ face ?

LEONARDO : No ! your reverence, the Judas !

THE PRIOR : Ah, Madre mia ! Santa Maria delle Grazie !

My heart ! My heart !

(*He faints*)

LEONARDO (*turning to Francesco who has just entered*) : Francesco, it appears that his reverencie has fainted.... Oh dear me ! not dead ! just fainted. Burn some cocks' feathers under his episcopal nose and he'll be all right.

(*To Donna Maria*)

Come, Donna Maria, breakfast awaits us.  
We will leave this Prior for the peaches.

(*They exit*)

CURTAIN

NORMAN DOWSETT

## STANFORD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS OF A. B. PURANI'S LECTURES ON SRI AUROBINDO

*(The Impressions were submitted to Dr. F. Spiegelberg.)*

DR. PURANI'S visit was enlightening, to say the least. I was extremely impressed with his articulation and wonderful temperament. I just pictured myself in the Ashram listening intently as the Guru spoke. I was also impressed with the vast amount of knowledge which he displayed when he compared Indian thought with Western culture. He knows much more about us than we do ourselves. I was very sorry when the time was up for Dr. Purani ; I could have listened to him for many hours more. He presented the complicated thought patterns of eastern philosophy in clear, attractive terms, which would be well accepted in any intellectual environment. In short, I remain very impressed with Dr. Purani. (In fact I shall definitely visit the Ashram when I'm in India next year.)

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I found the visit of Prof. Purani a very fascinating and informative experience. I have been excited about Sri Aurobindo's philosophy since I first read some of his work over a year ago and to hear a man who could explain the intricacies of this philosophy so lucidly was just fabulous.

His explanation of the Mother was brilliant. It revealed so many facets of this thought to me that have helped me to understand other things I have read. I shall treasure this visit. Of all the visitors you have had in your classes this is the one that I will always remember by name and by lecture.

It has been a great pleasure to have taken your courses here at Stanford. Each one of them has been very stimulative. I am sorry that you have to leave but I wish you the best of luck in your future work.

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I felt that Professor Purani knew what he was telling about, and explained it clearly. I especially liked his graphs and explanatory drawings. However I think it would take years of study to really understand the concepts he was talking about.

I think he is one of the happiest men I have ever seen.

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He seemed more like an emissary from Tagore than Sri Aurobindo, who I always picture as someone superhuman in nature. Purani seemed very down to earth and human, with a real sense of humor, which surprised me a little. I think the real advantage of having people like Purani come, is not what they say, most of which has usually been brought out in class already, but just the fact they come, that they take an interest in us. It makes one feel that one is not studying in a vacuum or from afar off.

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“Dynamic” is perhaps the best description of my impression of Professor Purani. Throughout his visit to the class he presented himself as an individual thoroughly immersed within Sri Aurobindo’s system. Indeed, it was almost a visit with Sri Aurobindo because of Purani’s fiery enthusiasm for his subject. His expressions about Sri Aurobindo and Sri Aurobindo’s system proved most helpful in clarification of my views and understanding. His graphic explanations at the board provided one with the most provocative description of the Overmind and Superman that I have thus far observed.

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One very interesting thought pattern that I feel he expressed was in reference to the function of the Mother. He started with the Mother, then progressed into what appeared to have no reference to her at all. Then suddenly he was back to the Mother. I, afterwards, realized the circular manner of his logic. This impressed me very much. I spoke to one student who said that he represents what a saint should be. I can’t go that far, but I will say that he appeared to revolve on a higher plane than most people I know.

I should like to hear him speak again some day.

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Professor Purani seemed to radiate his attained spiritual bliss in an unmistakable way that had to be recognized. I was impressed with his intelligence, his understanding and his ability to answer the questions put to him. I am not surprised that he wrote a book on *Savitri*. What he said was interesting and enlightening but did not seem so important as what he is. I think that the most important thing the class and the visitors gained was a direct result of his presence in the room. None of the other visitors created the same atmosphere in the class. I don’t mean that we all sat open-mouthed imbibing his every word with complete acceptance (which may be true) but that we all felt happy because he was here.

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The impression that stands out most clearly in my mind was a realization of the tremendous difference in thought and life between East and West. Though we had discussed Sri Aurobindo in class before, Prof. Purani's presence somehow made his idea become, in a certain sense, more real but also more exacting. It brought to mind the narrowness of my own life and experience thus far.

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It was a pleasure to have him speak to us, and an even greater pleasure to see a man seemingly so devoid of the anxiety which permeates our own society.

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I was impressed with Prof. Purani's appearance. He looked like such a kindly intelligent man with a wonderful sense of humor...and although I had the feeling he was old, he looked so young and spry.

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It is the man himself who is tremendously impressive, and only secondarily his words, good as they were. One is sure that he is "a man who knows", as Bach "knew" when he wrote "the B minor mass" and as the Old Testament prophet "knew". Knows what? God, Brahman, the answer to the question of existence, of man.

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I am very much interested in Sri Aurobindo and his philosophy, and to have one who was so close to him and so well-informed about him explain some of the thorny questions involved has opened my understanding wider to the writing of Sri Aurobindo.

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...it seemed strange to me, who has never met personally such a man, that he was so human, and so "undifferent." In other words, he made me realize that Indian philosophy is for *real* people and these people are not so horribly different and strange as I had previously suspected.

## A THING OF BEAUTY

IN a staff of twenty teachers at the Boys' School Mr. Vyas was conspicuous. His nature was not liked by all students. He taught mathematics but the class Seven B, found him even drier than the subject he taught. He had a peculiar idea that he was very miserable. This feeling made him hate everyone who was happy, cheerful and mostly those who looked jolly. Thus there was hardly anyone whom he liked. The young members of the staff laughed at him and the grown-up and the experienced ones felt pity for him.

This feeling which was not built on any facts made him get into great anger with the students, very often without reason. The students tried in every way to be attentive, to do their work in time and to be regular ; but alas! all of a sudden he would catch hold of a boy who happened to be innocently looking up and give him a good thrashing. The words poured out of his mouth as if fire were leaping out of a furnace. His eyes turned red as hot iron and his whole body shook as if with a strange fever. The whole class was uneasy because of these outbursts at random. They racked their brains to do something but the fury of the teacher smothered the edges of their sharp wits.

