

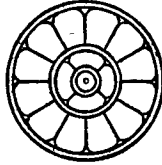
MOTHER INDIA

JANUARY, 1963

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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. 11

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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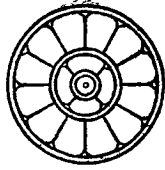
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THE MOTHER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

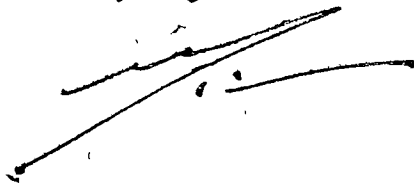
1963

L'Heure de Dieu
est proche : il faut se
préparer.



1963

Let us prepare for
the Hour of God



THE HOUR OF GOD

SRI AUROBINDO

There are moments when the Spirit moves among men and the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being; there are others when it retires and men are left to act in the strength or the weakness of their own egoism. The first are periods when even a little effort produces great results and changes destiny; the second are spaces of time when much labour goes to the making of a little result. It is true that the latter may prepare the former, may be the little smoke of sacrifice going up to heaven which calls down the rain of God's bounty.

Unhappy is the man or the nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call. But thrice woe to them who are strong and ready, yet waste the force or misuse the moment; for them is irreparable loss or a great destruction.

In the hour of God cleanse thy soul of all self-deceit and hypocrisy and vain self-flattering that thou mayst look straight into thy spirit and hear that which summons it. All insincerity of nature, once thy defence against the eye of the Master and the light of the ideal, becomes now a gap in thy armour and invites the blow. Even if thou conquer for the moment, it is the worse for thee, for the blow shall come afterwards and cast thee down in the midst of thy triumph. But being pure cast aside all fear; for the hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God; but he who can stand up in it on the truth of his purpose is he who shall stand; even though he fall, he shall rise again; even though he seem to pass on the wings of the wind, he shall return. Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear; for it is the hour of the unexpected.

THE HOURS OF GODS

WE believe in the constant progression of humanity and we hold that that progression is the working out of a Thought in Life which sometimes manifests itself on the surface and sometimes sinks below and works behind the mask of external forces and interests. When there is this lapse below the surface, humanity has its periods of apparent retrogression or tardy evolution, its long hours of darkness or twilight during which the secret Thought behind works out one of its phases by the pressure mainly of economic, political and personal interests ignorant of any deeper aim within. When the Thought returns to the surface, humanity has its periods of light and of rapid efflorescence, its dawns and splendid springtides; and according to the depth, vitality, truth and self-effective energy of the form of Thought that emerges is the importance of the stride forward that it makes during these Hours of Gods in our terrestrial manifestation.

SRI AUROBINDO

(From "Our Aim" in the ARYA, August 1914)

*
**

Above blind fate and the antagonist powers
Moveless there stands a high unchanging Will;
To its omnipotence leave thy work's result.
All things shall change in God's transfiguring hour.

SRI AUROBINDO

(Savitri, Book III, Canto 4.)

THE MOTHER'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

25-12-1962

Que la Lumière nouvelle illumine vos pensées et vos vies, gouverne vos cœurs et guide votre action.

Let the new Light illumine your thoughts and your lives, govern your hearts and guide your action.

WORDS OF THE MOTHER

(The Mother was asked how sadhakas should interpret a certain recent event of national importance. She put the index fingers of both her hands across her lips. Then she made a statement, on which the following report is based.)

BETTER not to pronounce anything. People see only a little way. The Divine sees much further. And there is a Truth which has to find its place on earth and create its own order. If people are quiet and allow it to come as it wants, things can be worked out smoothly. If there is resistance, an amount of breaking is bound to result. You may not know what exactly the Truth is, but if you keep constantly the will that this Truth, whatever it may be, should be established, you will work for its arrival. If you start thinking one way or the other, you may not put yourself in harmony with it. When you preserve a calm consciousness and concentrate only on the victory of the Truth, you help the Divine's Will to manifest. And this is what you must do always instead of deciding for yourself. Silently put forth all your strength of aspiration and resolution for the swift establishment of the Divine's Truth.

25-11-1962

THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

I HAVE already let you know that I approve both the people whose photographs you have sent me. As to BBD you are right in thinking that he is a born yogin. His face shows the type of the Sufi or Arab mystic and he must certainly have been that in a former life and brought much of his then personality into the present existence. There are defects and limitations in his being. The narrowness of the physical mind of which you speak is indicated in the photograph, though it has not come out in the expression, and it might push him in the direction of a rather poverty-stricken asceticism instead of his expanding and opening himself richly to the opulences of the Divine. It might also lead him in other circumstances to some kind of fanaticism. But on the other hand if he gets the right direction and opens himself to the right powers these things may be turned into valuable elements, the ascetic capacity into a force useful against the physico-vital dangers and what might have been fanaticism into an intense devotion to the Truth revealed to him. There is also likely to be some trouble in the physico-vital being. But I cannot yet say of what nature. This is not a case of an entirely safe development, which can be assured only where there is a strong vital and physical basis and a certain natural balance in the different parts of the being. This balance has here to be created and its creation is quite possible. Whatever risk there is must be taken; for the nature here is born for the yoga and ought not to be denied its opportunity. He must be made to understand fully the character and demands of the Integral Yoga.

Next for KKM. He is no doubt what you say, a type of the rich and successful man, but the best kind of that type and cast on sound and generous lines. There is besides indicated in his face and expression a refinement and capacity of idealism which is not too common. Certainly we are not to take people into the yoga for the sake of their riches, but on the other hand we must not have the disposition to reject anyone on account of his riches. If wealth is a great obstacle, it is also a great opportunity, and part of the aim of our work is, not to reject, but to conquer for the divine self-expression the vital and material powers, including that of wealth, which are now in the possession of other influences. If then a man like this is prepared with an earnest and real will to bring himself and his power over from the other camp to ours, there is no reason to refuse him. This of course is not the case of a man born to the yoga like BB, but of one who has an opening in him to a spiritual awakening and I think of a nature which might possibly fail from certain negative deficiencies but not because of any adverse element in the being. The one necessity is that he should

understand and accept what the yoga demands of him,—first the seeking of a greater Truth, secondly the consecration of himself and his powers and wealth to its service and finally the transformation of all his life into the terms of the Truth,—and that he should have not merely the enthusiastic turning of his idealism but a firm and deliberate will towards it. It is especially necessary in the case of these rich men for them to realise that it is not enough in this yoga to have a spiritual endeavour on one side and on the other the rest of the energies given to the ordinary motives, but that the whole life and being must be consecrated to the yoga. It is probably from this reason of a divided life that men like AS fail to progress in spite of a natural capacity. If this is understood and accepted, the consecration of which he speaks is obviously in his circumstances the first step in the path. If he enters it it will probably be advisable for him to come after a short time and see me in Pondicherry. But this of course has to be decided afterwards...

P.S. After this letter was finished I got your last of the 12th. What you say about KK there is what I could already gather about him, only made precise. I do not think that these things very much matter. All strong natures have the rajasik active outgoing force in them and if that were sufficient to unfit for the yoga, very few of us would have had a chance. As for the doubt of the physical mind as to whether the thing is possible, who has not had it ? In my own case it pursued me for years and years and it is only in the last two years that the last shadow of doubt, not latterly of its theoretical feasibility, but of the practical certainty of its achievement in the present state of the world and of the human nature, entirely left me. The same thing can be said of the egoistic poise, that almost all strong men have the strong egoistic poise. But I do not think judging from the photograph that it is of the same half bull and half bull-dog nature as in PM. These things can only go with spiritual development and experience and then the strength behind them becomes an asset. It is also evident from what you say about his past experience of the voice and the vastness that there is, as I thought, a psychic something in him waiting for and on the verge of spiritual awakening. I understand that he is waiting for intellectual conviction and, to bring it, some kind of assurance from an inner experience. To that also there is nothing to say. But the question is, and it seems to me the one question in his case, whether he will be ready to bring to the yoga the firm entire and absolute will and consecration that will be needed to tide him through all the struggles and crises of the Sadhana. The disparity between his mental poise and his action is natural enough, precisely because it is a mental poise. It has to become a spiritual poise before the life and the ideal can become one. Have the spoiling by luxury of which you speak and the worldly life sapped in him the possibility of developing an entire Godward will ? If not, then he may be given his chance. I cannot positively say that he is or will be the *adhikārī*. I can only say that there is the capacity in the best part of his nature. I cannot

also say that he is among the "best". But he seems to me to have more original capacity than some at least who have been accepted. When I wrote about the "best" I did not mean an *ādhāra* without defects and dangers; for I do not think such a one is to be found. My impression of course is founded on a general favourable effect produced by the physiognomy and the appearance, on certain definite observations upon the same and on psychic indications which were mixed but in the balance favourable. I have not seen the man as you have. Take the sum he offers, do not press him for more at present and for the rest, let him understand clearly not only what the yoga is, but the great demands it makes on the nature. See how he turns and whether he cannot be given his chance.

16th April, 1923

FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

SOME LAUGHS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

N : Again a blessed boil inside the left nostril—painful. A dose of the Force, please, to cure it !

SRI AUROBINDO : As the modern poet says,

O blessed blessed boil within the nostril,
How with pure pleasure dost thou make thy boss thrill !
He sings of thee with sobbing trill and cross-trill,
O blessed blessed boil within the nostril.

I hope this *stotra* will propitiate the boil and make it disappear, satisfied.

(5-9-1936)

N : What do you think of X after my account of his doings ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What a fellow ! He blunders through life stumbling over every possible or impossible stone of offence with a conscientious thoroughness that is unimaginable and inimitable.

(27-3-1936)

N : What is this you have written about X being busy over a “message” ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There is nothing about “message”. Marriage, marriage—two marriages, in fact. Not that he is going to marry 2 wives, but he is going to see the misfortune of two others consummated and gloat over it.

(18-3-1937)

N : I hear that Y has expressed some grievances to you.

SRI AUROBINDO : Well, what about the free Englishman’s right to grumble? This is not London and there is no “Times” to write to. So he writes a letter to me instead of to the “Times”.

(20-5-1937)

N : Getting fat and losing hair—this I fear very much.

SRI AUROBINDO : What one fears is usually what happens. Even if there were no other disposition, the fear calls it in. Who knows, if you had not feared, you might have had the waist of a race-winner and the hair of a Samson.

(29-7-1937)

N : I hear from all quarters that you are buried in letters. In the near future there will be millions and millions of letters heaped upon your supramental segregation, if you don't relinquish it soon and come out boldly.

SRI AUROBINDO : Come out and have millions and millions of admirers heaped upon my promiscuity ? Thank you for nothing ! The letters can be thrown into the W.P.B. more easily than the admirers can be thrown out of the window. (27-3-1936)

N : Many things in your writings are difficult to understand. What are we to do ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Well, but haven't I told you that the supramental can't be understood by the intellect ? So necessarily or at least logically if I become supramental and speak supramentally I must be unintelligible to everybody. Q.E.D. It is not a threat, only the statement of a natural evolution. (25-8-1937)

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

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

This is the twenty-third 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 18, 1939

N READ out to Sri Aurobindo some passages from Aldous Huxley's *Ends and Means*. They were on war, passive resistance, non-attachment, the Jacobins, Caesar, Napoleon and dictators in general. The last was: "More books have been written about Napoleon than about any other human being. The fact is deeply and alarmingly significant.... Duces and Fuhrers will cease to plague the world only when the majority of its inhabitants regard such adventurers with the same disgust as they now bestow on swindlers and pimps. So long as men worship Caesars and Napoleons, Caesars and Napoleons will duly rise and make them miserable." (P. 99)

SRI AUROBINDO : All that is shallow, it is mere moralising. If Caesar and Napoleon are not to be admired, then it means that human capacity and attainment are not to be admired. Caesar and Napoleon have been admired not merely because they were "successful". Plenty of successful people are not admired. Caesar has won admiration because it was he who founded the greatness of Imperial Rome which gave us one of the greatest periods of human civilisation. And we admire Napoleon because he was a great organiser and he stabilised the French Revolution. He organised France and, through France, the whole of Europe. His immense powers and abilities—are these things not great ?

P : I suppose men admire them because they find in them the realisation of their own potential greatness.

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course. But Huxley speaks of Caesar and Napoleon as if they were the first dictators the world had seen. There have been dictators since the beginning of the world. And they are of various kinds. Kemal, Pilsudski, all the kings of the Balkan states, as well as Stalin and Hitler, are all dictators. Even Gandhu, if he were put at the head of a free India, could be a dictator. My own father can be called the dictator of Rangpur or Khulna ! The dictators come in answer to the necessity of the hour. When men and nations are in conflict with their surrounding conditions, when there is confusion all about, the dictators come, set things right and pull the race out of its difficulties.

As for the Jacobins, with whom Huxley finds fault, I have been thinking of Laski's view. Laski is perfectly right in saying that the Jacobins saved the Republic. If they had not concentrated power in their hands, the Germans would have marched on Paris and crushed the new Republic at the very start and restored the old monarchy. It was because of the Jacobins that the Bourbons, even when they returned, had to accept constitutional monarchy. Louis XVIII and all the kings in Europe were obliged, more or less, to accept the principle of democracy.

It is true that in Napoleon's time the Assembly was only a shadow, but the full Republic, although delayed for some time, was in fact already established. Politics is only a show at the top : the real changes that matter are those that come into society. The social laws introduced by Napoleon have continued till this day. It was he who made for the first time all men equal before the Law. The *Code Napoléon* bridged the gulf between the rich and the poor. This kind of equality seems very natural now, but, when he introduced it, it was something revolutionary. The laws he laid down hold still. What he established may not have been democracy in the sense of government by the Masses, but it was democracy in the sense of government by the Middle Class, the Bourgeoisie.

On the topic of war, Huxley speaks as if there were always an alternative between military violence and non-violent peaceful development. But things are never like that : they don't move in a perfect way. If Napoleon had not come, the Republic would have been smothered in its infancy and democracy would have suffered a setback. No, the Cosmic Spirit is not so foolish as to allow that. Carlyle puts the situation more realistically when he says that the condition was : "I kill you or you kill me. So it is better that I kill you than get killed by you."

P : Huxley says war is avoidable.

SRI AUROBINDO : When intellectuals talk of these things, they get into a muddle. How is war avoidable ? How can you prevent war so long as the

other fellow wants to fight ? You can prevent it only by becoming stronger than he or, (*smiling*) as Gandhi says, by changing his heart by passive resistance.

And even there Gandhi has been forced to admit that none has understood his passive resistance except himself. It is not very promising for Satyagraha; in fact, it is a condemnation of it, considering that it is intended to be a general solution for all men. What some did in several places in India is not Satyagraha but Duragraha.¹

N : Huxley speaks of spirituality.

