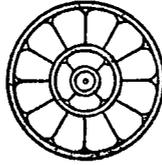


MOTHER INDIA

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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XV

No. 6

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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To be had of :
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM, PONDICHERRY

WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Be honest to yourself (no self-deception).
Be sincere towards the Divine (no bargaining in the surrender).
Be straightforward with humanity (no pretence and show).

25-6-1963

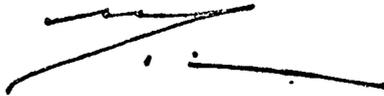


Go safely to Siddhapur and *do not fear*.

It is only fear which hurts, not the "spirits." When people who have left their body appear in front of you, you must not fear—it is generally because they are restless and lack peace—give them a good thought and wish them to be in peace and it will be over.

In any case you can tell them to go to Mother and they will not bother you any more.

Go to Siddhapur and avoid unpleasant company if there is any, but always remember that it is only fear which harms and that with confident faith in the Divine's Grace you are safe.



SRI AUROBINDO AND MAN'S TRANSFORMATION

KEEP firm faith in the victory of the Light and face with calm equanimity the resistances of Matter and human personality to their own transformation.

*
**

It is not a hope but a certitude that the complete transformation of the nature will take place.

*
**

Even if there is much darkness—and this world is full of it and the physical nature of man also—yet a ray of the true Light can prevail eventually against a tenfold darkness. Believe that and cleave to it always.

*
**

All can be done by the Divine,—the heart and nature purified, the inner consciousness awakened, the veils removed,—if one gives oneself to the Divine with trust and confidence and even if one cannot do so fully at once, yet the more one does so, the more the inner help and guidance come and the experience of the Divine grows within. If the questioning mind becomes less active and humility and the will to surrender grows, this ought to be perfectly possible. No other strength and tapasya are then needed, but this alone.

*
**

The core of the inner surrender is trust and confidence in the Divine. One takes the attitude : "I want the Divine and nothing else. I want to give myself entirely to him and since my soul wants that, it cannot but be that I shall meet and realise him. I ask nothing but that and his action in me to bring me to him, his action secret or open, veiled or manifest. I do not insist on my own time and way; let him do all in his own time and way. I shall believe in him, accept his will, aspire steadily for his light and presence and joy, go through all difficulties and delays, relying on him and never giving up. Let my mind be quiet and trust him and let him open it to his light; let my vital be quiet and turn to him alone and let him open it to his calm and joy. All for him and myself for him. Whatever happens, I will keep to this aspiration and self-giving and go on in perfect reliance that it will be done."

That is the attitude into which one must grow....

*
**

It is in fact the principle of sadhana that I myself followed and it is the central process of yoga as I envisage it.

*
**

If there is no surrender, there can be no transformation of the whole being.

THE CRUCIAL CHOICE

(1)

THE Hour of God, the Hour of the unveiled manifestation of the supramental Truth on earth, is at the present moment imminent. The Mother has therefore asked us to prepare ourselves for it.

How shall we prepare ourselves ? What is exactly demanded of us to make ourselves ready to receive the supramental Truth ?

Essentially the preparation consists in making a crucial choice between two alternatives facing us at the present moment. Sri Aurobindo has stated these alternatives in unmistakable words :

“On one side there is the supramental realisation, the overshadowing and descending power of the supramental Divine, the light and force of a far greater Truth than any yet realised on the earth, something therefore beyond what the little human mind and its logic regard as the only permanent realities, something whose nature and way and process of development here it cannot conceive or perceive by its own inadequate instruments or judge by its puerile standards; in spite of all opposition this is pressing down for manifestation in the physical consciousness and the material life. On the other side is this lower vital nature with all its pretentious arrogance, ignorance, obscurity, dullness or incompetent turbulence, standing for its own prolongation, standing against the descent, refusing to believe in any real reality or real possibility of a supramental or superhuman consciousness and creation, or, still more absurd, demanding, if it exists at all, that it should conform to its own little standards, seizing greedily upon everything that seems to disprove it, denying the presence of the Divine—for it knows that without that presence the work is impossible—affirming loudly its own thoughts, judgments, desires, instincts, and, if these are contradicted, avenging itself by casting abroad doubt, denial, disparaging criticism, revolt and disorder. These are the two things now in presence between which every one will have to choose.”¹

And Sri Aurobindo has also given a distinct warning :

“For this opposition, this sterile obstruction and blockade against the descent of the divine Truth cannot last for ever. Every one must come down finally on one side or the other, on the side of the Truth or against it. The supramental realisation cannot coexist with the persistence of the lower Ignorance; it is incompatible with continued satisfaction in a double nature.”²

¹ *On Yoga* II, Tome Two, pp. 411-12.