Once the Headmaster called Mr. Vyas and talked to him as a friend and inquired about his personal life, so that he could find the reason for his unhappiness. In the course of their talk the Head drew out the fact that there was no real reason but just his mental conception that he was miserable. After revolving the idea within himself for a time he advised the teacher to try and laugh a lot.

The teacher was stunned at the proposal as he thought it impossible to laugh or even smile. The Head seeing his uneasiness said, "This is not such an out-of-the way thing, Mr. Vyas. Go home and think over the matter, you are sure to find a solution."

Mr. Vyas left the office with a confused mind, but when he thought over it, he felt that there was no harm in trying it. On the second day when he entered the class, he was not red-eyed, his face was not tense as usual and the boys were really surprised. They waited patiently for a sudden outburst but it did not come. Mr. Vyas marked the attendance, closed the register and slowly got up from the chair. The boys got panicky now. Each heart started questioning, "Who could be the possible victim this time ?" But instead of a shout they heard a normal voice, "Now, my boys, I want you to bring me each day a very funny joke, or something which will make me laugh."

“Laugh...laugh, Sir ?” Natu, the boldest of the boys of the Seven B, asked very hesitatingly.

“Yes, laugh ! Can’t I laugh just as everyone else ?”

The class was amazed. “Can this be true ?” they wondered. But they were too scared to question it.

Thus from the next day the boys brought jokes after jokes, and the teacher started laughing. His frustrated feelings got a vent and he no longer jumped upon the boys as before. There was a relief in the tenseness of the class. But there came another trouble. The roaring laughter of Mr. Vyas was heard by the other students and that made Seven B ashamed. The other boys teased them for their funny teacher. The boys themselves were finding it difficult to bring fresh jokes for Mr. Vyas every day.

How long could they carry on? Besides, they must find a way to stop these maddening laughs.

Once they were seriously discussing a possible solution to this embarrassing problem. There were many suggestions but they did not seem practical. At last Sunil who was generally a very quiet and reserved type of a boy said, “If we bring something which is very very beautiful, don’t you think it would affect him ?”

“Do you think he ever pays attention to a thing of beauty ? If at all, he hates it.”

“No, I don’t think it is a useless suggestion.”

“Do you think Mr. Vyas can be belled with a thing like that ?”

“Well ! let’s try.”

“All right. But what shall we bring ? ”

“An unusually exquisite flower ?”

“He might crush it in his hand.”

“We can ask him to take us out for a walk. We can suggest the way and thus lead him to the Park where the ground is carpeted with emerald-green grass and bordered with multi-coloured flower-beds. He might be impressed if we all start talking about its grandeur.”

“But suppose he doesn’t agree to come ?”

“Oh yes, whatever it is, we must bring the flower here. We can’t rely upon him to come out anywhere.”

“My daddy has brought a very pretty glass box from abroad. It’s all made of tiny glass pieces of various colours and they are so arranged that when you open the lid the whole box jingles out a soft ringing sound and the colours glow with the different shades of the rainbow. He might be impressed because everyone who looks at it finds it beyond description.”

“Oh ! it sounds so beautiful, but we can’t take a risk with such a rare piece. For all we know Mr. Vyas might crash it into pieces and reduce it to its original elements in his anger. No, no, you can’t bring it to the school.”

“What shall we do then ?” There was a weighty silence upon these boys for the time being. Then suddenly one said, “I have an idea ; suppose we search for a very beautiful story, packed with an emotional description of nature, so beautiful it should be that it could be touching.”

“Yes ! That’s a real idea.”

“But from where are we going to get such a story ?”

“Shakespeare ?”

“Too old-fashioned.”

“Milton ?”

“Too dry and difficult.”

“Wordsworth’s Lucy Poems ?”

“He might find them childish, though they are lovely.”

“Keats ? Shelley ? Meredith ? Victor Hugo...” ?

“No, none of them can come to our rescue when a hard-hearted person like Mr. Vyas is concerned.”

“Let’s all get together and work hard and use the dictionary and make up something, shall we ?”

“There ! at last a Daniel has come to our help ! Minu is really a genius.”

Then the twenty-four boys of Seven B got to work. They consulted all the famous writers and dictionaries. Some made a list of the synonyms of the words ‘beautiful’, ‘touching’, and ‘feeling’. Others put down all the hues of soft colours, the rest gathered the names of flowers and birds.

At last they made up a really lovely story. They copied it out in a clear hand and appointed Minu to read it out to Mr. Vyas, not only because his pronunciation was good but also because it was his idea and lastly because he was the handsomest of them all. Mr. Vyas was to be given of their best !

One of them had the idea that they must practise the whole thing once beforehand. So they decided to gather in their Form during the break and let Minu rehearse the story.

Accordingly they gathered in the class-room quietly. Each boy was pen-sive as they all wondered whether all the work they had put in was going to be successful or no. Many of them prayed in their hearts to save them from the teasings and jokings of the other boys. Many stared at the handsome face of their hero, Minu, who himself was resolving in his mind to do his best and to prove the faith the class had put in him. When everyone was settled, Minu, the prefect, asked Minu encouragingly to start.

Minu looked at the chair where Mr. Vyas would be sitting the next day when the ordeal was to take place. He closed his eyes once, opened them slowly, took a quick look at the class. Every pair of eyes was fixed on him. He steadied the hands which held the paper and started the story.

There was pin-drop silence. The story read on very smoothly and they were surprised at the natural description which they themselves had written.

The little orphan girl living all alone in a forest was described as prettier than the angels and the multi-coloured flowers; the softly hovering, twittering birds sang better than a thousand jingling silver bells, the rainbow in the sky was seen through the rain and it looked as if strewn with pearls, diamonds, corals and emeralds, amethysts and rubies.

The story was over and the boys were struck, one and all, with the beauty which they could not believe they had created. Minu turned now towards the rest and asked, "Well?"

But before the boys had a chance to congratulate him and be happy over their own efforts, the classroom-door slowly opened and the class turned white as Mr. Vyas walked in. After all their precautions, they were found in the class when they were supposed to be out in the fields. He would flare up at them and, worst of all, they would not be able to read out their heroic work. They waited in suspense. Mr. Vyas walked to his table slowly and instead of wrath the boys saw a smile on his face! He opened his mouth and just said, "I am very, very grateful to you, my boys, you have cured me with a unique work."