SRI AUROBINDO : Spirituality is all right, but in what way is it to be got ?

P : He speaks of the ideal non-attached men who must practise virtue disinterestedly.

SRI AUROBINDO : No doubt, no doubt ! But how are you to get them ? And when you have got them how are the attached people to accept the non-attached ? And how will the non-attached men get their decisions accepted and carried out by the attached ?

It is all a solution by the mind. The mind has not been able to change human nature fundamentally. It cannot succeed so long as it works on its own principles. It accepts an ideal and tries to work it out but it is not a sovereign consciousness. You can go on changing human institutions and yet the imperfection will break through all your institutions.

P : The other day you spoke of the inrush of Forces during certain periods of history—the Greek and the Arab periods, for example. Can we speak similarly not of an inrush but of a descent of some Higher Force in case of men like Buddha and Christ ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course. It is a descent of a Higher Force, which works at first in one man, then in a group and then extends its influence to mankind. In the case of Mahommed—and here is another dictator for you !—the descent corresponded with the extension, the expansion, in life. But the descent may be just an inner one in the beginning and only gradually spread to other men and later extend outwards.

S : Many spiritual figures have come and tried to make our life spiritual. But the world remains the same.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Here also what happens is that the new Force gets mixed up with the powers that are already there. What happens is that the powers of Falsehood try at first to resist the spiritual descent. When they fail, they accept it in order to break it. Look, for instance, at Christianity. When it came, it was much oppressed, and afterwards it in its turn became oppressive. Never has there been such an amount of oppression and persecution. I dare say many of the Christian martyrs who died for the cause had a spirit of revenge—the feeling that if they got a chance they would take revenge for what they

¹ Obstnacy.

were made to suffer. And the Christians did take revenge when they got the power. So the passive resistance of Christianity became in the end a movement of persecution. It is the vital mixture—the mixture of the life-forces—that comes in and corrupts the whole spiritual movement.

Even Lenin had an idea of this truth. He said : “We must keep our ideal absolutely pure. So long as we with our 150,000-strong Communist party remain pure and are faithful to our ideal, nothing can resist us.” And it was quite true; for as long as they were able to do that, Communism was really successful.

Hitler too had a glimpse of the same truth. When he killed one of his prominent followers for immorality, he was not quite hypocritical even though he had known about it before. In some vague way he felt that the Nazi party must be kept pure if it were to succeed.

It is because of the vital mixture always that I want to bring down a Power which I call or refer to as the Truth-Consciousness which will admit none of it, no compromise with the lower forces, the powers of Falsehood. By the Truth-Consciousness I mean a dynamic divine Consciousness. This Power must govern even the minutest detail of the life and action of man. The question is to bring it down and establish it on earth and keep it pure. For, there is always a gravitational pull downwards. So the spiritual power must be such that it can not only resist but overcome that pull.

This is the solution that I propose. It is a spiritual solution that aims at changing the whole basis of human nature. But it is not a question of a moment or a few years. There can be no real solution unless you establish spirituality as the whole basis of life.

S : So the Truth-Consciousness will take a long time to act upon the whole world ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. But there must be a few—a race of Gods on earth—who will at first embody the new Power and then radiate it throughout the world like waves. When this force of action is established in the world, humanity will gradually turn towards it.

It was because of the difficulty of changing human nature—crooked human nature which Vivekananda called “the dog’s curled tail”—that the ascetic path advocated flying from the world as the only remedy. Nobody could think it possible to change human nature and so everybody said : “Drop it.”

S : There is an idea among some people here that even those who have gone into Laya—liberation—will have to come back to change their nature.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why should they come back ?

P : I believe what is meant is that Buddha, Shankara and others who went into Laya and accepted escape from Nature have not really got liberation.

SRI AUROBINDO : They got the liberation of the spirit and that is what they wanted.

P : The question may be put like this : Could their escape be considered to be against the fiat of the Divine ?

SRI AUROBINDO : But why should it be so considered ? If the Divine in them chose that path, the question settles itself.

P : Could they really drop their nature ? What becomes of the mind, the vital being and the physical ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What do you mean by "their nature" ? They have no longer any nature when they enter into Laya : they drop it.

S : Cannot the human soul, the psychic being, escape ?

SRI AUROBINDO : As I say, if you want to escape, you may. To accept the transformation or to escape is your own affair, but if you accept my idea of the world the truth of evolution stands.

S : But the solution is very difficult, Sir—at least to me.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is not at all easy. One way of looking at transformation is as the Tamil saint Nammalwar puts it : "Vishnu comes down with all the Gods and takes possession of the earth." My way is the other : to change the human being by some sort of evolution into what I call a race of Gods. The Hindu vision of the last Avatar Kalki destroying everybody is an easy but rather drastic solution.

The Divine Consciousness has here entered into the Inconscient by a process of involution. It is only apparently inconscient. It is also superconscient. From the Inconscience it is trying to evolve and that process thus becomes a process of manifestation. But if one does not want to manifest the Divine, it is his own affair. Someone asked the Mother about Raman Maharshi. The Mother said : "If the Divine in him does not want to undertake the transformation, it is not necessary for him."

S : When S.D. asked Maharshi, he said : "There is no Sankalpa¹ in me." The Spirit can't be compelled to choose a fixed path. Each one must follow the Divine within.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is not necessary for all to do this Yoga. It is a mistaken idea that I want everybody to do this Yoga.

S : They believe that Buddha or Shankara will have to be born again to do it.

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't say that they won't be reborn, but there is no compulsion. As Ramakrishna said, the Ishwarakoti² can go up and down as he chooses. It is therefore wrong to suppose that this Yoga is for everybody.

S : Your effort also may end in becoming a religion wanting to convert all. Already there are signs.

SRI AUROBINDO : But I have never wanted to start a religion. I have said

¹ Will

² Divine Soul

nothing new in philosophy. In fact, I am not a philosopher by temperament. Richard came and said : "Let us have a synthesis of knowledge." I said : "All right. Let us synthesise." I have written everything not from thought but from experience as it developed in my practice of Yoga. I have not cared even to be consistent or to see whether all my thoughts hung together.

Somebody has said that I have a great similarity to Hegel because I used the word "synthesis" and he speaks of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. But I must confess I have no idea of what Hegel says.

Western philosophies are so mental and dry. They seem to lead to nothing, only mental gymnastics trying to find out things like "What is judgment ?" and "What is not judgment ?" They appear to be written for the purpose of using the mind, not for finding or arriving at the Truth.

People speak of Platonism as a philosophy. Plato simply expresses what he thought and knew about life and men. You hear of Neoplatonism, etc., etc. I must say I got a shock when I read Adhar Das describing my philosophy —"Aurobindoism" !

N : It can't be helped. It is a convenient simplification.

S : They are entitled to call you a philosopher, for you have followed the tradition of the Acharyas and written about the Veda, the Upanishads and the Gita.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, that is true.

S : Besides, each one thinks you support his own school.

SRI AUROBINDO : The other day a follower of Nimbarka wrote to me that what I have said agrees very well with Nimbarka's philosophy. Even the followers of Madhwa say that I belong to them.

S : But if they knew your philosophy properly, perhaps all of them will attack you.

SRI AUROBINDO : I have said nothing new in my philosophy. I have not put my philosophy into the Gita. I have only tried to explain what seems to be the sense of the Gita in the light of my own experience. But I admit to a new way of Yoga.

I can't say that I like Indian commentaries on philosophies. They are very academic and pedantic, an abstract rigmarole, a maze of words, the authors trying to get rid of whatever spiritual experiences they don't recognise. For example, Ramanuja says at one place that no such thing as consciousness exists and that nobody can experience pure consciousness ! It is staggering.

S : You have made a translation of the Katha Upanishad. It is very fine. Why have you not published it since the time it first came out ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It was translated when I was very young. I wanted to convey the literary merit of the original in the translation. But now a revision and many changes would be necessary.

S : This Upanishad speaks of three Nachiketa fires. What are they?

SRI AUROBINDO : One is the fire in the heart. Another is above, and the two ends of the third are not known but only the middle term.

This middle term is the physical, vital and mental—Bhur, Bhuvar and Swar including the highest mind regions. I wanted to exp'ain other things also but at present the whole matter remains pending.

S : Why did you take up the Isha Upanishad ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Because it agreed with my line of sadhana and experience.

S : So many paths have been tried and I believe the other Yogas also have some truth.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why not ? All are parts of the same Truth.

S : But several sadhaks here tend to be so exclusive.

N : That is because we have not got the Truth-Consciousness yet.

SRI AUROBINDO : Quite so.

SRI AUROBINDO AND VIVEKANANDA

IN this centenary year of Vivekananda's day of birth (January 17), the greatest thing that can be said in appreciation of the mighty Swami is not only that during his lifetime he spread both by word and deed the message of Sri Ramakrishna but also that after his death his spirit aided, according to Sri Aurobindo, Sri Aurobindo's own preparation of the Integral Yoga whose aim is world-transformation.

In some recent issues of *Mother India* we brought together in Nirodbaran's *Talks with Sri Aurobindo* several reminiscences, by the Master, of how Vivekananda's spirit had given him inner help during his detention in Alipore Jail. Most interestingly, this help went beyond all that Vivekananda had declared of his own experience when he had been in the body. It pointed towards the new Light which Sri Aurobindo was endeavouring to realise in order to establish a universal Divine Life. It showed him that the key to his problem lay in planes of a divine dynamism above the mind—the levels of illumination and power which Sri Aurobindo has characterised as “overhead” and named in general the Truth-Consciousness. But there has been some misunderstanding of the precise nature and extent of Vivekananda's contribution.

Sri Aurobindo has broadly distinguished five grades of “overhead” dynamism : Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition or Intuitive Mind, Overmind and Supermind. What Vivekananda elucidated to Sri Aurobindo covered the grades up to the third. There is no question of his dealing with the Supermind, when even the Overmind remained untouched. The Supermind, the full Truth-Consciousness with its unique power of transforming not only mentality and vitality but also matter itself, is specifically the revelation brought by Sri Aurobindo to a world which, in spite of its sages, saints, yogis and avatars, has yet lacked the true foundation of a lasting and all-round spiritual living on the material plane. The most substantial glimpses of it before Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga are to be found in India's earliest scripture, the Rigveda whose long-lost “secret” he has set forth in a whole book in the light of his own spiritual discovery. By Sri Aurobindo's evidence elsewhere, no book or person gave him the knowledge of the Supermind.

This point is likely to be overlooked when assessing the momentous contribution to Sri Aurobindo's inner experience by Vivekananda's spirit. To clarify the point in Sri Aurobindo's own words we are reproducing a passage which was published in *Mother India* much before the recent collection of his pronouncements on Vivekananda during his talks in 1939. The passage was not repeated

when that collection was made. It says exactly what was rendered clear by a quotation which we had given, apropos of this collection, from Anilbaran's notes of talks in 1926, and which we are again reproducing below along with Nirodbaran's record.

FROM ANILBARAN'S NOTES

July, 1926

SRI AUROBINDO : Then there is the incident of the personality of Vivekananda visiting me in jail. He explained to me in detail the work of the Supramental—not exactly of the Supramental, but of the intuitivised mind, the mind as it is organised by the Supramental. He did not use the word "Supermind", I gave this name afterwards. The experience lasted for about two weeks.

Q : Was that a vision ?

SRI AUROBINDO : No, it was not a vision. I would not have trusted a vision.

FROM NIRODBARAN'S RECORD

December 18, 1938

DR. M : Have you realised the Supermind ?

SRI AUROBINDO : You know I was talking to N about the tail of the Supermind. I know what the Supermind is. And the physical being has flashes and glimpses of it. I have been trying to supramentalise the descended Overmind. Not that the Supermind is not acting. It is doing so—through the Overmind, and the Intuition and the other intermediate powers that have come down. The Supermind is above the Overmind. (*He put one hand over the other.*) So one may mistake the latter for the former. I remember the day when people here claimed to have got the Supermind. I myself had made mistakes about it. I didn't know then about the planes. It was Vivekananda who, when he used to come to me during meditation in Alipore Jail, showed me the Intuitive Plane. For a fortnight or so he gave instructions about Intuition. Then afterwards I began to see the still higher planes. I am not satisfied with only a part of the Supermind in the physical consciousness. I want to bring down the whole mass of it, pure, and that is an extremely difficult business.

Here it may be of interest to see the high value of the plane of Intuition and yet the difference between Intuition and Supermind. We may quote a few passages from Sri Aurobindo's letters :

“The Intuition is the first plane in which there is a real opening to the full possibility of realisation—it is through it that one goes farther—first to overmind and then to supermind.” (*On Yoga*, II, Tome One, p. 285)

“The overmind has to be reached and brought down before the supermind descent is at all possible—for the overmind is the passage through which one passes from Mind to supermind.

“It is from the overmind that all these different arrangements of the creative Truth of things originate. Out of the overmind they come down to the Intuition and are transmitted from it to the Illumined and Higher Mind to be arranged there for our intelligence. But they lose more and more of their power and certitude in the transmission as they come down to the lower levels.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 283-284)

“In the Overmind the Truth of Supermind which is whole and harmonious enters into a separation into parts, many truths fronting each other and moved each to fulfil itself, to make a world of its own or else to prevail or to take its share in worlds made of a combination of various separated Truths and Truth-forces.” (*Ibid.*, p. 19)

“Intuition sees the truth of things by a direct inner contact, not like the ordinary mental intelligence by seeking and reaching out for indirect contacts through the senses etc. But the limitation of the Intuition as compared with the supermind is that it sees things by flashes, point by point, not as a whole. Also in coming into the mind it gets mixed with the mental movement and forms a kind of intuitive mind activity which is not the pure truth, but something in between the higher Truth and the mental seeking. It can lead the consciousness through a sort of transitional stage and that is practically its function.” (*Ibid.*, p. 286)

A final point of interest in this connection may be touched upon. Sri Aurobindo (*Ibid.*, pp. 102, 429) has distinguished—apart from the question of fundamental inner realisation—the habitual stance of mentality, in relation to the “overhead” powers, in the spiritual figures of the past. Among them Buddha is said to work and speak from a mentality charged with the illumined Higher Mind, Krishna from one that carried the light of the Overmind. Ramakrishna’s mental stance is characterised as intuitive and he is seen as speaking “constantly from a swift and luminous spiritual intuition”.

It would seem to be in the fitness of things that the soul of Sri Ramakrishna’s greatest apostle should come to Sri Aurobindo in the early years with instructions about the Intuitive Plane and its swift and luminous activity.

K. D. S.

ŚRĪ AUROBINDO AS A SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER

(An address delivered at The Rotary Club of Kolhapur on Nov. 3 1962)

MR. President and gentlemen,

I AM grateful to you all, and especially to the President, for giving me this opportunity of addressing you this evening.