² *Ibid.*, 412.

He has also said :

“The power that works in this yoga is of a thorough-going character and tolerates in the end nothing great or small that is an obstacle to the Truth and its realisation.”¹

(2)

Thus the preparation demanded of us at this moment to receive the supramental Truth consists in making a decisive choice between that Truth and the persisting Ignorance in our lower nature. This is precisely what sincerity means and, in the final analysis, all the conditions required to be fulfilled for preparing for the Hour of God can be summed up in the one condition of sincerity. It is for this reason that Sri Aurobindo says : “There is one indispensable condition, sincerity.”²

Sincerity, as defined by Sri Aurobindo, means “to have all the being consciously turned towards the one Truth, the one Divine”.³ “Sincerity exacts the unification and harmonisation of the whole being in all its parts and movements around the central Divine Will.”⁴

Evidently, perfect sincerity in this sense can be only a progressive achievement, for it can be acquired only as a result of the complete conversion of all the parts and movements of the being, which requires a very difficult and prolonged sadhana. This is because of the extreme complexity of man’s nature. Even when the inner and higher parts of his nature are drawn towards the Divine, the outer and inferior parts are unwilling and oppose the higher aspiration. This duality or contradiction exists in every sadhak and continues for a long time. It is responsible for most of the difficulties and stumblings in yoga and gives it the character of a difficult and often perilous battle. As Sri Aurobindo puts it : ...“every sadhak is faced with two elements in him, the inner being which wants the Divine and the sadhana and the outer mainly vital and physical being which does not want them but remains attached to the things of the ordinary life. The mind is sometimes led by one, sometimes by the other. One of the most important things he has to do, therefore, is to decide fundamentally the quarrel between these two parts.”⁵

This quarrel can only be decided by an entire rejection from the nature of all the elements that contradict the higher Truth. An entire sincerity unflinchingly imposed on all the parts of the being can alone accomplish this result.

¹ *On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 779.

² *Ibid.*, p. 535.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 538.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 536.

⁵ *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 722.

(3)

The higher parts in man's nature—his psychic being, his thinking mind, his higher vital—are relatively easy to convert to the spiritual aspiration for they readily open to the Truth and adhere to it. But the lower parts—the lower vital and the physical being—are most difficult to change for they are wedded to the Ignorance and the ego and resist tenaciously all attempt to convert them to aspire for the Divine and the Truth. The crux of the difficulty in yoga lies in the obstruction of these parts.

The external personality of man is almost entirely governed by these lower vital and physical parts of his being. They support and dominate his habitual ways of thinking, feeling and action and largely determine his outer character and temperament. So long as these parts do not change, the aspiration in the higher parts of his being, however genuine and intense, cannot become all-pervasive and integral. All his spiritual endeavour and realisation remain mixed, uncertain, ineffective for a total transformation.

In the practice of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga, which insists on the total transformation of the whole being down to its very roots in the Inconscient, the necessity of converting these lower parts, so that they may open to the Truth and consent to be transformed by it, is imperative. Unless this is done entirely and thoroughly there can be no success in this yoga. It is not enough to open the inner and the higher parts to the Truth and change them; that is only the initial stage of the work of transformation which is relatively easy to accomplish. The sadhana then has to be brought down into the lower vital and physical parts and then still lower into the subconscious and the Inconscient levels for their change and transformation.

But the difficulty of changing these lower parts proves to be formidable. Even the sadhaks who make swift and remarkable progress when their sadhana is confined to the higher levels get stuck and even stumble or fall when it comes down to the lower layers.

It is because the obstruction of these lower parts is so formidable that the yogis of the past have declared it unsurmountable and abandoned the effort of changing them. The realisation they were able to achieve in the higher and inner planes of their being had to make terms with their lower incorrigible nature. The inner Light was compelled to coexist with the outer Shadow. The bright and dark Personae had to remain linked in an inseparable combination. The ancient spiritual and occult traditions accepted this duality as inevitable because they could not find any way of removing this fundamental contradiction in human nature. They found that human nature in its inferior parts admits some influence from the higher light but in the grain of its character it remains unaltered. The curve of the dog's tail cannot be straightened. The endeavour to do so is but a vain dream. Human nature is incorrigible at its roots—this has been the universal verdict of all the moral, religious and spiritual systems of the past.