The boys gasped in surprise. "How on earth did he know?" But Mr Vyas revealed the mystery: "I was just passing this way and remembered that I had to take my Algebra book from the class. I was about to open the door when I heard someone speaking inside, I listened carefully and heard every word of what Minu has just finished reading. I had overheard you people once discussing about writing some extraordinary thing for me, and when I heard Minu I knew it was for me. I am really sorry that I was immune to all this beauty in the world. You, my boys, have taught me a lesson, that 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever'." "Sir, we are sorry we remained in the class during the break..." "I shall speak to the Headmaster about it and if he has some punishment for you I shall also partake of it as you have partaken of my grief."

SUNANDA



## THE JOURNEY OF THE MOTHER OF THE VAST

THE Mother Supreme,  
Consciousness and Force divine,  
Sleeps in every being in perfect poise  
As harmony and light serene.  
Inexhaustible energy,  
Fountain of love,  
She embodies in flesh and blood  
All powers and personalities,  
Remains in our midst  
Veiled, one with us, passes sun-rays—  
To release the world from chaos and cloud,  
To harmonise contraries, conflicting natures,  
Commences the Mother Her journey downward to the clod,  
Bids *au revoir* to the Lord,  
Leaves far behind Her native realm,  
Enters at last the earth's dull atmosphere,  
Suffocates and faints—  
Regains her poise and consciousness,  
The nectar all-pervading.  
Descending still below, She touches the border of the mind.

Newcomer, unknown guest,  
She creates tumult in the whole being  
That in all its parts  
Is confused utterly how to receive the Visitant  
And how to pacify all the members  
Perplexed. It cries, "Oh uninvited guest, welcome !  
I know you not, neither your help.  
Agitated are all the parts and disintegrated  
Victims of right and wrong, good and evil.  
What are you ? Do tell, Madam,  
What happy cause brings you here ?  
Dispel my awkward feeling soon.  
My entire family has got frightened and abandoned me.  
The sole query is how to serve you ?"

"Silence, silence, silence.  
 Mine is the nature that disturbs none.  
 Harmony and light, I am the Mother,  
 The True Self hidden in all, unrecognised,  
 Come to redeem from illusion, falsehood blind,  
 To put into the right consciousness—white,  
 Grateful and happy ever to be.  
 Dive within yourself to find me."

The awaking soul  
 Turns the gaze inward, sees the fountain of smile serene  
 Cheering the whole being, and discovers the secret Grace,  
 Rejoices and falls upon the ground  
 Crying, "Oh Mother, merciful Divine,  
 Pardon my ignorance;  
 Saviour, send us back to light !  
 You know the meanness of our lower nature  
 That reaches not its bottom.  
 Numberless the human weaknesses,  
 Far beyond the grasp of divine goodness,  
 The fathomless divine generosity,  
 Transformer of all nature long-rooted."

Masquerader in all of us to deliver from the grip of ignorance  
 The Mother lights up our native land  
 To our deepest eye and in a team  
 Carries us over the path well carved out.  
 We arrive at the limit of our borders,  
 Cross into a dim-light reign, a chartless  
 Rule of shadow and light, mingling contraries,  
 We penetrate with some struggle,  
 Then halt abrupt, in a twinkling.  
 Lost the sense of body-consciousness,  
 Only the pure "I" is perceived.  
 Inquires the Mother, "What are you up to ?"  
 And why do you stop ? It is not the Highest Truth  
 And not my palace imperial.  
 Region of fragment, partial truth,  
 Most dangerous, illusion pure,  
 Many have lost their way here,  
 Thought a glimpse of light  
 Their final and full realisation.

Satisfied, they moved not and missed the Goal."
   
Come farther, come patiently, slowly
   
To the absolute domain
   
Of Sri Aurobindo, Land of Light Supernal."
   
Grace is the Guardian Deity.
   
Day is done, night extinguished, light for ever light.
   
Endless hues majestic and admirable—
   
Straight and stiff is the ascent,
   
At once quite safe and adventurous.
   
The progress upward, all embracing at every step,
   
Solely depends upon our consent
   
To the helping hands of Grace,
   
Till, pure in being, we approach the abode of Sun-Truth.
   
There the gorgeous splendour,
   
A person Supreme—
   
Image of silence concentrated, patience plenary,
   
Equality deeper than the mightiest ocean.
   
No stir upon His face; all-possessing
   
Faith, the Force marvellous, moves mountains from His ruffleless seat.
   
Folded are our hands in adoration,
   
Our selves forgotten, our souls prostrate
   
Before Him in love and awe—
   
He bathes us in His compassion-light,
   
The consciousness gold-bright that transcends all good and evil.
   
The still ocean of pure Ananda
   
Looked at Him, received an indulgent smile.
   
Found the burden of the universe nothing to bear :
   
To carry its load is to walk erect and straight,
   
All pressure—a grace immense.
   
All love is lifeless without it.
   
The mind though thoughtless is full of a white substance.
   
The whole being
   
Begs his permission to return home,
   
To be with the Mother divine,
   
To live a luminous life, to share her mission,
   
Her Work of victory, to stay with ignorance,
   
And falsehood, to perfect perfection,
   
Find the rhythm of a consciousness
   
In the ancient hopeless Night,
   
Divinity in the body's little instrument.

## KNOWLEDGE

How can God fail to know all  
When, through your eyes or mine,  
He experiences all ?  
He who is everywhere ;  
How shall He be uninformed ?  
He who kisses His own lips  
And has all the delight to Himself ;  
How shall He be destitute of any thing ?  
What beauty is beyond His reach,  
Who encompasses the wholeness ?  
Seek, therefore, to know Him,  
And the time will surely come  
When you also know  
You are He.