The genius of Sri Aurobindo has so many aspects that it is not possible to speak to you even briefly about all of them in the course of a single lecture. So I have thought it best to take up only one aspect of his genius and acquaint you with it rather than try to speak cursorily on all of them. And I have chosen to speak about that aspect of his genius which is as yet comparatively less known than the others. Sri Aurobindo is now well-known all over the world as a Master-Yogi, a great poet and a great spiritual philosopher, but he is not so well-known as a social philosopher, even though his contributions in the field of social philosophy are of as profound a significance as his contributions in other fields. This subject has also a special significance in the present world-situation when the collective life of man has reached a crucial condition and is in need of a drastic change. No thoughtful person can remain unconcerned in such a situation. To him Sri Aurobindo's teachings in this field would prove very helpful to arrive at a true understanding of the issues involved and to find the real solution. So I shall endeavour to acquaint you with his basic ideas in this field.

(1)

First, let me explain to you Sri Aurobindo's conception of society. The word 'society' is used in different senses not only in our common language but also by different social thinkers. Sri Aurobindo uses the word to mean the collective existence or the group-life of man. The individuals in their collective life enter into various kinds of mutual relationships which get formalised in a number of institutions—domestic, economic, political, religious, educational, cultural, etc. All these institutions are interrelated and form a complex organic structure of group-life or society. The smallest primary social group is the family and the largest, which is still in the process of formation, will be the world union. Sri Aurobindo says that a time will come when the whole of humanity will live as an organised community, in the same manner as the nation now lives.

But the important point to note is that Sri Aurobindo does not consider

the group or the society to be merely a collection of individuals or the structure of their interrelations as many other social thinkers do. If society is merely a collection or interrelation of individuals then it can have no real existence of its own. But in Sri Aurobindo's view, each society or organised group has its own real inner existence apart from the individuals and their interrelations of which it is externally composed. It is itself a living being, a collective entity as real as the individual. As the individual is an organic being with a body, mind and soul, so also every society is an organic living being with a communal body, mind and soul. Each nation society, for example, is such a conscious living being guiding and governing the life and development of its people. This is Sri Aurobindo's subjective conception of society as contrasted to the objective which considers a nation in terms of a geographical territory, a piece of land, or looks upon it as only a group of persons having a common political and economic status and a cultural heritage. To Sri Aurobindo this is not the essential reality of a nation but only its external form. In its essential reality each nation is a living being with its distinct soul, mind and body.

It is because Sri Aurobindo had this vision of the Indian nation as a living being with a soul that, in his early political life, when he was the leader of the Nationalist Movement, he gave to the nation the powerful idea of India as the spiritual Mother, Bharat Mata or Mother India. The battle that was then to be waged was not so much for the liberation of the country from the British rule as for the liberation of the Mother from the chains of foreign bondage. He told the nation that India was not a piece of land but our sacred Mother to be worshipped and adored, and the service that was to be rendered to her was not so much a patriotic duty as a sacred sacrifice of love. And he said that Mother India was not only a benevolent goddess who gave knowledge to our mind and love to our heart but was also a Shakti, a divine Power who gave strength to our arms—to the arms of her children who fought for her with faith in her might. It is this Shakti of Mother India that has arisen at every critical situation in Indian history; it was she who once fought through the sword of Shivaji, and she will rise once again and fight with a fiercer strength against those who in their blindness or vanity try to encroach upon her body and defile her sanctity. It was Sri Aurobindo who in modern times gave to India this powerful concept of nation as a divine Mother.

Let me read here a passage from Sri Aurobindo's writing in which he expresses this idea forcefully :

“Mother India is not a piece of earth; she is a Power, a Godhead, for all nations have such a Devi supporting their separate existence and keeping it in being. Such beings are as real and more permanently real than the men they influence, but they belong to a higher plane, are part of the cosmic consciousness and being and act here on earth by shaping the human con-

sciousness on which they exercise their influence. It is natural for man who sees his own consciousness individual, national or racial at work and does not see what works upon it and shapes it, to think that all is created by him and there is nothing cosmic and greater behind it.”¹

(2)

The second basic concept of Sri Aurobindo’s social philosophy is regarding the true relation of the individual and society. The different views of the social philosophers on this problem could be broadly classified into two main categories. There is, on the one hand, the individualistic view which considers the individual to be all-important and maintains that the society is only for the convenience of the individual, that it is only a means for his well-being and development. This view forms the basic ground of all democratic systems and insists on the preservation of the individual’s freedom from encroachment by the State. Opposite to this is the collectivistic view which stresses the importance of the society at the cost of the individual. It maintains that the individual is only a part of the social whole, a cell of the social body and so has no right to demand any freedom for his personal life and growth. The society alone counts and, for the sake of collective good and progress, the society has every right to subordinate and even to sacrifice the individual. This conception forms the common ground of all the collectivistic or socialistic doctrines and policies which have now become so powerful in the world and of which we have recently witnessed some extreme examples. At the present moment these two ideologies face each other in the world-arena and are locked in a sombre struggle each trying to discredit its opponent and spread its influence over the whole world.

Sri Aurobindo’s standpoint on this issue provides us with the most satisfactory solution because it steers clear of both these one-sided exaggerations. He is not an extreme individualist making society entirely subservient to the individual’s needs and admitting no curb on the individual’s liberty; yet he is a great champion of individual freedom because of its indispensable necessity both for individual and social progress. According to Sri Aurobindo, the society is unable to make any progress in a mass or as a whole; any new progress is first realised by the individual or a few individuals and afterwards it spreads in the social mass. So it is only through the progress of the individual that the society itself can progress. And the individual can progress only if he is left free by the society to develop and grow in his own way. If the society represses the individual’s liberties, he will have no scope to grow and as a result the society itself will become unprogressive. It will lose its vitality, and decay and degeneration will inevitably set in. Extreme regimentation or state regulation is thus harmful

¹ *On Yoga*, II, Tome One, p. 431.

not only to the individual but also to the society, even though it may temporarily bring order and efficiency. But that is only an artificial order and mechanical efficiency purchased at too heavy a price. It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo is against excessive regulation of the individual's liberty by the State, though some measure of it may be temporarily necessary so long as the individual has not learnt the right use of his freedom.

In Sri Aurobindo's view, the individual, though he is in his external self a unit of the social whole and dependent on it for his existence and development, yet he is not merely a cell of the social body because in his inner being he is capable not only of independent self-existence but also of universal enlargement and of exceeding even the universe and identifying himself with the Supreme Transcendent. For this reason any collective ideology or regime aiming at merging his individuality in the communal being finds no support in Sri Aurobindo's view. The attempt of the State to suppress the individual entirely in the interest of the collectivity is, in Sri Aurobindo's opinion, a dangerous falsehood because, as he puts it, "the individual is not merely a social unit; his existence, his right and claim to live and grow are not founded solely on his social work and function. He is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill; he is something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural or his assigned part in the truth and the law of the collective existence. He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much distrusts and has laboured in the past either to suppress altogether or to relegate to the purely spiritual field, an individual thought, will and conscience. If he is to merge these eventually, it cannot be into the dominating thought, will and conscience of others, but into something beyond into which he and all must be both allowed and helped freely to grow."¹

Let me read another passage from Sri Aurobindo's writing in which he states this idea with a great force :

"...the group self has no right to regard the individual as if he were only a cell of its body, a stone of its edifice, a passive instrument of its collective life and growth. Humanity is not so constituted. We miss the divine reality in man and the secret of the human birth if we do not see that each individual man is that Self and sums up all human potentiality in his own being. That potentiality he has to find, develop, work out from within. No State or legislator or reformer can cut him rigorously into a perfect pattern; no Church, or priest can give him a mechanical salvation; no order, no class life or ideal, no nation, no civilisation or creed or ethical, social or religious Shastra can be allowed to say to him permanently, 'In this way

¹ *The Human Cycle*, pp. 26-27.

of mine and thus far shalt thou act and grow and in no other way and no farther shall thy growth be permitted.' These things may help him temporarily or they may curb and he grows in proportion as he can use them and then exceed them, train and teach his individuality by them, but assert it always in the end in its divine freedom. Always he is the traveller of the cycles and his road is forward."¹

As the society has no right to suppress the individual in its own interest, so also the individual, in Sri Aurobindo's view, has no right to disregard the legitimate claims of society upon him in order to seek his selfish aims. This is a necessity not only for the good of the society but for the individual's own good because there is an inherent solidarity between their nature, and in a right relationship between them there need be no conflict between their interests. As Sri Aurobindo says :

"The society has no right to crush or efface the individual for its own better development or self-satisfaction; the individual, so long at least as he chooses to live in the world, has no right to disregard for the sake of his own solitary satisfaction and development his fellow-beings and to live at war with them or seek a selfishly isolated good."²

You will thus see that Sri Aurobindo is neither an exclusive individualist nor a collectivist. He avoids both these one-sided exaggerations. To him both the individual and the society are equal powers of one common existence and their true relation is that of mutuality and interdependence in which each helps to fulfil the other.

(3)

The third basic idea of Sri Aurobindo's social philosophy is his conception of social development fully elaborated by him in his great work *The Human Cycle*. All social thinkers agree that society is constantly changing, but they do not agree in their interpretation of social change. Some thinkers believe that society is constantly moving round in a circle; it is, they say, repeating the same movement and is neither progressing nor declining. There are others who maintain that originally, far back in the past, society was in a perfect condition. After that golden age it has been constantly deteriorating in a downward lapse. To both these types of thinkers the very idea of social progress is an illusion. But Sri Aurobindo does not agree with these views. According to him,

¹ *The Human Cycle*, pp 79-80.

² *Ibid*, p. 54.

social change is a movement of upward evolutionary progress. This progress, however, occurs not in a straight line but in a series of cycles or spirals in which periods of advance may alternate with periods of decline but eventually the curve of progress is resumed at a higher level. "Even in failure", says Sri Aurobindo, "there is a preparation for success : our nights carry in them the secret of a greater dawn. This is a frequent experience in our individual progress, but the human collectivity also moves in much the same manner."¹

Sri Aurobindo maintains that this cyclic development of human society passes through a sequence of three stages which he calls the infra-rational, the rational and the suprarational. This sequence is based on a psychological criterion, for it is determined by the state of consciousness to which the society has reached in its inner evolution. The Infrarational Age is the primary stage of society in which it lives in its physical and vital consciousness and is preoccupied with the satisfaction of physical instincts and vital impulses. This is followed by the Rational Age in which man lives in the mental consciousness and tries to govern his life by rational ideals and values. This again is followed by the Suprarational or the Spiritual Age in which man in society transcends the rational mind and governs his life by the light and power of the spirit.

But the transition from one age to another is not accomplished easily. It is marked by a struggle and a tension due to the conflict between the old established forces and the truth of the new age that tries to emerge. This tension becomes critical as the emergence of the new age becomes imminent.

According to Sri Aurobindo, humanity at the present juncture of its development is passing through such a critical period. The modern age, representing the Age of Reason in human evolution, is now coming to a close and a New Age of the Spirit is emerging. All the acute tensions of the modern world are at their root a result of the struggle between the forces of the old and the new ages. But Sri Aurobindo affirms that the Age of the Spirit is sure to arrive because the rational mind is not the last or the highest term of evolution. As mind has emerged in evolution from life and matter, so other powers higher than mind are bound to emerge in future and carry the evolution beyond mind. The next higher principle now seeking to emerge and establish itself on earth is called by Sri Aurobindo the Supermind or Gnosis. The Supermind is the infinite dynamic truth-consciousness of the Spirit that creates and secretly governs the universe. When it fully emerges in evolution it will create a new type of being on earth, as the emergence of mind in the past evolution created man. The new supramental being will be as different from the present man, as man is from the animal. As more and more supramental beings arise they will form a new type of society—the gnostic society living a divine life. Thus will come a new age for humanity.

¹ *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 32.

This is Sri Aurobindo's conception of social development—a development which will culminate in the manifestation of a new type of being and a new society upon earth. This will fulfil man's age-long dream of perfection, the Kingdom of God upon earth. But Sri Aurobindo points out that such a new age of humanity cannot be created by any change of external conditions of life. The external conditions are only a reflection or an expression of the inner consciousness. It is only when the inner consciousness is truly changed that the external life also can change. To try to change human life without a change of inner consciousness is, according to Sri Aurobindo, a vain dream. The Kingdom of God without can be securely based only on the Kingdom of God within man's heart.

(4)

This is a very brief outline of some of the basic ideas of Sri Aurobindo's social philosophy. But it is necessary to bear in mind that Sri Aurobindo was not merely an idealistic philosopher giving us only luminous ideas and theories. More than a philosopher he was a Yogi who tried to realise in concrete practical life the high possibilities that he saw in his inner vision. Also his aim was not to realise anything for his own self or for his few disciples but to create a new life upon earth for the whole of mankind. It was for this purpose that he formed the Ashram at Pondicherry which, beginning on a small scale, has now grown to vast proportions. Sri Aurobindo said that the supramental truth which is now trying to manifest on earth and which will create the new life and new society is not likely to be received at first by humanity as a whole. It will be received only by a few and from them it will gradually spread over the rest of the world. The Ashram was formed by Sri Aurobindo to prepare a representative group who will first realise and manifest the supermind and create a gnostic society living a divine life. This will serve as a model for the rest of humanity to form similar groups elsewhere and mould their life in the light of the supramental truth to the extent they are capable of it. This will eventually create a new humanity. This has been the aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga which is intended to give a concrete realisation to his spiritual philosophy.

KISHOR GANDHI

“I WILL ESCAPE”

SEE how the mighty British Government in India planned to kidnap Sri Aurobindo and were foiled in their efforts every time :

1. They prosecuted Sri Aurobindo for editing the *Bande Mataram* newspaper, but he was acquitted for want of proof.

2. In 1908 a Scots Sergeant entered Sri Aurobindo's cell in Alipore Jail and said to him : “Aravind, now you have been caught !” Sri Aurobindo replied in a mild voice: “But I will escape”.

3. Naren Goswami turned King's evidence and implicated Sri Aurobindo as the Supreme Commander of the All-India Revolutionary Party. Kanailal shot and killed Goswami in Jail. The Judge, for want of corroboration, acquitted Sri Aurobindo from complicity in the Alipore Bomb Case.

4. In 1908, the Lt. Governor of Bengal, A. Fraser, informed the Governor General Lord Minto that if Sri Aurobindo were left free he would undo everything and that it would, therefore, be better to remove him to a fortress or some other place beyond human reach (*Vide* Home Dept., Progs. May 1908, nos. 104-111). But the Governor General, instead, set up spy-nets around Sri Aurobindo, as Bengal then was surging in waves of fire because of her amputation by the British. Sri Aurobindo continued to publish the two papers—*Dharma* and *Karma Yogin* up to 1910.