The supreme significance of Sri Aurobindo's yoga lies in this that he does not accept this verdict as final and inevitable. In his view, if it is final, then all

the persistent seeking of mankind for perfection of life on earth is eventually futile and meaningless. To escape from life and the world altogether or to seek perfection elsewhere in some supraterrrestrial world is the only solution. Spirit and life, Heaven and earth, God and man remain for ever antithetical.

But Sri Aurobindo never admits this defeatist solution. On the contrary, he trenchantly and insistently rejects it as inconclusive and affirms that the resistance which life offers to the Spirit can be conquered, however formidable and obstinate it may prove to be. And he made this affirmation of Victory not merely on metaphysical grounds but because he was able to discover and realise a hitherto unknown Power of the Spirit which is capable of vanquishing any possible resistance that earthly life can offer to it.

(4)

Since the whole issue of earth-evolution and of human destiny depended on this Power, which he named Supermind, Sri Aurobindo made it the sole mission of his life to realise it in himself so as to manifest it effectively in the earth-nature and humanity. With what grim earnestness he pursued this task can be seen from his own words :

“It is not for personal greatness that I am seeking to bring down the Supermind. I care nothing for greatness or littleness in the human sense. . . . I believe the descent of this Truth opening the way to a development of divine consciousness here to be the final sense of the earth evolution. If greater men than myself have not had this vision and this ideal before them, there is no reason why I should not follow my Truth-sense and Truth-vision. . . . It is a question between the Divine and myself—whether it is the Divine Will or not, whether I am sent to bring that down or open the way for its descent or at least make it more possible or not. Let all men jeer at me if they will or all Hell fall upon me if it will for my presumption,—I go on till I conquer or perish. This is the spirit in which I seek the Supermind, no hunting for greatness for myself or others.”¹

After more than four decades of herculean labour by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother the Supermind manifested in the earth-consciousness on February 29, 1956. A whole New World came down upto the subtle physical layer of the earth and from there it is insistently pressing to manifest openly in the external material world. A thin crust still divides that New World from the external world. But this thin crust is at each moment getting thinner under the incessant corrosive action of the supramental Force, and soon what remains of it will fritter away and the way will be made clear for the New World to manifest openly in the external world. The missing link will then be forged and Heaven and Earth join in an eternal wedlock.

That manifestation will bring the direct reign of the supramental Truth on

¹ *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on The Mother*, pp. 214-15.

earth. And therefore it will be the Hour of God. Because that divine event is at this moment imminent, the Mother has given us the call to prepare for it. That call is truly the call of the Supramental Creator who has now come all the way from the Supramental World proper down to the subtle physical world just behind the earth's border and, having firmly stationed himself there, is now preparing the way for His advent on earth.

That can only happen when the crust that still divides the two worlds is dissolved. This crust though thin is yet tenaciously obstinate because it represents the whole massive resistance of the Inconscient. But as the Supramental Creator himself is now pressing to remove it, it will surely disappear. But his action from the New World in the subtle physical layer needs collaboration from the external material world. The call now is for this collaboration.

(5)

But the collaboration from the earth's side that is needed at the present moment has to be given whole-heartedly in a spirit of total sincerity. It can only be given by those who make the decisive choice of fully accepting the supramental Truth and, opening to its transforming Power in all their being, remove radically from their nature the obstinate obstruction in their lower vital and physical parts. It is the obstruction in these parts which maintains that crust which still prevents the New World in the subtle physical layer from openly manifesting in the external material world. Unless it is removed, there can be no definite link between the two worlds. To remove that obstruction, however, is not an easy task because these lower parts are supported by the whole formidable force of the Inconscient. Yet it has to be removed because that is indispensable for the final Victory of the supramental Truth on earth.