IRWIN L. ARLT

## THE PROBLEM OF GOD

HEAVENS and Earth by Him are wrought,  
The Universe is He.  
And yet they say that God is nought,  
Then what is it they see ?  
Matter stretches endlessly  
Beyond all mortals' ken ;  
And so His Body's immensity  
Is measureless for men.  
His Will is working everywhere ;  
Our joys and pains are His.  
The eternal Music that we hear—  
His thrilling speed through skies.  
Life is eternal, and yet all know  
We live to die anon ;  
Awhile we stay, and then we go  
Away to deeps unknown.  
Our joys are Nature's mockery ;  
Dire loss we have in gains ;  
In love we're duped most woefully ;  
Our freedom is bound in chains.  
God smiles at wilful reasonings wild,  
And lets us have our way ;  
All burdens He bears, heavy or mild,  
Awaiting His decreed Day.  
If Death be the final destiny  
Then God is dead and gone ;  
Our world is a lifeless misery,  
And sense it can have none.  
Will God display His Truth august  
Awhile then turn away  
From sorrow-ridden trembling dust  
And Earth's dim dolorous play ?  
God will be born in every heart  
And felt by every one ;  
The world will be His conscious part—  
All differences gone.  
Our joys and mirths will never pall,  
Our souls will brightly shine,  
God's luminous face be seen in all  
And men will turn divine.

SAILEN

## MY STAR

(FOR "CHILDREN")

I HAVE plucked a star from very, very high,  
Mother knows when it was and why. ·  
I hid it with care in my old good sack  
And I came tumbling down the sky.  
Bump ! Straight on an elephant's back !  
I tied its trunk in a tie, charming and smart,  
For believe me, I did not know what it was for  
And I planted my star deep in my heart  
To grow another one and—may be—more.

I looked around—on this earth, soft and wide,  
That was sweetly dozing under the skies  
And I wondered why men here do not laugh  
Or dance and why each heart sighs and sighs.  
Then I dressed like a clown  
In a striped and bright gown,  
I jumped, made faces and stood on my head.  
But they did not smile, they did not laugh  
And I too became very sad.

So I went to Mother and asked Her : "Why ?"  
"Do not worry"—was her gentle reply  
And she smiled and laughed at my funny dress—  
"You have your star from very, very high.  
Embrace it firmly, nurse and never rest,  
Until it grows big like the very sun !  
Then—all the people will come, will run...  
And seeing the star shining through your eye  
They too will laugh and dance to the sky."

JANINA

## THE AWAKENING

AWAKE in me, O latent powers !  
Before life's sun decline.  
There's much to do in the flying hours,  
No more in dreamy daze recline.

The Body has faithfully passed its test,  
Toiling to bring dear friends repose ;  
Its weary limbs now ache for rest ;  
O hidden powers, your flame disclose !

Work in joint harmony with the Mind,  
The willing Heart is ready to serve ;  
Dive deep within, the best to find,  
Losing not faith or nerve.

Grant me the art to live great pictures  
Without the aid of brush or paint,  
So I may bring out as bright victors  
Souls that are weary, broken or faint.

The Adored One's ever ready to help  
And call to the front your very best ;  
The secrets lying in one's true self  
Must wake and answer God's behest.

Like the fountain's stately leaping sprays,  
Send all thoughts rising towards the sky ;  
Make all your aims like beacon rays,  
To guide and help tired passersby.

TIM

## DO YOU REALLY AND TRULY SPEAK ENGLISH ?

Well, do you speak English ? The English language has a vocabulary of about 500,000 words. The creation of new words and senses goes on ceaselessly.

The American contribution, particularly in the 20th Century, has been pronounced.

With the growth of rapid communication, a large number of these Americanisms have crossed the Atlantic and found acceptance. However, the differences that remain tend to be confusing to Americans, on one hand, and to members of the British family of nations, on the other.

An automobile or auto (American) is a motor car or car to the British. Its parts to the British include a bonnet (hood in America), boot (trunk in America), bumper (fender in America) and dynamo (generator in America). The large model is a saloon not a sedan as in America. In this line, too, it's a lorry in Britain but a truck in America. British cars run on petrol while American autos run on gasoline. Kerosene (American) is paraffin (British).

Americans walk on the sidewalk beside the pavement. The pavement is always the road in Britain and the sidewalk is the pavement. Lumber (American) is timber or wood (British) while lumber (British) is junk (American).

Food comes in for differences, too. Chips (British) are French fries (American). Chips (American) are crisps (British). Ground meat (American) is minced meat (British). To broil (American) something is to grill (British) it. Biscuits (American) are scones (British) while biscuits (British) are cookies (American). Candy (American) is sweets (British) and corn (American) is maize (British).

In the factory or plant, as the case may be, a lineman (American) is a setter (British). The British employees take a holiday not a vacation as Americans do. This might be a fortnight—two weeks to Americans. An American stenographer is known as a shorthand typist to the British.

If you live on the first floor (American), it's the ground floor (British). If you live on the first floor (British), it's the second floor (American). Americans may live in an apartment; their British counterparts live in a flat.

Americans buy a lot in order to build a house while the British buy a plot. Trains run on a track (American) but on the permanent way (British). Babies ride in baby buggies (American) but in perambulators or prams in Britain. The housewife puts scraps from the table in the garbage can in America; she puts them in the dustbin in Britain.



When Americans have trouble with their radios or television sets, they are likely to check the tubes, but in Britain it would be necessary to check the valves. American lovers of parakeets have British counterparts loving their budgerigars.

Speak English ? Of course we do.

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POSTSCRIPT!

People don't know how to speak or even write English properly nowadays. You see a pretty girl. She opens her mouth and what do you get ? Bola-bola bola-bola—a series of syllables that mean almost anything.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

*(Reproduced)*

## A NEW MACHINERY OF THE ALPHABET

MANY believe that English orthography is in urgent need of reform and a number of proposals have been made over the years culminating in the Public Trustee's competition under Bernard Shaw's will. All have the same basic fault of approach, however. Without exception the new alphabets have had more symbols than the existing one—a ridiculous admission of failure to realise that the whole modern trend is towards efficiency and streamlining.

To me it seems apparent that there would be strong public support for a decimal alphabet. This would mean that all our communication stems from the same basis and would enable the problems of computer translation, for instance, to be enormously simplified.

With the number of sounds that exist in our language it is obviously impractical to make do with ten letters as such. We have six that are of little purpose and these can be immediately eliminated—C, Q, W, X, Y, Z. Each of these can be represented by other letters, for instance K or S will carry out all the functions of C, U can replace W without difficulty and so on.