5. The Home Department in England were against the partition of Bengal—the amputation of Sri Aurobindo's Mother's body. The Moderates conspired with the Viceroy to kidnap Sri Aurobindo because they knew that nothing short of full independence would satisfy him. At a Divine Command heard within him, Sri Aurobindo proceeded by boat to Chandernagore, accompanied by Bijoy Nag. Later he reached Pondicherry preceded by Suresh Chakravarti.

6. At Pondicherry, a stevedore from a French ship, being an agent of the British, arranged to kidnap Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo's companions suggested that he should shift to another house for safety. Sri Aurobindo said : “I am not going to budge an inch.” It later transpired that the stevedore was shot dead by another sailor for a personal grievance. The sailor later committed suicide.

7. At last, when the British Government in India could not succeed in kidnapping Sri Aurobindo, they sent an Envoy in a special Railway Saloon to persuade him to go to Darjeeling which, they suggested, would provide a better atmosphere for his Yogashram. Sri Aurobindo rejected the proposal.

8. During the First World War, the British twice approached the French Government to remove Sri Aurobindo to Algeria from Pondicherry, but did not succeed.

Thus Sri Aurobindo's voice, “I WILL ESCAPE,” resounds for ever.

SUDHIR KUMAR SARKAR

A COMMENTARY ON THE THIRD SUKTA OF RIGVEDA

LIFE needs pure, calm and effectuating delight. It is through delight that knowledge, work and truth are revealed. The more the inspiration of life-energy becomes divinely blissful and lasting, the more the aspirant is endowed with the pure intelligence, divine power and fulfilment, and at last he presses forward all the faculties of the vast direct knowledge and creation.

In the present sukta there are four groups of three slokas each, graded according to the spiritual progression.

The first group begins with the invocation of the twain equestrians. Who are these equestrians ? According to the narration of the Puranas, the Aswini-kumaras are generally known as the twain heavenly physicians. It means, they drive away disease, decay and incapacity from the being and make the life-energy pure, sound and indomitable. In other words, they are the gods of immortality. Their work is to found immortality and an eternal youth of divinity in life. *Prāṇvāyu* which is the conveyance of the divine power has been symbolically expressed as the horses. It may be asked why they have the twain forms. Perhaps it is because the one gives knowledge, the other the energy for work. Both are the presiding deities of immortality and both of them embody the most benevolent delight. Hence they are called *Śubhaspati*. Also they are called *Purubhujā*, for they bring into life the divine enjoyment in profusion. However, the one gives much importance to the energy of work, the other to the powerful pure intelligence. Whatever may be the difference in their outlook, they are the twain faces of one and the same God. The two horsemen open the fount of that very divine exhilaration in life by which there awakes and ascends an upward inspiration in the being of the aspirant. As the aspirant has been the possessor of an intense diversified delight, he is now able to proceed farther and farther, higher and higher by sacrificing his lower inspiration to the higher one. It is an immortalised life-energy that makes all the realisation effective, real and beautiful. It infuses spirit and power into the intelligence. The aspirant is endowed with an occult power of hearing and is initiated with the power of mantras which expresses and manifests the Truth. That is why the twain gods are called *Nāsatya* (the Guides on the path). They are the leaders in our spiritual adventure. They lead us speedily through the different levels of consciousness to the vast ocean of the higher truth.

The second group of slokas. The spiritual delight and the immortal power of life will find themselves in a calm, pure and firmly rooted basis of the entire being. And this immortal delight will lead the spiritual practicant to the Divine

Mind, the pure Intelligence and to the realm of Indra. An ordinary man is unable to have a glimpse of the higher mind, the pure Intelligence because he is confined to the narrow limits of the lower material world and his life abounds with restless, impure and hurtful desires. It is not by a gross inert inspiration but by a subtle inward power that the enjoyment of life must be purified and divinised. Then only the sloth of the mind will be replaced by the divine Intelligence. With the divine Intelligence of Indra the aspirant enjoys a pure delight in life. It is Indra who fills the different aspects of each object-with a luminous truth. The inspiration surcharged with the effulgent knowledge of Indra will bring down and manifest in the aspirant the delightful truth of the Self which is the main support of the divine in the aspirant.

The third group. After this the aspirant rises into the realm of Truth, Delight and the Vast where his being will embody all the gods. The universal Godhead is the collective power of all the gods. Each god has a different aspect and a particular truth to stress. They at once carry out their own work and help one another in performing their work. Thus in their combined efforts they give shape to diversified expressions of the one great and vast Truth. When the power of these gods is established in the aspirant, his aspiration rises higher and higher unflinchingly and infallibly. The body, life and mind which are the different parts of the being are considered to be the channels of different aspects of the Truth.

The fourth group. Saraswati, the wealth of the fullest inspiration of the complete Truth, signifies speedy and rhythmic truth. She is the divine hearing. No doubt, we see and meet the Truth with our divine vision, but to make the Truth active and dynamic and fill the creation with the power of Truth we need must take the help of divine hearing. As the truth possesses a form, even so it has a name. It is precisely because of form and name that the truth becomes real. The form of truth is visible in the divine vision, the name of truth in the divine hearing. Saraswati gives the divine name and Ila gives the divine form to the truth. Under the inspiration of Saraswati the truth casts aside all untruths. Hence she is called *Pāvaka* (the Purifier). Above the mind there abides the vast ocean of Truth. We have neither any knowledge nor any experience of it. In a sense, we are quite unconscious of it. Saraswati raises the intelligence into the vast ocean of Truth and purifies it. Afterwards she brings it down to our understanding. She manifests the complete knowledge in all its facets and makes them living.

In the Vedic literature, very often we get the reference to *vāk* (speech). So it will be no exaggeration on our part to hold that the aim of the Vedic spiritual discipline is to get the significant sound aspect of the truth. And for this the Vedic seers of truth are called the seers of mantras or the creators of mantras. *Vak* is the living image of truth. There lies a rhythm in the being of truth and the movement of this rhythm produces a note which was later on called *nād*

(the unsounded sound) or Shabda Brahman (the Brahman manifested as Sound). When the rhythm of this note is found in our intelligence and mind, it takes the form of a sentence and this very thing is called a true mantra. The more a language can express intimately and directly the primal form and rhythm of truth, the more the mantra becomes living. Therefore the aspirant who has acquired this mantra has also acquired truth and the power of truth. The Vedic seers have placed the name of truth in different categories, e.g., *R̥k*, *Stoma*, *Uktha*, *Brahman*, etc. At the beginning of the present sukta too, in the spiritual practice of truth *Gi*, the *vāk* or name that reveals the truth clearly in the consciousness of the aspirant has been invoked with the help of the twain equestrians. Then with Indra's help the Brahman, that is to say, the true message of the inner Self was invoked. When man gets a purified mind and purified intelligence, he discovers the real Being within and another name of this Being is *Brahmanaspati* (the Lord of the inner Self). Finally comes in *Saraswati* who is the power of the Infinite Truth in which the multiple aspects of the truth of the universal God are manifest.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(Translated by Chinmoy from the original Bengali)

REMINISCENCES

I PLAYED FOOTBALL

I

SOME of you have asked to hear about my performance in football. I have already told you something on an earlier occasion. Let us have a little more today.

I have dabbled in football almost since my birth or, to be more exact, from the time I barely completed five. My hand was introduced to the pen or chalk and my feet touched the ball practically at one and the same time. Would you believe it, I had my formal initiation into studies, not once but twice, and on both occasions it was performed with due ceremony on a Saraswati Puja day, as has been the custom with us. The first time it took place, I was only four years old and I cannot now tell you why it had to be at that early age. It may be that I had gone into tantrums on seeing somebody else's initiation and a mock ceremony had to be gone through just in order to keep me quiet. But I had to go through the ceremony once again at the age of five, for according to the scriptures one cannot be properly initiated at the age of four, so the earlier one had to be treated as cancelled and a fresh initiation given to make it truly valid. Perhaps this double process has had something to do with the solid base and the maturity of my learning !

But if I was to play football, I must at least get hold of a ball. Here you have your footballs by the dozen, as if they were tennis balls. But we had to move heaven and earth in those days in order to procure a single ball. Even the older boys could seldom boast of more than one, or at the most one and a half—one already half-worn and the other a mere half, an old tattered ball with a thousand patches like the shoes of Abu Salim in the story. But young people never lack devices. We discovered a substitute, the Indian grape-fruit or shaddock that looks like a ball. No doubt the touch was hard, but it could be reduced to a convenient softness with our kicks and blows and poundings with the fist. The only trouble was that the thing gave way soon afterwards on receiving such treatment. But this particular fruit was no rarity in our part of the country. There were any number of trees and it grew in profusion; there were several trees in our compound itself.

Now to announce my first victorious feat. I was then about seven, or eight at the most. The older boys were playing and I stood as a spectator, perhaps an envious one. They suddenly found themselves short of one player: one of their goalkeepers was missing. Someone called to me, "Hey, you there, would

you go and take your stand at that goal ? You will have nothing much to do, simply keep on standing." A nominal goal-keeping in fact, since they had to have a goalkeeper in order to play a game. And till the very last moment, the ball did not come to our side of the field at all. It was growing fairly dark when one of the opponents suddenly came in running and aimed the ball at my goal from a little distance. No one had any doubts as to what would happen and they all began to shout, "Goal, goal !" for how could a little kid like me manage to stop the ball ? But the miracle happened : I did stop the ball and took hold of it before it could pass into the goal. Our people now cried out, "No, no, no goal !" and what a pandemonium followed ! They started dancing about with myself caught up in their arms. "Bravo, bravo, my dear fellow," rang the cry all around. For me it was like the tiger's first taste of blood, to use a hunters' phrase.

Years went by and I grew into an expert player while still in school. I played right-out in the forward line and began to get used to that position alone. But this gave me the habit of using only one foot, the right, and I became an adept of the single foot. I could not make much use of the left, except as an occasional stand-by at need, just as Rajen still does with his right. Do you know where I got real good training in the use of my left foot ? That was after I came here in Pondicherry. And it took me several years to make it perfect. But I developed a different style for each of the two feet. The right was used for high long shots, such as corner kicks and overhead passes, and the left was reserved for the low powerful drives. It is these left-foot drives that have got me most of my goals. In the Pondicherry team there was no place for me as right-out, for the boy who played in that position could not play in any other position but he played very well as right-out. His name should be recorded here, it was Sinnas, Everéste Sinnas; he was an Indian Christian and the name was like that. So I was given the right-in position. I played on the right wing, and Moni (Suresh Chakravarti) played left-out. The two of us, Moni Chakravarti, or Chakra for short, and myself soon acquired quite a name here thanks to our football. Our styles were very different, though. Moni's tactics were simple. Once he got in possession of the ball—the ball had to be passed on to him for he seldom bothered to snatch it for himself—but once he got the ball he was irresistible. What a run he could give ! He seemed to fly past the touch line and no one could catch up with him or stop him till he reached near the corner post. From there he would send a high kick which would land the ball right in front of the goal, as though it were a corner shot. I would be there to receive it and do the needful.

I played a different style. I did not lag far behind Moni in the matter of speed, but I was an extremely calm and steady player. Moni raced like a storm without caring for anything or anybody, as if it was a matter of life and death. This cost him a broken collar-bone more than once and he had serious injuries

to his face and nose. I too ran fast enough, and carried the ball past my opponents whenever I could, but my aim was always to pass on the ball and to receive it back. I tried to keep my position, anticipate where the ball was likely to land, in what positions our men would be found. A well-known player from Cooch-behar had once remarked on noticing the easy manner and artistic style of my game, "There is a fine individuality about your play; it is calm and steady, neat and clean and robust." Indeed my aim was to play a clean game : none was to touch me in the legs nor was I to touch my opponent's body, whatever contacts came must come through the ball alone. I had nothing to do with what they call a robust game, that was miles apart from my idea of football. That explains why after so many years of football, I have never had a fracture or injury except for a slight twist to one of my toes. I must however confess that I too have done a bit of roughing in my days, but I was forced to it; for in those days, "push him down" was the accepted slogan and it was not treated as a foul. But even the pushing had its do's and don'ts; you could not just push your way through as you liked.

Moni and I, and with us our club, the Cercle Sportif of Pondicherry, suddenly came into the limelight after a particular match. We had a visiting team from Vellore. This team was thought to be invincible. They had won all the matches they played on their way to Pondicherry. The first time they met with a reverse was at our hands ; we won by a margin of two goals. They felt humiliated and demanded a return match the next day. It was a tense game ending in a draw, so we could keep up our prestige. They never expected to meet such a formidable team as ours in an obscure spot like Pondicherry—Pondicherry was certainly an obscure enough spot from the point of view of football. In our team, four of us were what they called "Swadeshi" players—this was the name given to those who took asylum here after doing patriotic work. All the four were from Bengal. Moni was there and Bejoy—he played centre-half—and Purnachandra Pakre, a student from Chandernagore who pursued his studies here, and myself. This Purnachandra had gone one better than the rest of us at least in one respect. He had mastered the Tamil language to such a degree that I could find him devouring Tamil novels of the "yellow-back" type with complete ease. How many of us here have learned even the Tamil alphabet?

Now to come back to Bengal. When we returned to Bengal after a lapse of four years and they saw us play at Rungpore, we were given the name, "Madras players", and it was given out that two absolutely formidable "Madras players" had arrived in town. So the Town Club of Rungpore decided that they must now be able to annex the Dinajpur Shield, the most coveted trophy in North Bengal. A couple of players were "hired" from elsewhere to make the team perfectly invincible. And off we went to Dinajpur. The performance of our team had already received adequate publicity, for we had beaten Bogra Town by two goals. One of these goals had been scored by me and it had brought

profuse applause. Let me stop and tell you first about that particular feat. I was playing right-out. A ball came to me about mid-field, near the touch line. The field lay practically open. The half-back, a non-Indian, was a little farther away and I could easily pass him by. The full-back rushed at me, but he too was by-passed. As there was no point in waiting longer, I aimed a shot at the goal. But instead of shooting with the right foot—I was playing right-out you remember—I used the left. The goalkeeper was naturally expecting the shot to land on his right; instead it went to his left and got us a fine goal, and what hurrahs ! Needless to add, these things do not happen by previous plan or calculations, they come in a matter of moments and automatically. One can of course try to reason out later how it all happened. This in the parlance of Yoga is what Sri Aurobindo calls an “involved process”.