How intensely Sri Aurobindo felt the need of converting these lower parts which govern our external personality, and what supreme importance he gave to it for the successful realisation of the aim of his yoga cannot be stated more pointedly than in his own words :

“It was inevitable that in the course of the sadhana these inferior parts of the nature should be brought forward in order that like the rest of the being they may make the crucial choice and either accept or refuse transformation. My whole work depends upon this movement; it is the decisive ordeal of this yoga. For the physical consciousness and the material life cannot change if this does not change. Nothing that may have been done before, no inner illumination, experience, power of Ananda is of any eventual value, if this is not done. If the little external personality is to persist in retaining its obscure and limited, its petty and ignoble, its selfish and false and stupid human consciousness, this amounts to a flat negation of the work and the sadhana. I have no intention of giving my sanction to a new edition of the old fiasco, a partial and transient spiritual opening within with no true and radical change in the law of the external nature. If, then, any sadhak refuses in practice to admit this change

or if he refuses even to admit the necessity for any change of his lower vital being and his habitual external personality, I am entitled to conclude that, whatever his professions, he has not accepted either myself or my yoga".¹

For each person who calls himself a follower or a disciple of Sri Aurobindo nothing is more important at this moment than to remember these words of the Master and, taking them to heart, make the crucial choice that he expected us to make. That is the only preparation for the Hour of God. All now depends on that choice alone.

KISHOR GANDHI

¹ *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, pp. 405-6.

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 right 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-ninth 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 29, 1939

SRI AUROBINDO (to P) : Have you read the report of Hitler's interview with Colonel Beck in the *Sunday Times* ?

P : No, what is it about ?

S : Shouting at each other ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. It is said that when Hitler begins to shout and his eyes become glassy, it means some disaster. But when in this interview he began shouting and his eyes got the glassy look, Beck began to shout louder. Hitler was much surprised at this unexpected response and himself toned down.

S : He seems to have met his match.

SRI AUROBINDO (turning to P) : You have seen X's statement, I am sure. He seems to be a mere intellectual, with no grasp of realities. Others too talk impractical nonsense.

N : But X for one is very sincere and honest.

P : Many leaders are like that.

SRI AUROBINDO : What is meant here by sincerity and honesty ? Readiness to suffer for the cause and accepting no bribe ? But that does not save everything. Even during our Swadeshi Movement, although the leaders were egoistic and quarrelsome, they were honest and sincere. Our fight was over principles—for example, Reform or Revolution or, as somebody put it, Colonial Self-government or Independence. We never fought for personal reasons, and yet do you know what Das said about criminals ? He said that in his whole legal career he had not met worse types of criminals than in politics !

N : But if one really believes that the Party is going to compromise with the enemy, isn't one justified in fighting about it—especially if one knows that negotiations are going on ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What is there objectionable in negotiations ? Every big Party and even every country has to negotiate. The Germans before and

during the last war were doing it. Negotiation does not mean acceptance of the enemy's terms. There is no harm in seeing how far the other Party or country will go in granting concessions, rights and privileges.

P : When Néhu visited Nahash Pasha in Egypt, the latter said that his Wafd Party had become demoralised after accepting office. And now they are defeated. He wondered how Congress Ministers had remained pure after coming into power. Nehru explained to him about the Parliamentary Board which serves as a check on the Ministers.

SRI AUROBINDO : I was surprised to see the dissolution of the Wafd Party. I was wondering what it may have been due to. So this is the cause then ? They ought to have turned out the King as Kemal did in Turkey. The present King is following the policy of his father. And instead of quarrelling among themselves they should have used their newly acquired power to build up their nation: first, by giving the people education and general training and, secondly, by increasing the country's wealth and, thirdly, by building up the military machine.

Exactly the same thing should be done in India by the Congress Ministers.

N : What sort of education ? Technical ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Technical, agricultural, economic. Without proper knowledge, how will India develop her industries and trade ? India is such a vast country; she can consume a lot amongst her own people. External trade is not necessary at the beginning. Look at what the U.S.A. did. She developed first her internal trade to meet all the necessities of her own people and, when by that means she had increased her wealth, she began to develop her external trade. Our Government should have a plan for an economic survey of the provinces to see what products are necessary for consumption in India. But, of course, one must not neglect secondary education. You can't have efficient people today without education. It serves to create a common interest and a basis of common understanding. But I don't mean the present form of education. That is not at all suitable for building up a nation. It has to be radically changed. Indian boys are more intelligent than English boys but three-fourths of their talent and energy are wasted, whereas English boys use their gifts ten times more than Indian ones do.

P : Y has approached the merchants for donations to the Government. Owing to prohibition, there is a substantial loss of revenue. He said to the merchants that if they didn't donate, new taxation would have to be imposed.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is better not to destroy the capitalists as the Socialists want. They are the source of a nation's wealth. They should be encouraged to spend for the nation. Taxing is all right, but you must increase production and start new industries and raise the standard of living. Without that, if you increase the taxes, there will be a state of depression. Other nations can tax enormously because they produce on a grand scale.