This leaves us with twenty symbols, an apparently irreducible minimum. But we already have ten other symbols that we borrowed from the Arabs (while our alphabet is a Roman legacy) and it is surely time that these were integrated. I refer, of course, to our numbers. Looked at with an unprejudiced eye most of them are sufficiently near in appearance to some of our letters so that their substitution would create little difficulty once the initial strangeness so had worn off. The replacements would be as follows :

A would become 4, B 8, E 3, F 7 (this will be even closer when we join the Common Market and adopt the Continental 7), G 6, I 1, L 2, O 0, P 9, and S 5. The revised alphabet would thus read 4 8 D 3 7 6 H 1 J K 2 M N 0 9 R 5 T U V.

Ten letters and ten figures, a perfect decimal basis ! Consider how much easier life will be for those who have to use typewriters.

At the same time an element of spelling reform would be introduced to make what we write bear a little more resemblance to what we say. Equally the archaic use of capital and lower case letters would disappear in favour of majuscules only. The following passage will show how quickly the eye can absorb the new style.

TH<sub>3</sub> 134R IN U<sub>1</sub>T<sub>5</sub>H TH<sub>3</sub> D<sub>35</sub>I<sub>M</sub>4<sub>2</sub> 42783T U<sub>45</sub> 71R<sub>5</sub>T INTRo-  
DUCED To 8RIT<sub>4</sub>IN M<sub>4</sub>RK<sub>3</sub>D 4N 45ToN<sub>15</sub>H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>6</sub> D<sub>3</sub>V<sub>3209</sub>M<sub>3</sub>NT IN  
8151N<sub>355</sub> 37715H<sub>3</sub> N<sub>5</sub>I 4ND oUT9UT

(The year in which the Decimal Alphabet was first introduced to Britain marked an astonishing development in business efficiency and output.)

Plainly the great advantage of the decimal alphabet is that it makes use of existing symbols and therefore of existing machinery and equipment. There would be no need for expensive re-equipment. The present typewriters and type-setting machines could continue until they were worn out, when they could be replaced with the new models. As I have said, computers could be used not only for numerical calculation but for work that has not so far even been contemplated. Not only, for instance, could the Treasury use them for its financial problems but they could be set to drop in the appropriate bromides in the Chancellor's Budget speech without human aid.

The alphabet could also serve as a great force for peace and lead us to utopian millennium undreamed of by philosophers. So far as I can see it will eliminate the possibility of algebra altogether, and with it the greater part of atomic physics—surely the strongest argument that can be devised for its immediate adoption.

A Correspondent in "THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

## IS THE ILIAD A ONE-MAN JOB ?

### AN ELECTRONIC COMPUTER'S REPLY

A GRADUATE student at Columbia University has enlisted the aid of a modern electronic computer to solve a problem of ancient Greek literature—was the Iliad composed by one man? He thinks the answer is “yes.”

James McDonough, who plans to present the study as his doctoral dissertation this fall, said a similar study of the Odyssey might help determine whether the two epics attributed to Homer were actually his work.

“I started out fairly neutral on the question of unity of authorship,” Mr. McDonough said last week. “And the more statistics that the computer turns out, the lists of identical metrical phenomena, the more convinced I am that one man wrote the Iliad.”

The concept of the Iliad as a collection of separate ballads poorly stitched together was formulated by a German scholar in the late eighteenth century and had been widely accepted until very recent years, the 27-year-old graduate student noted.

Now, he said, there is a growing tendency to accept each of the poems as the work of a single author, although there is no general agreement on one author for both the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Mr. McDonough's study is concerned with the metric patterns of the Iliad, which can be analyzed without the introduction of subjective interpretation and judgments.

“The computer makes it physically possible to detect differences in metric pattern which would otherwise be virtually undiscoverable,” he said. “It provides an analysis at such a level of detail as to reveal minute stylistic mannerisms which even the cleverest imitator could not duplicate.”

For each of the 15,693 lines of the Iliad, Mr. McDonough has prepared an .B.M. card punched in a number code that indicates the metric contour of the line. The code shows where words begin and end and where the long and short syllables fall. The information was fed into the computer, which was programmed to count and make complete lists of all lines containing words of the same metrical pattern.

Mr. McDonough is an instructor in classics at St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia. He has devoted four years to working on the project in his spare time. His seventeen-hour teaching schedule last year was arranged so that he could commute to New York and Boston to carry out his work on computers “bor-

rowed" from Columbia, Harvard University, an insurance company and a shoe factory.

On occasion he has worked as long as fifty consecutive hours to make use of a computer that was available only over the week-end. But he points out that the computer has enabled him to prepare in only four years the kind of study to which classical scholars used to devote twenty to forty years.

Mr. McDonough, who has explored the potential uses of the computer for classical studies, has proposed that all of classical literature be recorded on computer tape. With a computer keyed to print in Greek, scholars would be able to draw from the machine's "memory" studies from whatever author they chose.

"Dr. James L. Allen, a famous classical scholar, spent forty-three years compiling a concordance to the Greek dramatist Euripides," Mr. McDonough said. "With an electronic computer, he could have completed the same study in several months."

*(The New York Times, Sunday, August 6, 1961)*

# SANSKRIT SIMPLIFIED

## BOOK I

### LESSON VI

1. In Sanskrit, verbs are used in six tenses and four moods. Of these the Present and the Imperfect (Past, but not of to-day) tenses, and the Imperative and the Potential Moods form a group of their own. They are known as Conjugational or Special Tenses and Moods. And it is for these that Sanskrit Roots are arranged into ten classes, each class having its own particular way of forming the verbal base for taking up the terminations of these Special Tenses and Moods. Each of these classes is in English called a conjugation and in Sanskrit a Gana गण.

These ten conjugations are again in their turn arranged into two groups. The First Group consists of the first, the fourth, the sixth and the tenth conjugations, and the Second Group of the remaining ones, *i.e.*, the second, the third, the fifth, the seventh, the eighth, and the ninth conjugations.

But, for the present, we shall deal with the conjugations of the First Group only, in which the verbal bases shall always end in ञ, and once these verbal bases are ready, the terminations of the Conjugational Tenses and Moods will be applied to them all in exactly the same manner.

Besides, there are two sets of terminations for each of the ten Tenses and Moods — 1. Parasmaipada (P.) परस्मैपद (प.), 2. Atmanepada (A.) आत्मनेपद (आ.).