To come back to the point. It was the last match of the tournament, the final : Dinajpur Town Club *versus* Rungpore Town Club. Everyone felt certain that we would be the winners, ours was such a strong team; the only question was : by how many goals ? We too felt the same way. However, soon after the play began, I think it was before half-time in any case, something entirely unexpected came to pass. One of the Dinajpur forwards, I cannot now recall his name but he was a very good player, finding our side of the field almost empty—we were pressing them hard on their side of the field—aimed a shot from beyond the half-boundary line, almost near mid-field. Our goalkeeper was caught napping and it was a fine score. Everybody was flabbergasted. During the next half-hour or so, we held them pressed to their goal mouth and went on bombarding them with shots at the goal. But each time we shot, the ball struck the post or the cross-bar or it hit the goalkeeper, it could never be placed inside the goal. It was a regular bombing every minute that we kept up, but nothing could happen; it looked as if somebody had raised a wall against us. I tried six or seven corner kicks, all of them first-class, but to no avail. A Kumartuli player in our team was so impressed by my corner kicks that he extended to me an invitation. “Why don’t you come and play in Calcutta ? What is the point in wasting yourself here in a provincial town ? You should come and play with us in our team.” I could not however accept the invitation; I am going to tell you why. Anyhow, we did not manage to equalise that goal and had to accept defeat. I never felt so disappointed. We returned to Rungpore with heads down and not a word spoken.

But do you know what had happened ? It was explained to us soon after the match by one of their outstanding players, perhaps he was their captain. He actually half belonged to our team, for his relatives lived in Rungpore and he himself sometimes came and played for the Rungpore team. “This serves you right,” he said. “Mother Kali is a living goddess, you see.” With this, he took out a half-pice bit from his pocket and went on, “We had been to the Kali temple, we made this offering to the goddess and said to her, ‘Mother, here

we have come, begging for thy protection; take this half-pice as our modest offering and give us the victory this afternoon.' Now, see how she has got us the victory. How else could we have stood up against a team such as yours?" So, that was how. We had been swelling with pride at our prowess and ability, somewhat in the spirit of Duryodhana haughty in the pride of his troops of the divine gift, whereas they had been modest like the Pandavas reliant on Sri Krishna. This at least was the lesson that came to me.

Let me tell you a story here in this connection. It is not a story, but a thing that actually happened. It was the time, at the beginning of the century or even earlier, when the youth of Calcutta took to football seriously and enthusiastically. And among the pioneers was the same team—of which I spoke just now—Kumartuli. This club had at its head as manager and inspirer a gentleman who gave his all—money and time and energy—for his organisation. He had the ambition to see his boys play and play successfully with the European and military teams. It was an ambition. For there was no comparison in those days between a team of British soldiers and a team of weakling Indians. The Indians in football were almost like new recruits in comparison with the seasoned Britons. First of all, the Indians played all bare-footed against eleven pairs of high boots. Secondly, the Britons were strong robust beef-eating bodies while the Indians were almost airy nothings. Thirdly, the British had a long strenuous training behind them: the Indians were newcomers in the field. However, this particular Indian team worked and practised with zeal in view of a match with the Britishers. The result of course was a foregone conclusion. They were lucky to get defeated by only a couple of goals.

Now the British team had a generous captain who became interested in the matter and undertook to coach and train the Indians. A big tournament came on at about that time and this Indian team was pitted against a famous Military team, Blackwatch or something. The manager—the guiding spirit of the Indian team—was, as I said, a high-spirited, enthusiastic, ebullient personage—he had only one defect, if defect you call it: he was addicted to drinking. That was a fillip to increase his enthusiasm and buoyancy and dare-devilry. He used to invite his players to feasting and revelry—to inspire them and encourage them. Now the day of days approached. And the gentleman was in jitters, terribly nervous: how were his boys to face these giants? And a change came upon him. On the previous day he refrained from drinking, fasted, adopted *mauna*, went to Kalighat and worshipped Mother Kali.

On the next day the hour struck and the players were about to take the field. The team of British soldiers came in carriages (there were horse-carriages in those days), with music, bugle and drum, singing and shouting, sure of their victory. They were giants indeed, each a Hercules, and the Indians were pigmies before them. The play started. Just then our manager noticed that at a distance, away from the field, under a tree was sitting a Sannyasi. Directly he

saw the Sannyasi, he ran, ran towards him and sat before him. The Sannyasi asked what was the matter. He answered that there was to be a fight with British soldiers, our Bengali boys had to be protected, they must win. The Sannyasi enquired whether they had guns and cannon and what was the strength of the enemy. He was answered that it was not that kind of battle—it was a football game. The Sannyasi shook his head and sent him away.

The gentleman returned and saw that with great effort his boys had managed a drawn game and they pulled through till half time. Now the danger was ahead—half an hour more. He could not restrain himself and again he rushed to the Sannyasi who was still sitting there in the same position, and prayed and entreated him saying they were threatened with defeat at the hands of Mlechchhas, their honour and prestige were at stake. The Sannyasi asked, “How many killed and wounded?” The gentleman explained again it was not like that. It was a football game. The Sannyasi asked, “How many on their side?” They were eleven. The Sannyasi then asked the gentleman to get eleven bits of stone. These were collected and placed before him. The Sannyasi arranged them in a row, and then drew some circles around and sprinkled water and uttered something. And then he told the gentleman to go away. He returned, the game had already started after the recess. But a strange thing he began to notice. He saw one of the soldiers—a giant of a fellow—rushing with the ball and nearing the goal and about to shoot into it, when suddenly he tumbled down and rolled over and the ball went off somewhere. In fact all the mighty heroes were behaving in a curious manner. They were running but with difficulty as if with legs tied up. They fumbled, tottered, fell down—moved with great difficulty. Something was restraining and impeding them, pulling them back. So the result was a victory for the Indians by two goals. You can imagine what they did after this miraculous victory. The gentleman manager rushed towards the tree to thank the Sannyasi. But where was he? Nothing was there, barring the row of stones.

2

I did not go to play in Calcutta. One of the reasons of course was that I belonged permanently to Pondicherry and my trips to Bengal were more in the nature of holiday excursions and I did not want to enter into binding commitments. For another thing, the atmosphere of Calcutta football was one that I was not likely to cherish; we belonged to different worlds as it were.

Let me now tell you about another match, this time in Jalpaiguri. As far as I remember, it was a Jalpaiguri Shield Final, Nilphamari *versus* Purnea. Young Samad, the great Mohan Bagan hero, was then playing for the Purnea team and his game was already something worth seeing. Nilphamari enjoyed a peculiar kind of reputation—whether it was good or bad is for you to judge—

they always played a good game but they seldom managed to win. The same thing happened this time. You will be surprised, four of us⁷ brothers were playing on the same side on this occasion. I believe one was at the goal, another was back, the other two in the front line. Out of these, my third brother played centre forward. He read for his Degree in Calcutta and was a member of the junior Mohan Bagan team. I alternated between the out and the in positions at the wing, but he always played centre. One of the tricks I performed on this occasion brought tremendous applause and much excitement among our spectators. I held the ball and was planning to make a run, when one of my opponents came and stood within less than a couple of paces in front of me. Both of us stood perfectly still for a moment, both manoeuvring for position. Can you guess what I did next ? I drove the ball past his side, got around him and caught it up again. The poor fellow was left behind and completely non-plussed. What a shout of joy rose from the crowds and what applause ! I was right-out and as I passed along the touch line, stray comments reached my ears : “Blackbeard plays very well indeed, doesn’t he ?” “Carry the ball yourself, blackbeard, do not pass it on”—this because my team seldom made good use of my passes. I wore a beard in those days, you know; it was something like a French cut. Already, some of my friends had launched a campaign against my beard. “That is now wholly out of date in Bengal,” they would say. “Shave it off, throw it away.” One of them even went to the extent of making me a present of a shaving set. Finally, there was no other go for me but to follow the maxim, “Eat to please yourself, but you must please others in what you wear.” But Sri Aurobindo did not much appreciate my beardless face; he seemed to prefer us to wear a moustache and beard, at least in those days.

I shall end this story of football with an account of my last performance in this line. By then I had practically given up and was on the “retired list”. I began as an ordinary player, then I was captain for a year, an Inspector of Games (in our club) for another year, and finally a retired man. I never played in matches any longer. The juniors now took our places. I would however pay an occasional visit and play just a little. They once held a six-a-side competition. The final was between our team, Cercle Sportif of Pondicherry, and the Missionaries’ team, Société le Nid. For a long time, the two teams had been keen rivals. The Missionaries never liked us, as you know, and their supporters naturally took their side. The boys of the Cercle Sportif were the enlightened, nationalist element in the local population. Now, the play began. One of the conditions of the match, laid down in advance, was that if any of the players on either side were to get disabled in the course of the game, he could be replaced by another. The Sportif boys had arranged among themselves that in case the game did not go well and they found themselves giving way, they would get someone “disabled” and take me in, as a substitute. That is what happened in fact. Our team lost a goal and immediately afterwards one of our boys—he

was later the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Antoine Tamby, now in retirement—sat down with a thump. He said he had got hurt and could not play any more. So they shouted for me. “Roy, where is Roy ?” I was “Roy” and ready at hand. I entered the field, with my red and white uniform, the Mohan Bagan colours. I changed immediately the whole tactics of the game. What our boys had been doing was to cluster close around the ball for purposes of short passing—all the three or four out of the six were doing that. There was to be a centre kick following the goal. I stood with the ball at the centre and told the two boys on my right and on my left to keep as far away as possible from the centre and to go on making long passes. I sent the ball from the centre straight to the right wing. Our outside man was ready. He took the ball and passed it back to me at the centre. I was already far ahead, almost beyond the half-back. As soon as the goalkeeper saw me rushing with the ball towards the goal, he lost his nerve : “Oh, Roy coming !” It was an easy score. What an excitement among our boys, what uproarious hurrahs! We won by two goals in the end and the cup was ours. After the game was over, how they danced with me on their shoulders ! Moni led the boys. He too, like me, had given up playing, and was on the retired list, acting only as a spectator. Moni was so pleased with this performance of mine that he took me straightway to a nearby hotel or bar. There was no Ganpatram in those days, alas !

Let me conclude this narrative with a few incidental remarks, some reflections concerning “style” in games. In my native town in Bengal I had a friend who played tennis. Once I made this comment on seeing him play, “There is no grammar about his play.” My dictum became a classic among our sporting circles. He used to play in what may be described as a “hit and miss” style. Not that he broke any of the rules of the game, but there was about his manner something loose and slovenly; he had no style or system. But often enough he hacked his way to victory by sheer force of vital energy. Bejoy and our Benjamin with his leech-like grip—they were the two half-backs in our team—followed exactly the same method. In fact, there are two essentials to a good game: grammar and style, or grammar and rhythm, to use the terms of ancient rhetoric. In our time, grammar was no doubt important in school, but we were never to be bothered by any such bugbear in the field of sports, at least as far as our country was concerned. In those days, men became champions through sheer genius, that is, by virtue of an innate skill. Without any systematic training or practice on scientific lines, they developed a skill in the game through an inner urge or influence. Perhaps all men of genius are creatures of this type. They say this about Napoleon too. He went on winning his victories without end and no one could stop his onward march. The old experienced generals of the enemy Powers, the Austrians for example, practically gave up trying. On being criticised for their failure, they said, “But what on earth can we do ? The fellow does not observe any of the principles of warfare. How can one fight under such

conditions ? He breaks every rule of battle.” But today we are in an age where not untrained skill but close mastery of detail and unfailing practice are the things that count. Here in the Ashram, through your games and physical exercises, you are being trained to make every posture and movement of all the parts of your body orderly, precise and disciplined. You practise day after day, month after month, for years on end. We in our days had no knowledge of any such thing, we were utterly ignorant and illiterate in this regard. The time has now come when man has to make his advance by conscious method, not drag his feet along somehow in a blind ignorant way, not rest satisfied with what comes automatically. In our country, in ancient times at least, grammar was considered important in two fields : in the study of language and in the art of Yoga. The rules were extremely strict and there was no end of manuals and glosses. But in our ordinary life, in the art of day-to-day living, there grew up an enormous amount of slackness and indiscipline, at least during the more recent times.

I have just now spoken of two things, grammar and rhythm; style is mainly a matter of rhythm but it presumes grammar, for you cannot have a good style without taking note of grammar. Grammar is like the skeleton and bony structure in a man's body; without that support and foundation, the body becomes limp like a mass of flesh. By grammar I mean the right arrangement of the different limbs. Whether it be tennis or cricket or any other game, or even ordinary jumping and running, one must know in minute detail and apply in practice the knowledge as to how the arms and the chest and the back and abdomen are to be held, in what position the legs should be, down to the smallest fingers and toes. And it is not enough that you control the separate movements of the different parts of the body, you have to combine all these movements into a single harmonious whole and give them a fine well-formed and one-pointed rhythm. This last quality is what characterises rhythm or style. It is said that the style is the man. It is really something that belongs to the inner man; in a game, it is a quality of the inner body-consciousness. It needs a harmony between the consciousness of the body and the inner vital being, it implies a natural sense of measure and rhythm. In our days, we did not know anything of all this. We did have the gift of imagination and feeling, but now is the day of science. You have the great good fortune that you can now acquire both these gifts, effect between the two a supreme synthesis and harmony and arrive at a higher fulfilment.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

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

OLD LONG SINCE

(5)

SRI Aurobindo's household moved from Mission Street to François Martin Street. There arose a difference of opinion among those called "swadeshis" as to the necessity of this change of residence. A strong dispute started in their midst on this account. The disputation, I was told, reached Sri Aurobindo's ears.

Why this controversy over Sri Aurobindo's change of residence ? The city of Pondicherry was divided into two by a canal running north-south. The eastern side of the city was called by the people "European Quarter" whereas the western side, comprising more than three-fourths of the population, was known as "Indian Quarter". The "European Quarter" was mostly, we may even say totally, inhabited by the white or mixed white people. As a rule, the houses in this part of the city had in front a footpath for pedestrians and, further away, the road for vehicles. Standing on the footpath one would open the gate of a house and then get in. The houses in the "Indian Quarter" had commonly covered platforms in front to sit upon, but no footpath. In the "white town", pedestrians would find no shelter from rain and storm. The gates remained always closed. The streets were nearly always silent. People were hardly seen walking there. Sometimes with the arrival of French steamers the shores of Pondicherry were a little busy and, in the interior either the next day or the day after, one might come across one or two pedlars carrying, on the head in baskets or big wooden boxes, perfumes, special biscuits, children's playthings, stitching threads of many kinds and colours, and other French products. These pedlars would cry out in French, "Marchandises, marchandises" (*i.e.*, "Goods for sale"), with a view to attract the attention of customers. This business was run by one or two of the French families which had settled down at Pondicherry for supplying the needs of the local French people.

Every house had two gates—one for the inmates and the other for the "Push-push" carriages. The latter had a wide opening, a big one-leaf door or, in some places, folding doors.