P : Y is opening Agricultural Schools in villages and small industrial schools also—that is to say, carrying out the Wardha Scheme.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is a pity to give up all that work for merely fighting the idea of Federation. You can fight it even after it has been established—you

can fight the Federal Government. One has to utilise what one has obtained and on that basis work out the rest. If the British Government finds that Federation is properly worked out, it may not object to giving more. It expected a crowd of demagogues shouting together in the Assembly, not people capable of governing. But if Socialism came, that might frighten the British.

P : The present British Governor of Bombay seems sympathetic to his Cabinet.

SRI AUROBINDO : The English people, except for a few autocrats like Curzon, have a constitutional temperament. They will violently oppose their being kicked out of the country but they don't object to being slowly shouldered out as in the Dominions. The Dominions are practically independent. The British Government will be quite content if it can get India's help in case of war with other nations, but these declarations of anti-imperialistic policy and "No Compromise", etc., etc., will tend to stiffen its attitude. What is the use of declaring your policy from the beginning ? Even as regards the States, one must not be too exacting in one's demands. The Government won't tolerate the idea of reducing them to mere figureheads from the very beginning.

JANUARY 31, 1939

N : There is a tempting offer by the *Calcutta Statesman*. A. Moore writes to D that he will pay Rs. 100 per article if Sri Aurobindo writes in his paper on world events in the light of Yogic experience.

SRI AUROBINDO (*bursting into laughter*) : In the light of Yogic experience ! And what reply is D going to give ?

N : He has asked me to get your reply.

S : Sh also offered good money to D to write articles for his paper. It is an unscrupulous pro-Government paper, perhaps even financed by the Government.

P : Sh came for the last Dārshan.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes; and his eyes were constantly roving about. Isn't he the same chap who wanted to see me when he was a young man? I refused to see him because I had a feeling that he was a spy. Then when the police took interest in the matter and asked people why I had not seen him, my suspicion was confirmed. In fact, it was more than a feeling, it was a concrete intuition.

Later, I found he had become a notable figure in the Executive Council. I was much surprised.

Arthur Moore is also suspected by some people of being a spy—not an ordinary spy but a secret agent of the Government. But, spy or not, he knows how to meditate.

P : How can he be a spy when he has supported Congress ministries and given them praise.

SRI AUROBINDO : People will say he has done it to spy better—to get sympathy.

Then there was talk about some old patients. One had said he had no substance left in his brain ! Another had complained of hernia due to *āsanas*.

N : There is a remarkable change in L.

SRI AUROBINDO : At one time she gave up work and that made her worse. Thinking constantly of disease and harbouring fear—these two things stand in the way of cure.

N : Now L eats and digests anything.

SRI AUROBINDO : She used to write to us : “I am going to eat. You please digest for me.” (*Laughter*)

P : The Gaekwar is still in Bombay, he seems to have been suffering for a long time.

SRI AUROBINDO : What is the disease ?

B : Thrombus in the brain.

P : He is 76 now—rather old.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not very old for a sturdy man like him. In India they consider one old after 50 and fit to die at 60. In England and China, one is ripe between 60 and 70, and only after 80 is one considered old. These things depend upon the atmosphere of the place—I don't mean the external atmosphere.

S : In India, Government servants have to retire at 50 or 55. After that, they have no energy to do anything new, especially as they are accustomed to an easy way of living.

SRI AUROBINDO : They don't find work and therefore die. One can always do something new at 55.

P : Hindenburg lived actively up to 87. Chamberlain is 77 and is now Premier of England.

SRI AUROBINDO : The Mother's brother, after retiring from Governorship in Africa, has been doing a lot of things—President of this, Member of that and so on. He was made to retire. He did a great deal in Africa, but other people got the profit. It is men like him who built up France and also made it possible for the Ashram to continue here. Otherwise I might have had to go to France, or else to America and supramentalise the Americans.

When the Mother came here and I met her, her brother got interested. These things look like accidents but they are not. There is a guidance behind these events.

P : J writes that he is more and more distracted and wants to know how he will be able to come back. He is the secretary of some Students' Federation.

SRI AUROBINDO : He will have to federate less and consolidate more.

P : He complains of being wrecked.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, the usual old things ! That is a kind of neurasthenia that makes one restless and produces a want of balance. He wants to show himself off, appear bigger than he is, do something startling and striking. He has capacity but it has to be organised before it can be useful.