Of the Sanskrit Roots numbering over two thousand, some take only the Parasmaipada variety of terminations, some only the Atmanepada variety, and there are some others which are capable of taking both the varieties of terminations. They belong to Ubhayapada (U.) उभयपद (उ.).

Henceforward we shall use the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. to indicate the Conjugation गण, P. or प. to indicate Parasmaipada and A. or आ,

for Atmanepada, and the abbreviation 'c.v.b.' for the Conjugational verbal base.

The Future Tense, though belonging to the Second Group of Tenses and Moods, known as the Non-Conjugational Tenses and Moods, takes the Present Tense terminations with the Future Tense sign स्य (ष्य or इष्य) before them. We can therefore learn it easily along with the Present Tense, if we only know the base for the Future (F.b.). With this end in view, we would give the Future-base also along with the conj. verbal base (c.v.b.).

2. We now give here all the roots we have learnt, with their Conjugation, Pada, meaning and the two verbal bases :—

Root-Conj. Pada	Meaning	c.v.b	F.b.
१. वद्—१. प.	to speak	वद	वदिष्य
२. लिख्—६. प.	to write	लिख	लेखिष्य
३. भज्—१. उ.	to worship	भज	भक्ष्य
४. त्यज्—१. प.	to abandon	त्यज	त्यक्ष्य
५. नम्—१. प.	to bow to	नम	नंस्य
६. खाद्—१. प.	to eat	खाद	खादिष्य
७. पा—१. प.	to drink	पिब	पास्य
८. गम्—१. प.	to go	गच्छ	गमिष्य
९. वृश्—१. प.	to see	पश्य	द्रक्ष्य
१०. ह्—१. उ.	to take away	हर	हरिष्य
११. भू—१. प.	to become	भव	भविष्य
१२. पठ्—१. प.	to read, study	पठ	पठिष्य
१३. वस्—१. प.	to dwell	वस	वत्स्य
१४. रक्ष्—१. प.	to protect	रक्ष	रक्षिष्य
१५. विश्—६. प.	to enter	विश	वेश्य
१६. उप-विश्—६. प.	to sit	उपविश	उपवेश्य
१७. उद्-इ—१. प.	to rise	उदय	उदेष्य
१८. भक्ष्—१०. उ.	to eat, devour	भक्षय	भक्षयिष्य
१९. आ-गम्—१. प.	to come	आगच्छ	आगमिष्य
२०. क्रीड्—१. प.	to play	क्रीड	क्रीडिष्य
२१. नी—१. उ.	to lead, carry etc.	नय	नेष्य
२२. आ-नी—१. उ.	to bring	आनय	आनेष्य
२३. कृष्—१. प.	to draw	कर्ष	कर्ष्य, ऋक्ष्य
२४. उत्-कृष्—१. प.	to draw up	उत्कर्ष	उत्कर्ष्य, उत्ऋक्ष्य
२५. स्था—१. प.	to stand	तिष्ठ	स्थास्य

२६. उत्-स्था—१. प.	to get up	उत्तिष्ठ	उत्थास्य
२७. रुह्—१. प.	to grow, mount	रोह	रोक्ष्य
२८. आ-रुह्—१. प.	to mount, climb	आरोह	आरोक्ष्य
२९. आ-कर्ण—१०. उ.	to hear	आकर्णय	आकर्णयिष्य
३०. गर्ज्—१. प.	to roar, thunder	गर्ज	गर्जिष्य
३१. सम्-ऋ—१. प.	(causal) to offer	समर्पय	समर्पयिष्य
३२. रच्—१०. उ.	to compose, arrange	रचय	रचयिष्य
३३. पत्—१. प.	to fall	पत	पतिष्य
३४. तृ—१. प.	to swim, cross over	तर	तरिष्य, तरीष्य
३५. साध्—५. प.	(causal) to accomplish	साधय	साधयिष्य
३६. विद्—६. उ.	to obtain	विन्द	वेत्स्य, वेदिष्य
३७. सम्-आ-ह्—१. उ.	to gather	समाहर	समाहरिष्य
३८. वि-ह्—१. उ.	to sport	विहर	विहरिष्य
३९. स्रम्-ह्—१. उ.	to destroy, draw back	संहर	संह्रिष्य
४०. स्मृ—१. प.	to remember	स्मर	स्मरिष्य
४१. वि-स्मृ—१. प.	to forget	विस्मर	विस्मरिष्य
४२. गै—१. प.	to sing	गाय	गास्य
४३. ध्ये—१. प.	to meditate upon	ध्याय	ध्यास्य
४४. कूज्—१. प.	to chirp, warble	कूज	कूजिष्य
४५. जीव्—१. प.	to live, be alive	जीव	जीविष्य
४६. अनु-भू—१. प.	to experience, enjoy	अनुभव	अनुभविष्य
४७. पुष्प्—४. प.	to flower	पुष्प्य	पुष्पिष्य
४८. नश्—४. प.	to perish	नश्य	नशिष्य, नक्ष्य
४९. सृज्—६. प.	to create	सृज	स्रक्ष्य
५०. स्पृश्—६. प.	to touch	स्पृश	स्प्रक्ष्य, स्पृक्ष्य
५१. चर्—१. प.	to walk, practise	चर	चरिष्य
५२. चल्—१. प.	to move	चल	चलिष्य

3. We give some examples of the bases, conjugated in the Present and the Future.

वद्—१. प. to speak—c.v.b. वद, F.b. वदिष्य

Present			Future		
१. वदामि	वदावः	वदामः	वदिष्यामि	वदिष्यावः	वदिष्यामः
२. वदसि	वदथः	वदथ	वदिष्यसि	वदिष्यथः	वदिष्यथ
३. वदति	वदतः	वदन्ति	वदिष्यति	वदिष्यतः	वदिष्यन्ति

गम्—१. प. to go—c.v.b. गच्छ, F.b. गमिष्य

Present			Future		
१. गच्छामि	गच्छावः	गच्छामः	गमिष्यामि	गमिष्यावः	गमिष्यामः
२. गच्छसि	गच्छथः	गच्छथ	गमिष्यसि	गमिष्यथः	गमिष्यथ



३. गच्छति गच्छतः गच्छन्ति गमिष्यति गमिष्यतः गमिष्यन्ति

All conj. verbal bases and Future Tense bases can be similarly conjugated.