Sri Aurobindo's house in Mission Street was rented at Rs. 15/- per month whereas the rent of the house now taken was settled at Rs. 35/-. Now the great question arose : Why did Sri Aurobindo change his residence when the rent was so high ? A perplexing question ! Why this extravagance ? The difference in rent would be sufficient to meet the needs of a whole family. All this was

brought to Bharati's notice. But he did not utter a word about it to Sri Aurobindo, because there was no point in discussing about it when Sri Aurobindo had already taken the decision. It was Bharati's firm belief that Sri Aurobindo would not do anything without a definite purpose behind it.

Description of the new house : it was a big self-sufficient house in François Martin St., No. 37. It had two entrances—one on the north and the other on the west. This well-built structure stood at the junction of two streets. Rue François Martin ran from north to south whereas Rue Law de Lauriston from east to west. The western gate faced Rue François Martin. This was evidently the postern gate, the northern indeed was the main entrance; but as it remained always locked, the western became the main gate. Entering by this gate one would come across an open space which could be termed a courtyard. The northern gate led straight to the staircase; it was later on closed up and the entrance converted into a room, as you see at present. The house being tenantless so long, grass had grown thick at places along its walls. There was only one tap for the whole house and that too in the open courtyard, against a wall near the back staircase. The tap still exists and is used by our Green Group boys. Under this water tap—it was fitted up almost to a man's height—lay a big round stone resembling the lower part of a grindstone.

In the interior of the house, at one end of the verandah there was a wide staircase leading to the first floor. Each of the steps had its rim strengthened, almost decorated, by a wooden plank. The back staircase had no protection from sun and rain. It was constructed for the passage of cooks, servants, the menials. I have said before that the house was big but it looked desolate.

The upper storey held spacious rooms and a spacious verandah. The east and the west ends had both an open terrace facing south. On the west, at the corner there was a wide room, adjoining which was another room and then the open terrace. Both the terraces had seats under the parapets. I mention this because we used to sit there, including Sri Aurobindo, and chat for long hours at night. The big room, the front room and the terrace—the three together being considered the best part of the house—were set apart for Sri Aurobindo. Such a big house but without electric lights !

The events that took place from after Sri Aurobindo's birth anniversary in August, 1913 to his shifting to the François Martin Street, *i.e.*, from August 1913 to December 1913, left no clear impression upon my mind. My memory is dim now about this period.

To go a little back in our story. Sri Aurobindo reached the shores of Pondicherry on board the Dupleix at 4 p.m. on April 4, 1910, got down with Bejoy Kanta and made straight for Shankar Chetty's house in Comoutty Street.

The persons who escorted Sri Aurobindo to Shankar Chetty's house were Srinivasachari, C. Subramania Bharati, Suresh Chandra Chakravarti and Shankar Chetty. Of them only Srinivasachari is still alive (1962).

Sri Aurobindo lived *incognito* for six months in Shankar Chetty's house. Later on, his stay in Pondicherry came to be known more and more by others.

It was during his stay at Shankar Chetty's that he observed a fast for 21 days. Though he lost weight, as he said, due to this fast, his energy increased many times.

It was again in Shankar Chetty's house that a distinguished scholar and savant from France met Sri Aurobindo in secret. His name was Paul Richard. He was sent from France by Mira—she whom we now know as the Mother. She handed over to him the sketch of a yogachakra, saying that its interpreter was to be found in India; and he who could interpret it would alone be her helper and master on the path of yoga. Paul Richard received the meaning of the symbol from Sri Aurobindo, and then left for his country with the message. While returning to France he said to Sri Aurobindo that Mira and he could come in the year 1914. Accordingly, they sailed from France, disembarked at Dhanushkoti, took the train and reached Pondicherry on March 29, 1914 without a halt on the way.

Now, what accounted for that change of residence to No. 37, in the François Martin Street, many thought, was the impending arrival of these two persons from France. So far as I remember it was in the middle of December 1913 that the new house was first occupied.

The "revolutionaries" who had settled at Pondicherry whispered to one another that two Europeans had accepted Sri Aurobindo as Guru and would stay here. This news spread abroad and reached my ears also. One day in December, 1913, as was my habit, I went to see Ramaswami Iyengar in the evening. He was downstairs on the verandah in front of his room and said that two persons from the topmost cultural circle of France were coming to Sri Aurobindo for practising yoga. They would be coming very soon. "It was a secret till now; I have disclosed it to you today," he concluded.

I felt very happy : European savants ! they have approached a countryman of ours with reverence. My heart rejoiced to hear of it.

The upper storey—its verandah, to be exact—was somewhat beautified. One old cracked table, two arm-chairs, four or five folding armless chairs with back-rest—these were borrowed and arranged there, luckily with no binding to return them.

Moreover, four electric lights were put up, one in Sri Aurobindo's room, another in the centre of the upper verandah, the third in the verandah downstairs, the fourth I do not remember where. There was no electric metre in the house. For each point the charge was one rupee and four annas per month. Whether the lights were kept burning or not, five rupees had to be paid and the charge would be the same even if they were kept on through all the twenty-four hours. Less than four points were not given as a rule.

The weeds in the courtyard were pulled out. Daily sweeping of the house

was now attended to. The house put on almost a gay appearance because of these much-needed changes.

I do not distinctly recollect what took place after Ramaswami Iyengar had shifted from Mission Street and before he finally left Pondicherry. The succession of events and their chronology have become hazy in my remembrance. Naturally I could not know everything, since I was not an inmate of Sri Aurobindo's house.

After Sri Aurobindo had moved to the new house, not a day passed without my paying a visit to the place. Ramaswami was put up in a room downstairs adjacent to the staircase. I used to call on him every evening without fail and accompany him to the beach. As I said, I was much attached to Ramaswami and identified myself with him without being quite conscious of it. In the Mission Street house I used to have Sri Aurobindo's Darshan once a day. Here it was not so. I had no occasion to go upstairs. Sometimes he would come down and if I happened to be there—well, my good luck!

One event. The year 1914 was born. It was towards the end of March. Time: evening, about 6 p.m. Ramaswami Iyengar was sitting all alone in the open court. There was no other soul. The sense of solitariness was somewhat awesome. Not a fly, not a crow near about. I entered the house. He made a sign and calling me near said: "The two persons from France have arrived. They will just now come and see Sri Aurobindo. The order is that none other than the inmates should remain in the house. You go alone to the sea-side."

There was a reaction of sorrow and confusion in my heart. I not an inmate! a stranger! Yes, that must be the cause. I said once that there was a kind of screen in my consciousness. The "I" behind that screen was not a stranger; the "I" outside the screen was one.

Iyengar did not stay long in this new house. So far as I remember, he left for his village in May 1914. Whenever I called at the new house I found Ramaswami with a big copy of the Ramayana printed in Devanagari script. He had started reading Sanskrit. Nolinikanta Gupta was his tutor. Whenever Ramaswami spoke about his tutor, he spoke with love and respect.

Nolinikanta Gupta gave him lessons in the Bengali language also. In the new house Ramaswami rendered into Tamil Bankim Chandra Chatterji's short story "Jugal Angurā" and got it published in some periodical—I have forgotten the name, it might be "Swadeshimitran". Iyengar's handwriting looked like a string of tiny pearls. Bharati used to write each letter separately, juxtapose one letter to another and so his handwriting would look like an arrangement of jewels.

Iyengar would send his translations to the press only when they had been shown to Bharati.

Ramaswami cherished an immeasurable affection for his mother. A year had passed since he had left his mother's house. He must see his mother now,

he decided. He spoke about this to Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo was reluctant to permit him. He tried to dissuade him from going back to his place and the old life. But Ramaswami stuck to his decision stubbornly and set out for home. It was some time in May 1914. When I went to the house the day after Ramaswami had left Sri Aurobindo and gone home, I found the downstairs as if all forsaken. Sorrow invaded my heart. My eyes swam in tears. I felt as if I had been deprived of help or support. With what affection and what love had Iyengar talked with me even on the day previous to his departure ! Did all that now become an illusion ! Seeing me thus, and realising my piteous condition, Bejoy Kanta, who was on the spot, approached and comforted me with words of kindness.

Iyengar's departure was but an excuse for me to be in that condition. There was created a vacuum in me. The parental affection could not fill it. The one chosen by my inner being only could make this emptiness disappear. Bejoy Kanta was a help in reaching the Guru's Feet.

AMRITA

(Translated by Parichand from the Tamil)

A WINDOW OF MILK

TIME revolved
Inside another kind of time
And the swan left languidly
Through a window of milk.

The red butter rose
From the bridges and waves—
The mask untied, the eyes were bare,
Unfringed by shade.

Mink dripped through placid grease,
While the long, slim legs of the aging saint
Stepped daintily through gothic prayers.

A swan with a mask,
A saint with a mink
And a window of milk
On time...

ANURAKTA (TONY SCOTT)

THE ABSOLUTE

MAN made God in the image of his mind,
Ignored the absoluteness of the Alone.
By thread of thought he started Him to bind—
He escapes, He flies afar, remains unknown.
His splendour in the sky the stars reveal,
On a rainbow-ridge He swings from heaven to earth,
In clamour of clouds He steers His giant wheel,
Silvers the poles with flash of lightning-mirth.
He stands above the peak of the universe,
Uncaptured in the snare of sightless thought.
By twinkling of His eye all creation stirs;
In a luminous chain of love His joy is caught.
Gopis of Gokul hear Him play His flute:
Cored in Lord Krishna lives the Absolute.

V. M. MEHTA

NEW ROADS

BOOK XII

(iv)

THE AFFIRMATION

FROM a deep Calm
we fell into meditation;
And from there
into a Silence dynamic with Desire.
Then into Samadhi—
this state, can words describe ?
We are as children
born on the bottom of an ocean—
We catch glimpses,
feel intimations of the Sun
For which we yearn
yet know not how to claim.
We alternate
between the gloom and glitter of life;
We swim in our senses
through which we fail to see
Inward towards
the being that we are :
Our senses are
so heavy that we sink
Always to
the gloom of the ocean floor.

At times we catch
a glimmer of the Sun :
The weights of ego
and the senses fall—
We rise within
ourselves and breathe again
The rare and golden
skies of Consciousness

That do affirm
 the Truth men ever seek :
 The blazing Sun,
 the widening sky and sea,
 The greater Joy
 in an illimitable Vast
 Rising on wings
 of Time's unending flight :
 There all is Love,
 and Knowledge and Delight—
 There all is Silence
 and the beginning of Light.

NORMAN DOWSETT

SOMETHING IN MY SOUL IS STIRRING

Is it the beginning of an end
 Or the end of a beginning ?
 While my mind refuses to bend,
 Something in my soul is stirring
 Will the streamlet vanish in the sand ?
 Or rush all frothing-foaming
 Through hill or dale or forest land
 Until its cry is one vast homing
 In the Ocean limitless, unfathomed and
 Ageless—the consummation of a blind searching
 For the Supreme, an endless end ? I stand
 At a parting of the ways, soul stirring.

C. S. AHLUWALIA

THOUGHTS

“I, I ALONE am in the right”—Such an ‘I’ was one day hanged from the gallows whose upright bars consisted of the Light that by the Guru’s grace descended from above and thus spread wide and formed the cross-bar from which I was hanged.

*
**

The treasure is hidden in the hollow of the wall, but we search for it in a niche. If we fail in sounding the secret place it will avail us nothing to rummage the niche.

Peace, Delight and the whole spiritual wealth are with us, but treasured in the interior, not in the exterior.

They are lying in the depths, in the secret place.

GIRDHARLAL

(Translated from the author’s Gujarati book ‘Uparāma’)

NOTE

The “Thoughts” published so far and a few more will be brought out in book-form by the author in February 1963 under the title “Silence Speaks”. The price will be Rs. 2, 5 sh. and \$1, including postage. The book will be available from Girdharlal, Sri Auṛobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 2.

SELF-TEACHINGS : DIVINE PLAN AND HUMAN EFFORT

THE human brain is like a wireless set, with intricate nerve-settings like the wire-settings in radio. It is meant to receive only those healthy progressive thoughts which, in a smooth tuning-in, add to the harmony of human life for progress and perfection towards the truth of God. The idea behind it is like that of the radio engineer who intends, in the manufacture of his set, only the smooth undisturbed reception of music and other programmes.

But, like a radio set, never free from catching extra unintended disturbances in the atmosphere which mar its smooth functioning, the human brain, too, unfortunately catches and picks up unintended impure thoughts from the surroundings in this material world, which retard our intended progress and cause misdeeds and sufferings.

Yet such thoughts have also been wisely sanctioned by God's manifesting executive power of creation called Prakriti or Nature, with the healthy idea that the individual should progress by enjoying his own complete freedom of committing various deeds good and bad. Such freedom gains him self-experience, a realisation of his own mistakes, leading him ultimately from imperfections to self-perfection, purity and the intended truth of his Creator.

So there are no human efforts, with their results in various and diverse actions, without the original will of the Divine at the root of the thought behind them. To the eye of faith, devotion and bhakti, they have no independence. Yet the idea of human effort satisfies the first ignorant conception of some intellectuals of strong vitality and has a definite wise and healthy place in the working of their progress by so-called personal initiative—until the final formation of such a faith and devotion in them too, gained by self-experience.

NARWANI

THE DIVINE PRISONER

If you seek to realize the Divine, then you will have to enter into the Eternal Blissful Cell which is walled, entrapped and encircled by the Divine alone. There only one law exists, that is of the Eternal Freedom, where bondage is merely an illusion.

The ordinary human prison is for a certain period and there one undergoes a kind of forced punishment which is the consequence of one common human crime or another. That punishment is borne with hatred. But for the prisoner Divine the punishment is for Eternity, and it is saturated with Eternal Love, Bliss, Grace, as a result of the only crime—that you seek to realize the Divine, the Supreme.

As soon as the Divine is re-discovered within this tiny little gaol known as the body, the gaol becomes the Temple and all-bondage turns into all-freedom.

The prison, prisoner and the Divine melt into ONE.

TARAK BOSE

Students' Section

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

ACT 5

Scene 1

(Aurobindo comes to a Bengal partitioned and distressed. Aurobindo and Mother Bengal.)

MOTHER BENGAL : My child, you come to me in my moment of utter distress. Look at my state. How long would you suffer me in this way to grovel in the dust ?

AURO : Mother, look into my bleeding heart. The stab in your heart is a stab in the heart of every one of your children. We are determined to let you, our mighty Mother, no longer lie prostrate and dismembered. Our first task will be to restore you to your full-limbed stature, and at the same time to launch a supreme effort to free you for ever from your thralldom. The fire that we shall kindle here will spread all over the world. For the moment our love of you will be the love of fire, there will be fire everywhere till the black forces ranged against our Bharat Mata are a heap of ashes, and her benign face shines with the light of liberty. We stand vowed to do or be undone. If our efforts are crowned with success, then only will begin our second task—the task of the spiritual liberation of our sisters and brothers at home and abroad. Rest assured, we shall look to your great need first. Nothing will see us swerve an inch from our path. Bless us, O Mother.