REMINISCENCES

XIV

ATHLETICS

THERE is in the Upanishad a description of the stage in man's life when he becomes so old and decrepit that he cannot walk except on a stick, *tvam jirṇo dandena vañcasi*. At precisely that stage in our life, we in the Ashram received a call to plunge into the activities of our Playground. I was then perhaps the oldest among the inmates, and had long passed the fifty-year limit once set by the ancients for repairing to the forest, *pañcāśordhe vanam vrajet*; I was in fact in my early sixties.

For at least twenty years previous to that, we had been taking it rather easy and were doing very little physical work or exercise. That had been what might be described as a period of inner preparation, a time devoted almost entirely to meditation and study. Lest however I should lose all elasticity of body, I had been making use of two opportunities for some kind of exercise. One was to ride on a bicycle once a week to the local French Post Office and back. The Mother used to receive her foreign mail in those days through that Post Office, and on me had devolved the task of bringing in the mail. That incidentally was how I got my famous headgear: it came in connection with this particular item of work. During summer, the hot summer months of Pondicherry, I had to go to the Post Office in the blazing sun. It was quite a distance in those days and I felt I needed some kind of protection for my skull. I struck upon a device. The mail had to be carried in bags, one or two white canvas bags. I folded them up in two and put them on my head, the two corners of the bags sticking out on either side like a pair of horns. This gave the children of the local school an occasion for a hearty laugh one day: "Quel bonnet! quel bonnet!"—"What a cap! what a cap!" they cried. When I mentioned this to the Mother, she said, "All right, we shall see." We had a French lady, called in the Ashram by the name of Sarala, staying with us here at "Belle Vue", with her husband who was known as Shuchi. Shuchi died later and was buried in the public cemetery in Pondicherry. This Sarala was asked to devise something for my head. It was she who designed my skull-cap which has since been the inspiration for many a subsequent imitation.

Let me in this connection tell you another amusing story. One day there came to the Post Office a packet addressed to the Mother from Japan. It was war time and the rules were very strict, lest any kind of undesirable matter should find entry. One of the Post Office employees, a Frenchman, opened the packet in my presence. He found in it nothing else except a single sheet of paper with something on it that looked like a sketch—just the branch of a tree. The

official handed me the paper with obvious disappointment, adding his comment, "Une branche quelconque"—"some sort of a branch !" The "branche" happened to be a fine piece of Japanese painting. But who would appreciate that ? Not in any case a detective of the Post Office. I mentioned the incident to Sri Aurobindo. He could never forget the story; at the slightest opportunity he would come out with that "une branche quelconque".

Now to come back to the point. I was speaking of the kind of exercise I had in those days, that medieval period of our existence, perhaps you would call it. The second item in my physical education programme was still more impressive. It consisted in giving a very careful wash to my clothes when I took my bath. This allowed some exercise to the limbs and body and I considered this as the minimum needed for keeping up the physical tone; it did duty for push-ups and dumb-bells and everything else. I should add another item : that was walking, a kind of morning walk. Early in the morning every day I used to go out and deliver to the sadhaks the letters written to them by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. In those days, of course, the Ashram houses were not so many and not so far apart, so it was not exactly a 1500 or 3000 metre walking race.

I have told you, we received the call to join the Playground activities. I was enlisted in the Blue group. In those days it was the Mother who decided who would go to which group; in any case it was done with her knowledge and approval. Udar was our captain. We started learning the steps, "Un, deux, un, deux". Ages ago, I had done some military marching with the Volunteer Corps, but that was only for a few days. I remember how in that enthusiasm for everything Swadeshi, they had started giving the marching orders in Bengali: "Turn to the left", "Turn to the right", "Drop out" (in place of "Dismiss" or "Rompez vos rangs") !

I had to start on this new athletic career without any preliminary practice or training. Many of you may recall how we joined in our first competitive tournament, on the site along the sea-face where the Tennis grounds stand—they had not yet been built. I had no knowledge of the special technique, there was no warming up or anything. We just walked in and took our positions along the starting line, and off we went as soon as the whistle blew. We simply ran for our lives, with the result that I sprained a thigh muscle in my first run. Luckily, this happened near the goal, so I could finish the race. The results were not bad : I shared the second place with Pavitra and Yogananda—the first position went to someone, a sannyasin who is no longer with us. I took part in the long jump in the same manner, without any previous practice or warming up. Some people advised me to do a little preliminary training, but I was obliged to reply, "My sole events in the course of a whole year are a single race and three jumps. They do not deserve more." This is the opening chapter in my new career of athletics.