The root अस्—2.P. to be and कृ—8.P.A. to do belong to the Second Group of conjugations; but as they are among the most commonly used roots, we give here their Present and Future Tense forms.

अस्—2.P. to be, substituted by भू in the Future.

Present		Future		
१. अस्मि	स्वः स्मः	भविष्यामि	भविष्यावः	भविष्यामः
२. असि	स्थः स्थ	भविष्यसि	भविष्यथः	भविष्यथ
३. अस्ति	स्तः सन्ति	भविष्यति	भविष्यतः	भविष्यन्ति

कृ—8.P. to do

Present		Future		
१. करोमि	कुर्वः कुर्मः	करिष्यामि	करिष्यावः	करिष्यामः
२. करोषि	कुरुथः कुरुथ	करिष्यसि	करिष्यथः	करिष्यथ
३. करोति	कुरुतः कुर्वन्ति	करिष्यति	करिष्यतः	करिष्यन्ति

#### 4. Translate :—

१. ईश्वरस्य कृपा एव परमः लाभः। २. अन्ते तु पापस्य पराजयः भवति ३. इन्दीवराणाम् वर्णः नीलः अस्ति। ४. हृदये हृदये इन्दीवरश्यामः रामः निवसति। ५. प्रभाते प्रभाकरः पूर्वदिशायाम् उदयति। ६. उदयस्य समये सूर्यस्य बिम्बं सुवर्ण-वर्णम् भवति। ७. पूर्णचन्द्रः प्रदोषे पूर्वदिशायाम् उदयति। ८. सुधाकरस्य बिम्बं श्वेतवर्णम् भवति। ९. सूर्यस्य किरणाः उष्णाः, चन्द्रस्य तु शीतलाः सन्ति। १०. नद्यः सागरम् उद्दिश्य प्रवहन्ति। ११. गङ्गा च यमुना च हिमाचलस्य पुत्र्यौ स्तः। १२. गङ्गायाः तोयम् शुभ्रम्, यमुनायाः तु श्यामम् अस्ति। १३. यथा कृष्णः श्यामः तथा एव काली अपि श्यामा। १४. आलस्यम् अस्माकम् (our) शरीरे तिष्ठति। १५. आलस्यम् एव नराणाम् नारीणाम् च महाशत्रुः। १६. उद्यमेन समः कोऽपि बन्धुः न अस्ति। १७. सत्पुरुषाः पुण्यम् एव आचरन्ति। १८. दुर्जनाः पापे प्रीतिम् कुर्वन्ति। १९. मनुष्याः पापैः नश्यन्ति। २०. पापम् सुकृतानि भक्षयति। २१. सुजनाः धर्मम् एव आचरन्ति ततः च आत्मसुखम् अनुभवन्ति। २२. व्याघ्रः अटव्याम् पर्यटति रात्रिवेलायाम्। २३. सिंहाः पर्वतानाम् कन्दरासु गर्जन्ति। २४. दिवससमये सिंहाः व्याघ्राः च शीतलायाम् छायायाम् संविशन्ति। २५. उद्यमेन विना किमपि कार्यम् न सिध्यति। २६. रामः सीतया लक्ष्मणेन च सह वनवासाय गच्छति। २७. मृगाः स्वयम् एव सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य व्याघ्रस्य वा मुखे न प्रविशन्ति। २८. दिनवेलायाम् अपि हिमालयस्य गहनासु गुहासु घनः अन्धकारः भवति। २९. राधया विना कृष्णः कृष्णेन च विना राधा न सम्भवति। ३०. द्रौपद्या सह पाण्डवाः घोरं वनम् विशन्ति ॥

## 5. New Words :

१. परम—वि. great, supreme. २. अन्त—पुं. end. ३. वर्ण—पुं. colour.  
 ४. नील—वि. blue. ५. वेला—स्त्री. time. ६. पूर्व—वि. eastern. ७. दिशा—स्त्री.  
 direction. ८. उदय—पुं. rise. ९. समय—पुं. time. १०. प्रभाकर—पुं. sun  
 ११. सुधाकर—पुं. moon. १२. किरण—पुं. ray. १३. प्र-वह्—१. उ. to flow—  
 c.v.b. प्रवह, F.b. प्रवक्ष्य. १४. काल—पुं. time. १५. बिम्ब—पु. न. disc. १६. सुवर्ण—  
 न. gold. १७. पूर्ण—वि. full. १८. श्वेत—वि. white. १९. प्रभा—स्त्री. light,  
 lustre. २०. शीतल—वि. cool. २१. उष्ण—वि. hot. २२. उद्दिश्य—अ. towards,  
 in the direction of. २३. हिमाचल—पुं. the mountain Himalaya. २४. श्याम  
 —वि. dark. २५. शुभ्र—वि. white, bright. २६. काली—स्त्री. Goddess Kali.  
 २७. नारी—स्त्री. woman. २९. कोऽपि— some, any (कः अपि). २९. किमपि—  
 any, some. ३०. सत्पुरुष—पुं.—सज्जन—पुं. ३१. आ-चर्—१. प. to perform. c.v.b. आचर,  
 F.b. आचरिष्य. ३२. प्रीति—स्त्री. fondness, pleasure. ३३. सुकृत—न.—पुण्य—न.  
 good deed. ३४. शुभ—वि. good. ३५. ततः—अ. on account of that, there-  
 fore. ३६. अनु-भू—१. प. to experience, to enjoy. c.v.b. अनुभव, F.b.  
 अनुभविष्य. ३७. अटवी—स्त्री. forest, wood. ३८. परि-अद्—१. प. to wander  
 or roam about. c.v.b. पर्यट, F.b. पर्यटिष्य. ३९. रात्रि-त्री—स्त्री. night.  
 ४०. छाया—स्त्री. shade. ४१. सम्-विश्—६. प. to sleep, rest or lie down.  
 c.v.b. संविश, F.b. संवेक्ष्य. ४२. विना—अ. without (used with द्वितीया,  
 तृतीया, पञ्चमी of the noun or pronoun governed by this preposition).  
 ४३. सह—अ. with (used with तृतीया of the noun or pronoun governed  
 by this preposition.) ४४. स्वयम्—अ. oneself. ४५. वा—अ. or (used  
 after each word or placed at the end of the two words joined by 'or'.)  
 ४६. गहन—वि. deep. ४७. गुहा—स्त्री. cave. ४८. घन—वि. dense. ४९. अन्धकार—  
 पुं. darkness. ५०. सम्-भू—१. प. to be possible, to exist, to be born.  
 c.v.b. संभव, F.b. संभविष्य. ५१. घोर—वि. frightful. ५२. प्राप्त—pp. वि. reached.  
 ५३. मकर—पुं. crocodile. ५४. वाहन—न. vehicle. ५५. वाक्य—न. sentence.