MOTHER BENGAL : Your words are worthy of the great soul in you that speaks them. Your Mother will be with you at all times. Mother India expects her children in Bengal to rise and join hands with her children everywhere from North to South, from East to West. Godspeed to you and your sisters and brothers in the vast sacrifice you have undertaken.

Scene 2

(The residence of P. Mitter, Bar-at-law. Aurobindo and Barin. Jatin Banerjee, whom Aurobindo had helped to get into the Baroda army for military training.)

P. MITTER : Aurobindo Babu, Barin and Jatin did their best to organise the youths. But of late there has been a sharp difference of opinion between them. Barin differs from Jatin's principle of military discipline with regard to the youths who, he says, will do better through love and sympathy than under subjection to a military regime. He fears that strict discipline may scare away the tender ones. Jatin insists on military discipline as essential to an effective basis for our organisation. Until the two views are harmonised, there is no progress of the work. It is now yours to do the needful.

AURO : Both of them are right, each from his own point of view. (*Looking at Jatin*) You and Barin have sacrificed so much for the Mother. The spirit of sacrifice and self-accommodation must govern your actions. First of all, let there be love and sympathy in dealing with the new recruits. Then let them be inspired by love of the country to sacrifice their life. Once this love has taken firm root in youthful hearts you have to introduce military training and discipline to make of them useful hands. Jatin, certainly you can co-operate with Barin and Barin with you through the next necessary stages. Don't you agree to this ?

BARIN and JATIN (*in one voice*) : Certainly that is the best course.

Scene 3

(*Bengal National College. Principal Aurobindo Ghosh's English class. The class begins with the recital of 'Bande Mataram' in chorus. Among the authorities Rash Behari Ghosh, Sir Gurudas Banerjee and Nagendra Nath Guha happen to overhear it from afar. Recitation over, all take their seats; one of the students stands up.*)

STUDENT : Sir, may I ask you a question not relevant to our lesson ?

AURO : Yes, you may. No harm.

STUDENT : Sir, we feel inspired when you speak of India's renaissance. But when we turn to her drawbacks our whole outlook is obscured by doubt.

AURO : Well, my boy, do you believe with me that the spirit of nationalism that is now stirring the hearts and souls of our countrymen is a gift of the Divine ? Do you believe that the Divine Himself is our Leader ?

THE CLASS IN A BODY : Yes, Sir, we do.

AURO : Then take it from me that whatever drawbacks stand in India's way will be swept away by His Force. The Nation is rising and will go on rising, maybe at times through ups and downs, to the infinite heights. If she does not, she will be an ignominious failure, and ultimately become extinct. But have no such fear. India rises to do God's Will, to give His Message to the world, to help humanity out of its humanness into its native divinity. India's renaissance is as sure as God Himself. Cast doubt away. Be sincere in your unshakable faith. It will carry you through.

Scene 4

(Prof. Manomohan Ghosh in Dacca Government College. The Professor of English and his students.)

(One of the students stands up.)

STUDENT : Sir, to-day we would like to hear from you something about your younger brother Aurobindo.

MANO (*placing his right hand on his chest*) : Alas, what about my poor self ?

STUDENTS IN A CHORUS : Aurobindo Ghosh's life is a life of stupendous sacrifice.

MANO : As if mine were a life of sheer enjoyment ! Do you ever care to know that once upon a time I walked in step with Laurence Binyon and Oscar Wilde ? It will be all a surprise to you if I say that I was on the way to being a great poet. Now it is all a dream to me. I came over to India to offer my poetic inspiration to her. Strangely enough, she has not recognised it.

STUDENTS : But we, your students, have recognised your poetic inspiration.

MANO : Have you ? Then I am prepared to say something about my younger brother Aurobindo ! You know, he is fully responsible for the failure of my career. He is a bar to my success. The Government fail to swallow his fiery speeches. My only crime is that I too came of the same parents. They might be thinking that my room too is not empty of bombs and ammunitions !

(*The students burst into hilarious laughter*)

STUDENTS : Sir, pray, tell us something in favour of Aurobindo Ghosh.

MANO : Well, my boys, truth is a very sacred thing. I do not use it so often as you people do.

STUDENTS : But why ?

MANO : The reason is so simple. The more you use it the sooner it gets spoiled.

STUDENTS : For our sake, for your beloved students' sake use it once.

MANO : Listen, then. I do not care a straw for anybody's unwillingness to subscribe to my firm belief. There are only two and a half men in India : one is Aurobindo and the other Barin, and the half is Tilak !

Scene 5

(*Aurobindo, Rash Bihari Ghosh, Sir Gurudas Banerjee and Nagendra Nath Guha.*)

RASH BIHARI : Aurobindo Babu, please do not take me amiss. We admit that Nationalism is an invaluable thing. But to preach it in the College, we

believe, is not advisable. You always insist on admitting the boys who have been rusticated from Government institutions on political grounds. You say that they are just the sort of stuff that you want for this College. Moreover it is not safe at all. The Government have already started looking upon our College with an eye of suspicion.

AURO (*after heaving a deep sigh*): I think, our College must have an ideal of its own. Will you be pleased if it follows other Colleges *in toto* ?

GURUDAS : Not at all. But the thing is, if the students pay more attention to politics and nationalism than to their studies, then their studies will go to the dogs.

AURO : I don't think Politics and Nationalism stand as a bar to their mental culture. One has to adore one's Motherland first. Mere mental information is of no use. I believe, one who has no love for his country is no better than a learned fool, although one may be rich in mental faculties.

GURUDAS : I must say, you are quite ahead of our age. Nationalism, politics and mental culture—these three cannot go together.

AURO : I am sorry, I fail to share your views. The name of our College is Bengal National College. Will it not be a negation of the *raison d'être* of the College if it keeps clear of Nationalism ?

NAGENDRA : Aurobindo Babu, you are always noted for your clarity of thought and expression, depth of understanding and the facility with which you make the abstruse intelligible. I am deeply convinced that your own lofty spirit of Nationalism will fill the country with a powerful idealism that will build up our Nation.

Scene 6

(*August 22, 1907. Bengal National College. The resignation of Aurobindo's Principalship of the College. His beloved pupils request him for a few words of advice. Their faces are overwhelmed with sorrow at his resignation. He has been profusely garlanded by these students.*)

AUROBINDO : I have been told that you wish me to speak a few words of advice to you. But in these days I feel that young men can very often give better advice than we older people can give.¹

(*One of the students stands up.*)

STUDENT : Excuse me, Sir. If so, they speak of inspiration received from outstanding leaders like you. (*Cheers*)

¹ Sri Aurobindo's words in this scene are from an actual speech of his.

AURO : When we established this college and left other occupations, other chances of life, to devote our lives to this institution, we did so because we hoped to see in it the foundation, the nucleus of a nation, of the new India which is to begin its career after this night of sorrow and trouble, on that day of glory and greatness when India will work for the world. (*Thunderous applause*)...When I come back I wish to see some of you becoming rich, rich not for yourselves but that you may enrich the Mother with your riches. I wish to see some of you becoming great, great not for your own sakes, not that you may satisfy your own vanity, but great for her, to make India great, to enable her to stand up with head erect among the nations of the earth, as she did in days of yore when the world looked up to her for light. Even those who will remain poor and obscure, I want to see their very poverty and obscurity devoted to the Motherland...Work that she may prosper. Suffer that she may rejoice.

(*Repeated cries of "Bande Mataram".*)

(*In reply one of the students stands up.*)

STUDENT (*with a choked voice*) : Words cannot express our feelings. The brilliant future of our country you have called up before our minds has impressed itself upon our hearts. We feel too that it can be realised by us if we have a leader of your stature to guide us. We give you our soul's word that we will follow you, your noble ideal, your noble sacrifice.

(*Loud cries of "Bande Mataram".*)

(*To be continued*)

CHINMOY

PEDLARS AND POETS

WE are familiar with poems written on the rude forefathers of the hamlet, the solitary reaper and the Gardener. Gray, Wordsworth and Tagore were consciously attempting to show their audience that the common was really uncommon, the prosaic was really poetic. Their aim was to awaken the mind to the charm of novelty in things of everyday and suggest to us the revelation which puts the tarnished familiar world in a new light.

American poets have tried to present to us the same revelation, in their own way. They perceive wonder and surprise in the day-to-day events and common people like the pedlars, like the ice-cream sellers and balloonmen. What flashes on their inward eye is the reality of things about them, immediately surrounding them in a peculiar way. This reality they capture and communicate to us in a peculiar idiom.

My purpose is not to vindicate the greatness of American poetry, for any body of poems will get established by its own merit and have its place in the progress of poetry. What I wish to suggest is that the critical sense which is trained will perceive the effect, the truth, and the nuances of any kind of poetry. I shall presently quote two poems by American writers on the theme of pedlars—*The Balloonman* by E.E.Cummings (incidentally Cummings never gave titles to his poems, he numbered them) and *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* by Wallace Stevens. In the context of the modern world, these poems have their value and place in the realm of poetry.

in Just-
spring when the world is mud-
luscious the little
lame balloonman

whistles far and wee

and eddieandbill come
running from marbles and
piracies and it's
spring

when the world is puddle-wonderful

the queer
 old balloonman whistles
 far and wee
 and bettyandisbel come dancing
 from hop-scotch and jump-rope and
 it's
 spring
 and
 the
 goat-footed

balloonman whistles
 far
 and
 wee

"It is at first sight no more than a picture of American boys and girls generalised and eddieandbill and bettyandisbel leaving their games in the wet spring countryside to follow the faint and distant whistle of the balloonman. The season is Just-spring and the world is mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful. But there is more in the poem than just a picture. For the balloonman, first lame, becomes towards the end 'goat-footed'. In other words, he is identified with the god Pan—that is why the man of the balloonman suddenly acquired a capital letter. Pan is the god of youth, spring and nature. It is this God whom Cummings' poetic imagination sees—rather hears—in modern America and whom boys and girls leave their play to follow, as they did in Greek mythology. Why Just-spring should have a capital letter is not easily explained; it may be that Cummings wishes to suggest that the season like the God is magical. The reader who complains that the poem is set out in an unnecessarily odd way should try to set it out in a more conventional way, to see if the effect is exactly the same." (James Reeves)

The art of E.E.Cummings is of course highly self-conscious and sophisticated; but his feelings are as spontaneous and natural as can be the feelings of a man living in the highly sophisticated and unnatural atmosphere of modern American urban life.

Let us examine the other poem *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* by Wallace Stevens.

Call the roller of big cigars,
 The muscular one, and bid him whip
 In kitchen cups concupiscent curds,

Let the wenches dawdle in such dress
 As they are used to wear, and let the boys
 Bring flowers in last month's newspapers.
 Let be be finale of seem.

Take from the dresser of deal,
 Lacking the three glass knobs, that sheet
 On which she embroidered fantails once
 And spread it so as to cover her face.
 If her horny feet protrude, they come
 To show how cold she is, and dumb.
 Let the lamp affix its beam.
 The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

“For the superficial reader, Wallace Stevens is slightly irritable. But the critical sense will detect that Stevens implies a contrast between Reality and Imagination in this short poem which has similarities with the high-nonsense of Edward Lear. The muscular one is the yokel, an average sensual one whom we find around us. ‘Let the wenches dawdle...newspapers’—this is ordinary life around us. The flowers—the symbol is there. It is symbolic of the world of fertility, of vitality with passion and growth and beauty. ‘Let be be finale of seem’ : let limited being be the end of seem i.e. seeming, Appearance. In other words, seeing is being; Appearance is reality.

“Ice-cream is cold; and what ruins the world is cold; death. In the second stanza note the formal tone in the word dresser. The word protrude which has Latin roots gives distance; the world of vitality without passion. The word affix is once again a legal word, gives the finality of death, as the signature does in a legal deed. Therefore this poem, apparently nonsensical in tone, contains the particular point of view or didactic note rendered in an odd way. Only the critical sense will be able to penetrate the nonsense and make sense out of it. There is poetry in pedlars too.” (Allen Tate)

C. SUBBIAN

À DAY WILL COME...

(A note of reminder to the In-charge of an Ashram Department, whose name may be gathered from this poem, hinting at his unintentional forgetful delay in supplying three badly-needed spoons, for which the Mother had given Her sanction, along with sanction for other things which were supplied with remarkable rapidity.)

THE Mother's Grace may hopping and dancing come,
But if bland memory stays mum,
 Her best and choicest boon
 May rest in samadhi-swoon
 And Ravi's nor Indra's most blue moon
 Would ever show the face of the triple spoon.
And yet is whole this faith that Ravi's blaze
And the Thunderer's lightning-chase
 Will one day bring these THREE
 Out of their state of secrecy
 On some most towering height
 To human sight.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

SANSKRIT SIMPLIFIED

BOOK I

LESSON VII

1. *Guṇa* गुण and *vr̥ddhi* वृद्धि :

Guṇa and *vr̥ddhi* are two kinds of change taking place in a vowel before certain terminations and affixes. Which these *guṇa* and *vr̥ddhi* producing terminations and affixes are, shall be brought to the notice of students when we shall need to deal with them. For the present it is enough if we know what the *guṇa* and *vr̥ddhi* changes are in themselves :

The गुण of इ or ई is ए, of उ or ऊ is ओ, of ऋ or ॠ is अर् and of लृ is अल् .

This means that when there is an occasion for *guṇa*, इ or ई will be replaced by ए, उ or ऊ by ओ, ऋ or ॠ by अर् and लृ by अल्, other vowels remaining unchanged under the circumstances.

The वृद्धि of अ is आ, of इ, ई and ए is ऐ, of उ, ऊ and ओ is औ, of ऋ, ॠ is आर् and of लृ is आल्.

This means that when there is an occasion for *vr̥ddhi*, अ will be replaced by आ; इ, ई and ए by ऐ; उ, ऊ and ओ by औ; ऋ, ॠ by आर् and लृ by आल्, other vowels remaining unchanged under the circumstances.

The following table will give us the idea of गुण and वृद्धि at a glance.

स्वरः	अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	लृ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ
गुणः	...	...	ए	ए	ओ	ओ	अर्	अर्	अल्	...	...	...	...
वृद्धिः	आ	...	ऐ	ऐ	औ	औ	आर्	आर्	आल्	ऐ	...	औ	...

2. The First Group of Conjugations, i.e. the First, the Fourth, the Sixth and the Tenth Conjugations.

The conjugational verbal base in these is formed by adding अ to the root or its substitute in the First, य in the Fourth, अ in the Sixth and अय in the Tenth Conjugation.