At that time I had not the faintest notion that one day I would develop into a regular athlete, that is to say, undergo all kinds of training and exercise. I told you once about the difference between the physical training activities here and the way we used to set about them in our time. This is an age of science and

those were the days of untrained skill. Let me illustrate from an experience I had in football. We never observed the rule that a proper warming up is needed before one joins the game. We entered the field straightway, and it has happened several times that after the first long run at the beginning of the game I felt absolutely worn out and wondered how on earth I was going to last through the game. Of course, everything was all right after a while and the body received a new influx of energy as it got warmed up—we used to call it “heating up the blood”. Today, the first and most important principle of any kind of game or other exercise is “training”, a detailed and minute training. Formerly, one could pass off as a master by simply mastering the rules of the game. This applied not only to games like cricket or football; even in our own native wrestling and lathi-play, “training” meant nothing more than getting acquainted with all the tricks and applying them correctly in practice. But that is not what is now meant by “training.” “Training” implies a special preparation of the body, making it apt for a special kind of activity. First of all, one has to acquire a general all-round physical fitness. Next, one has to find out which particular parts of the body and which of the muscles are specially called into action in any particular movement and these have to be specially trained with a view to give them the necessary strength, endurance and skill, exactly like a material instrument, as if they were bits of dead matter. In whatever activity you wish to specialise, for specialisation seems to be the aim of physical culture today, you have to prepare yourself for it; the preparation itself becomes the main objective, the end in view is relegated to the second position. You take part in a 100 metre race, actually a matter of a few seconds only. But in order to prepare for the race, you have to train for several hours every day, for days on end over a period of months and perhaps years.

Formerly, the entire emphasis was on the game itself, not so much on the person who played the game; it used to be said that it was the game that made the player. But now the scales have turned the other way : the player has become the main interest. The concentration is on the player himself and his training is the main thing. He has first of all to build up the body, next his vital forces, and finally even his mind and will power have to be geared to the end in view; the inner psychological factors are taken particularly into account today. In science too the same thing is noticeable, even in the study of physical science. Formerly, the whole effort of science lay in discovering and establishing the existence of the separate, self-existing and independent elements in Nature and in finding out the mechanism of their action through the methods of observation and experiment. Now it is being said, observation and experiment are all right so far as they go, but at the same time one cannot ignore the person who makes the observation and experiment; he too has an importance, perhaps a prime importance.

To a certain extent, I too have gone through this phase of modern “training”, as you all know. I have given up the old methods of learning by rule-of-thumb and have tried to acquire some kind of proficiency through a process of regular training, following in the footsteps of many among yourselves, although I may not have been able to tread the lines of our Madanlal. His theory seems to

be that the more effort you put in the greater becomes your skill or ability and that there is no game on earth that you cannot master by sheer dint of hard work. Madanlal himself is a living proof of his doctrine, for he is without a rival in this method of hard painstaking practice. There are, as you know, two main types among those who do well in studies or—shall we say?—there are two ways of becoming a good student. There are those who, gifted with natural intelligence and ability, waste the whole year in all sorts of extra-curricula activities and in pleasures and pastimes and then read up for days and nights for a month or two just before the examination and get through the test and even secure high places. There is the second type who read and work hard throughout the whole year, devote some time every day to their studies, and never run the risk of falling ill or having a nervous breakdown about the time of the examination on account of excessive work. Our Madanlal belongs to this second category. He is really out to prove by his own example that definition of genius which makes it nothing but the capacity for taking infinite pains.

I have to mention another name in this connection. For much of what I have now achieved in the field of athletics I owe a deep debt to our Chinmoy. He has been my coach. What have I learnt from him? It is enthusiasm. What do I mean by enthusiasm? I shall explain. One of the secrets of physical training is that you must always try to perform a little more than your capacity, or what you may think is the limit of your powers. Perhaps it was with this end in view that in our time when one had to exercise a particular part of the body, the instructions were to go on repeating the movement until one began to sweat and felt exhausted. For how long am I to manipulate the dumb-bells or the Indian clubs? Until you are tired, the chart said, that is, until you felt you could do no more. Now of course nothing is done by such haphazard guesswork. You have to repeat the movements for a certain definite number of times, by actual count, say, five or six repetitions for the first day, to be increased by one or two every day or week, a final limit being set in respect of each individual according to his capacity. This is the method of scientific training today.