## ६. सन्धि

Applying your knowledge of the Sandhi Rules you have learnt, effect all possible Sandhis in the sentences given for translation. The following Sandhi-formulas will be of use.

१. अ or आ+ए or ऐ=ऐ for both. २. अः+घोष=ओ+घोष. ३. अः+अ  
 =ओः. ४. ए, ऐ, ओ, औ+स्वर =अय्, आय्, अव्, आव्+स्वर respectively.  
 ५. आः+घोष=आ+घोष. ६. विसर्ग+त or थ=स्त or स्थ. ७. इ or ई+स्वर  
 ( other than इ or ई )=य्+स्वर. ८. इः...औः+घोष or स्वर=इर् ..और्+घोष  
 or स्वर. ९. अ or आ+अ or आ=आ for both. १०. विसर्ग+च् or छ्=इच् or इछ्

7.

श्लोकः ११

लाभस्तेषां जयस्तेषां कुतस्तेषां पराजयः ।  
 येषामिन्दीवरश्यामो हृदयस्थो जनार्दनः ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— लाभः gain (लाभ-पुं. gain); तेषाम् their, theirs; जयः victory (जय-पुं. victory); तेषाम्; कुतः—अ. whence, from where, how. तेषाम्; पराजयः defeat (पराजय-पुं. defeat, failure); येषाम् whose; इन्दीवर-श्यामः dark blue like the blue lotus (इन्दीवर-न. blue lotus— श्याम-वि. dark-blue); हृदय-स्थः seated in the heart (हृदय-न. heart—स्थ seated, staying, or situated); जनार्दनः an epithet of God Vishnu, Krishna. one towards whom people turn in prayer.

इन्दीवरश्यामः जनार्दनः येषाम् हृदयस्थः (वर्तते is) तेषाम् लाभः, तेषाम् जयः (भवति); तेषाम् पराजयः कुतः (भवेत् would be) ?

Translation : Theirs is the gain and theirs the victory, in whose heart dwells Janardana, the God of (our) prayers, who is (in complexion) dark-blue like the blue lotus.

श्लोकः १२

आकाशात्पतितं तोयं यथा गच्छति सागरम् ।  
 सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवम् प्रति गच्छति ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— आकाशात् from the sky ( आकाश-न. पुं. sky); पतितम् fallen; तोयम् water; यथा (तथा) अ. just as; गच्छति goes; सागरम् to the sea; सर्व-देव-नमस्कारः obeisance offered to all gods ( नमस्कार-पुं. obeisance); केशवम् to Keshava, epithet of God Vishnu; प्रति—अ. towards (governs the accusative case); गच्छति ॥

आकाशात् पतितम् तोयम् यथा सागरम् (प्रति) गच्छति, (तथा) सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवम् प्रति गच्छति ॥

Translation : — Just as water fallen from the sky goes to the sea, obeisance offered to all gods goes to Keshava, the Divine Vishnu.

श्लोकः १३

आलस्यं हि मनुष्याणां शरीरस्थो महारिपुः ।  
 नास्त्युद्यमसमो बन्धुः कृत्वा यं नावसीदति ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— आलस्यम् laziness (आलस्य-न. laziness); हि—अ. itself, only, alone (lays emphasis on an idea); मनुष्याणाम् of men (मनुष्य-पुं. man, human being); शरीर-स्थः residing in the body (शरीर-न. body — स्थ

residing or staying); महा-रिपुः the great enemy (महत्-वि. great, becoming महा in the beginning of some kinds of compounds) — रिपु-पुं. =शत्रु-पुं. enemy); न not; अस्ति is; उद्यम-सम. like effort or industry (उद्यम-पुं. =उद्योग-पुं. industry, work -सम-वि. like, equal to); बन्धुः friend (बन्धु-पुं. friend, kinsman); कृत्वा having done (by doing); यम् which, whom; न; अवसीदति (one) perishes, gets ruined (अव-सद्-१. प. to end, perish—c.v.b. अवसीद, F.b. अवसत्स्य);

आलस्यं हि मनुष्याणाम् शरीरस्थः महारिपुः (अस्ति) । उद्यमसमः बन्धुः न अस्ति । यम् (उद्यमम्) कृत्वा (मनुष्यः) न अवसीदति ॥

Translation : Laziness alone, dwelling in the body, is the great enemy of men; there is no friend who can equal industrious work, by doing which one does not get ruined.

श्लोकः १४

उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति कार्याणि न मनोरथैः ।  
न हि सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य प्रविशन्ति मुखे मृगाः ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—उद्यमेन by industry; हि-अ. alone; सिध्यन्ति are accomplished (सिद्-४. प. to be accomplished, c.v.b. सिध्य, F.b. सेत्स्य); कार्याणि works, undertakings (कार्यं-न. work, affair, duty, etc.); न not; मनोरथैः by wishings (मनोरथ-पुं. wishing, desire, etc.); न not; हि-अ. indeed, surely (never used in the beginning of a sentence); सुप्तस्य of one asleep (सुप्त-वि. p.p. asleep); सिंहस्य of the lion; प्र-विशन्ति enter (प्र-विश्-६. प. to enter, c.v.b. प्रविश, F.b. प्रवेक्ष्य); मुखे in the mouth; मृगाः deer (मृग-पुं. deer, an animal in general).

कार्याणि उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति, मनोरथैः न (सिध्यन्ति) । मृगाः सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य मुखे न हि प्रविशन्ति ॥

Translation : (It is) not by (mere) wishings but by industry (hard work) alone (that our) objects are accomplished : indeed deer do not (of themselves) enter into the mouth of a sleeping lion.

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