The अ of the First conjugation is *strong*, i.e. capable of producing *guṇa* change in the vowel of the root. Before such strong termina-

tions, the final vowel, short or long, and the penultimate short vowel takes *guṇa* substitute. Let us remember that the case for *guṇa* arises only if there is one of the vowels इ, उ, ऋ or लृ short or long : otherwise we have simply to add the conjugational sign अ to the root in order to form the verbal base to which we then apply the terminations of the Special Tenses and Moods.

The sign of the Fourth Conjugation is य and that of the Sixth is again अ; but these two, य and अ are weak, i.e., incapable of producing either the गुण or the वृद्धि change. Therefore it is simply by the addition of य to roots of the Fourth and अ to those of the Sixth Conjugation, that we get the verbal bases ready for taking up the terminations of C.T.M. (Conjugational Tenses and Moods).

In the Tenth Conjugation, अय is to be added on to roots before the terminations of C.T.M. Before this अय the final इ, उ, ऋ, लृ short or long and the penultimate अ undergo वृद्धि change, and the penultimate *short* इ, उ, ऋ, लृ take a गुण substitute. To this general rule there are a few exceptions like कथ्, गण्, रच्, प्रथ्, स्पृह्, मृग्, etc.

Let us here take note of the fact that some of the roots take a substitute in the Special Tenses and Moods, and it is to these substitutes that we have to add the conjugational sign (विकरण-प्रत्यय), and not to the original roots, e.g.,

<i>Root</i>		<i>Substitute</i>
१. गम्—१. प.	to go	गच्छ्
२. पा—१. प.	to drink	पिब्
३. वृश्—१. प.	to see	पश्य्
४. दा—१. प.	to give	यच्छ्
५. स्था—१. प.	to stand	तिष्ठ्
६. घ्रा—१. प.	to smell	जिघ्र्
७. सद्—१. प.	to sink, sit	सीद
८. इष्—६. प.	to wish	इच्छ्
९. सो—४. प.	to finish, destroy	स्
१०. ध्मा—१. प.	to blow	धम् etc.

We here show how a verbal base is to be prepared by adding the conjugational sign to roots. But for the present we take only those roots that do not undergo any change before the conjugational sign.

<i>Root</i>	<i>Conjugational sign</i>	<i>C.V.B.</i>
१. वद्—१. प. to speak	+अ	वद
२. रक्ष्—१. प. to protect	+अ	रक्ष
३. नम्—१. प. to bow to	+अ	नम
४. वस्—१. प. to dwell	+अ	वस
५. चर्—१. प. to walk	+अ	चर
६. त्यज्—१. प. to abandon	+अ	त्यज
७. दह्—१. प. to burn	+अ	दह
८. जीव्—१. प. to live	+अ	जीव
९. नश्—४. प. to perish	+य	नश्य
१०. नृत्—४. प. to dance	+य	नृत्य
११. पुष्—४. प. to nourish	+य	पुष्य
१२. तुष्—४. प. to be pleased	+य	तुष्य
१३. विश्—६. प. to enter	+अ	विश
१४. स्पृश्—६. प. to touch	+अ	स्पृश
१५. दिश्—६. प. to show	+अ	दिश
१६. सृज्—६. प. to create or abandon	+अ	सृज
१७. कथ्—१०. उ. to tell	+अय	कथय
१८. चिन्त्—१०. उ. to think of	+अय	चिन्तय
१९. पीड्—१०. उ. to give pain	+अय	पीडय
२०. रच्—१०. उ. to arrange, compose	+अय	रचय

N.B. — Please have a look at the roots given with their bases in the list printed in lesson VI.

3. We give some sentences with their verbs either in the Present or the Future Tense. Translate them into any other language, say English, and then retranslate them into Sanskrit. They may also be written with the Present Tense changed into the Future Tense and the Future Tense Changed into the Present Tense wherever possible.

१. अहम् सदा सत्यं वदामि। २. आवाम् कदापि असत्यं न वदावः। ३. वयम् अभ्यासपाठं पत्रके लिखामः। ४. त्वम् ईश्वरं कदा भजसि? ५. युवां स्वधर्मं किं त्यजथः? ६. यूयम् अधुना गुरुदेवस्य आश्रमे किं न वसथः? ७. सः सदैव उष्णं दुग्धं पिबति। ८. सा अपि उष्णं दुग्धं पिबति। ९. रामः राज्यं त्यजति, न तु पुत्रधर्मम्। १०. तौ बालौ अपक्वम् आश्रमं खादतः। ११. ते छात्राः पाठशालाम् प्रति गच्छन्ति। १२. ताः बालिकाः मातरं नमन्ति। १३. यूयम् मातरम् किम् न नमथ? १४. अहं पर्वतराजं हिमालयं पश्यामि।

१५. त्वं हिमाचलं कदा द्रक्ष्यसि ? १६. चौराः रजन्याम् लोकानां धनं हरन्ति । १७. साधु-
जनाः जनानाम् पापम् अज्ञानं च हरन्ति । १८. त्वं पण्डितः किं न भवसि ? १९. आवां
पण्डितौ भविष्यावः । २०. अत्र बालाः प्रभाते श्लोकान् पठन्ति । २१. यूयम् पाठशालायाम्
किं न पठथ ? २२. रामः लक्ष्मणः सीता च घोरे वने वत्स्यन्ति । २३. भो राम ! त्वं राक्षसे-
भ्यः तपोवनानि रक्ष । २४. हे लक्ष्मण ! त्वं सीतां संरक्ष, अहम् सुवर्णमृगम् आनेष्यामि ।
२५. कन्यकाः वाप्याः जलं घटैः उत्कर्षन्ति । २६. हे बाले ! त्वं तत्र एव तिष्ठ, अत्र भयम्
अस्ति । २७. वयं प्रभाते पञ्चवादाने उत्तिष्ठामः, यूयं कदा उत्तिष्ठथ ? २८. वनेषु व्याघ्राः,
पर्वतानां गुहासु सिंहाः, आकाशे च मेघाः उच्चैः गर्जन्ति । २९. वृक्षाः बल्लर्यः च अटवीषु वाटि-
कासु च रोहन्ति । ३०. अपि त्वं सिंहस्य गर्जनम् आकर्णयसि ? ३१. अथ किम्, तद् अहम्
आकर्णयामि एव । ३२. अपि त्वं स्वदेशस्य रक्षणे युद्धसेवां समर्पयिष्यसि ? ३३. अथ किम्,
आनन्देन सह अहम् स्वदेशस्य रक्षायाम् प्राणान् अपि समर्पयिष्यामि । ३४. सेनापतिः सेनानाम्
व्यूहान् रचयति । ३५. सैनिकाः शस्त्रैः अस्त्रैः च शत्रुगणान् संहरन्ति । ३६. पण्डिताः सदैव
ग्रन्थान् पठन्ति च रचयन्ति च । ३७. त्वं काव्यं किं न रचयसि ? ३८. काव्यस्य रचनम् अहं
न जानामि, अहं तु सङ्गीतम् रचयिष्यामि । ३९. परमेश्वरस्य कृपया मनुष्याः दुःखसागरं
तरन्ति । ४०. कदापि त्वं पापस्य आचरणं मा कुरु । ४१. ये पापानि आचरन्ति ते अधः
पतन्ति । ४२. अपि युवाम् ईश्वरस्य सेवाकार्यम् करिष्यथः ? ४३. आम्, आवां परमेश्वरस्य
सेवाम् साधयिष्यावः । ४४. तौ सज्जनौ सत्कार्याणि कुरुतः ततः च परमसुखम् अनुभवतः ।
४५. माता पुत्रम् प्रेमभावेन पुष्यति, तस्य सुखेन च तुष्यति । ४६. सदैव हस; सुखे हस, दुःखे
अपि हस । ४७. हिमालयः धवलैः शिखरैः स्वर्गम् स्पृशति । ४८. नटराजः कालस्य हृदये
नित्यम् एव नृत्यति । ४९. वृक्षेषु विहङ्गाः, गृहेषु च बालकाः कूजन्ति गायन्ति च । ५०. भक्ताः
भगवत्स्वरूपं भक्तिभावेन ध्यायन्ति, आत्मार्पणेन च अर्चयन्ति ॥

4. Prepositions उपसर्गाः In Sanskrit, there are 20 such Prepositional Particles उपसर्गाः, which, when prefixed to a root or a word formed from the root, modify and sometimes altogether change the original meaning of the root or the word.

They are : १. अति, २. अधि, ३. अनु, ४. अप, ५. अपि (पि), ६. अभि, ७. अव (व), ८. आ, ९. उत्—द्, १०. उप, ११. दुस् (दुः, दुश्, दुष्, दुर्), १२. नि, १३. निस् (निः, निश्, निष्, निर्), १४. परा, १५. परि, १६. प्र, १७. प्रति, (१८). वि, १९. सम्, २०. सु.

We have already come across some of these, e.g., गम् to go, but आगम् to come, विश् to enter, but उपविश् to sit; स्था to stand, but उत्-स्था —उत्तिष्ठ् to stand up, ह् to take away, but विह् to play; स्मृ to remember, but विस्मृ to forget. The student may go on taking note of the change in the meaning as instances occur.

श्लोकः १५

तुष्यन्ति भोजनैर्विप्राः मयूरा घनगर्जितैः ।

साधवः परसन्तोषैः खलाः परविपत्तिभिः ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— तुष्यन्ति are pleased (तुष्—४. प. to be pleased or satisfied —c.v.b. तुष्य F.b. तोष्य), भोजनैः by dishes of food (भोजन—न. eating, meals), विप्राः Brahmins (विप्र—पुं. Brahmin); मयूराः peacocks (मयूर—पुं. peacock), घन-गर्जितैः by the rumblings of clouds (घन—पुं. cloud—गर्जित न. rumbling); साधवः good-natured men (साधु—पुं. good-natured man), पर-सन्तोषैः by the joys of others (पर—other—सन्तोष—पुं. joy, satisfaction); खलाः wicked men (खल—पुं. wicked/ man), पर-विपत्तिभिः by the troubles of others (विपत्ति—स्त्री. trouble, misfortune, calamity).

विप्राः भोजनैः तुष्यन्ति, मयूराः घनगर्जितैः (तुष्यन्ति), साधवः परसन्तोषैः (तुष्यन्ति), (परन्तु) खलाः परविपत्तिभिः (तुष्यन्ति) ।

Translation : The Brahmins are pleased with (good) dishes of food, the peacocks by the rumblings of clouds, the good-natured by the joys of others, (but) the wicked feel glad at the misfortunes of others.

श्लोकः १६

वने रणे शत्रुजलाग्निमध्ये महार्णवे पर्वतमस्तके वा ।

सुप्तं प्रसक्तं विषमस्थितं वा रक्षन्ति पुण्यानि पुरा कृतानि ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—वने in a forest, रणे in battle (रण—पुं. न. battle) शत्रु-जल-अग्नि-मध्ये in the midst of enemies, water or fire (अग्नि—पुं. fire, मध्य—पुं. न. the middle), महार्णवे in the ocean (महत्—वि. great—अर्णव—पुं. sea), पर्वतमस्तके on the top of a mountain, वा—अ. or, सुप्तम् p.p. asleep, प्रसक्तम्—p.p. negligent, inattentive, intoxicated, विषम-स्थितम् standing on a precipice, in a difficult or dangerous position (विषम—न. precipice, or a dangerous position—स्थित p.p. standing, situated, वा or, रक्षन्ति—protect, पुण्यानि virtuous or meritorious or holy deeds (पुण्य—न. a meritorious or holy act), पुरा—अ. formerly कृतानि p.p. done, performed.

पुरा कृतानि पुण्यानि वने, रणे, शत्रुजलाग्निमध्ये, महार्णवे, पर्वतमस्तके वा, सुप्तम्, प्रसक्तम्, विषमस्थितम् वा (जनम् a person) रक्षन्ति ।

Translation. Whether in a forest or on a battle-field, in the midst of enemies or in the midst of water or fire, in the ocean or on the crest of a mountain, meritorious deeds of former times protect a

person though he may be asleep or inattentive or placed in a dangerous situation.

श्लोकः १७

भोगा न भुक्ता वयमेव भुक्तास्तपो न तप्तं वयमेव तप्ताः ।
कालो न यातो वयमेव यातास्तृष्णा न जीर्णा वयमेव जीर्णाः ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— भोगाः enjoyments (भोग—पुं. enjoyment), न not, भुक्ताः enjoyed, वयम् एव we ourselves, भुक्ताः (are) eaten up; तपः austerity, penance (तपस्—न. penance), न not, तप्तम् p.p. performed, वयम् एव we ourselves, तप्ताः afflicted; कालः Time (काल—पुं. time), न not, यातः p.p. (has) gone, passed away, वयम् एव we ourselves, याताः (are) gone; तृष्णा—स्त्री. thirst, longing, न not, जीर्णा p.p. worn out, वयम् एव we ourselves, जीर्णाः p.p. (are) worn out.

(अस्माभिः by us) भोगाः न भुक्ताः (परंतु) वयम् एव भुक्ताः; (अस्माभिः) तपः न तप्तम् (किन्तु) वयम् एव तप्ताः; कालः न यातः (परम् but) वयम् एव याताः; (अस्माकम् our) तृष्णा न जीर्णा (परन्तु) वयम् एव जीर्णाः (सञ्जाताः become)।

Translation. We have not enjoyed enjoyments, but we ourselves are enjoyed (eaten up) (by them), penance we have not performed but we are afflicted (all the same); Time has not passed away but we are passing away, and it is not the thirsting desire that has worn out but we ourselves are wearing away.

श्लोकः १८

पद्मा पद्मालया पद्मवदना पद्मलोचना ।
पद्मनाभप्रिया पद्मे राजतां हृदयस्य मे ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः— पद्मा Goddess Lakshmi, पद्म-आलया having (her) abode in a lotus, पद्म-वदना lotus-faced (वदन—न. face), पद्म-लोचना lotus-eyed (लोचन—न. eye), पद्मनाभ-प्रिया beloved of God Vishnu, with a lotus rising from his navel (पद्मनाभ—पुं. an epithet of Vishnu who has a lotus rising from his navel —प्रिया—स्त्री. beloved), पद्मे in the lotus, राजताम् may shine (in her glory), हृदयस्य of the heart, मे—मम my.

पद्मालया, पद्मवदना, पद्मलोचना, पद्मनाभप्रिया पद्मा मे हृदयस्य पद्मे राजताम् ।

Translation. May Goddess Lakshmi with the lotus as her abode, lotus-faced (and) lotus-eyed, the beloved of God Vishnu, shine glorious in the lotus of my heart.