Whatever the method you adopt, your strength and capacity have to be increased in this manner. If you go beyond your limits, there is always a chance of accidents, but you accept the risk. The carefree enthusiast asks you to hitch your wagon to a star whereas the more cautious would point to the tragedy of Icarus. The legendary hero of Greek mythology had invented wings for man to fly, but he built them of wax. His aim had been to reach the sun, but as he came near that burning orb the wax got melted by the heat and his wings vanished and he was hurled back headlong down to earth.

Well, it was from Chinmoy that I got the courage or the foolhardiness for an attempt of this kind. This has been of great help to me. But there was a considerable resistance born of old age, even though we are here precisely to get rid of that. The resistance comes from two sources. It is there first of all in your own individual consciousness; you have heard of the adage about getting old before twenty. It is true that here in the Ashram we are often apt to forget, or we try to forget, to take count of our age. For example, even at the age of sixty,

I did not quite realise or, rather, my body did not feel—it is quite natural for the mind not to feel, but the body itself must realise—that it carried any load of more than twenty-five or thirty years. This kind of feeling must have come at one time or another to many among the older people here. This is indeed the root idea behind our desire to conceal the true age and reckon our age at less than the true figure. This recourse to a slight falsehood comes of an attempt to express and maintain the fact of our youth that is still effective in our life and inner consciousness in spite of our years. But the inexorable law of the external physical nature is still in operation. It invades our mind and pains it at times. Moreover, in addition to this resistance in our own individual consciousness or frame of mind, there is pressing upon us from all around the collective resistance, a resistance that comes from the consciousness and mental attitude of everybody else, the neighbours with whom we live. Even if we manage to forget, they will remind us of the pressure of advancing age. It is difficult ordinarily to escape from the influence of this double pressure. But to get rid of this influence and pressure is after all the very aim of our endeavour here.

(To be continued)

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

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

SPIRITUAL CAUSERIE

MAN AND ANIMAL BIRTH

I HAVE often wondered what the element of truth is in the innumerable Puranic legends about men being cast back into animal births either as a result of their own Karma or due to some curse of an enraged god or Rishi. For we can be sure that behind all that is said and described in the ancient Puranas there is some core of truth somewhere, whatever may be the hyperbole or the embellishment indulged in to appeal to the popular mind.

Thus it is said that a royal sage Bharata, in spite of all the religious merit he had acquired, had to be born a deer for the simple reason that he came to conceive an inordinate attachment to a deer which he brought up as a foundling. A prince of the house of Sudas was, for no fault of his own, cursed by Vasishtha to be born as an ogre eating human flesh. The curse was undeserved and it acted as a boomerang inasmuch as the man so condemned took his revenge by neatly eating up all the hundred sons of the sage. That is, however, another story. Now, is it really possible for a being, a soul, who has arrived at the human level in Creation to go back, to regress in the scale of natural evolution? Or are all these accounts simply didactic stories to instil fear into credulous minds and keep men to the righteous path?

We are assured on good authority that the normal line of soul-development is upward. A soul that has once reached the human stage does not go back to a lower level, curse or no curse. It is after a series of countless births—over eighty lakhs, say the Tantras—that the soul is brought up to the human gradation and it is inconceivable that the economy of Nature could permit a sudden turn-back, a retrogression after such an aeonic labour. But Nature is vast and elastic in her operations and we cannot bind her to too rigid a logical course either. There may be deviations under exceptional conditions.

Sri Aurobindo concedes one or two possible conditions under which a human soul may take an animal birth. Discussing the question he points out that for a soul in the animal order to make a transition to the human, means a conversion of consciousness, a conversion radical enough to enable it to inhabit a human tenement and answer to the demands of Nature at that level. Now it may happen that in some cases the conversion of consciousness has not been deep enough and the being after a tentative probing embodiment in the human organism may find that its conversion is not as complete as required to give it the needed security of tenure under the new conditions. In that case it may go back to its old habitat to perfect its change and qualify fully for a secure human assumption.

Another likely condition is when the soul has certain strong animal propensities which stick to it even after leaving the body and will not be shed in the

normal course. They demand a satisfaction or fulfilment in their own kind and it is under such circumstances that the soul or, more correctly, a part of its vital personality attaches itself to a proper animal form and exhausts itself. Thus one with excessive greed for food may cling to a pig, one with inordinate sexual desire to a goat, one with a strong streak of unsatiated cruelty to a hyena, and so on. In all cases there is a loose holding of the animal body by the soul or part of it, till the karma is worked out and the soul freed to proceed on its way to the place of rest.

Barring such cases, we do not envisage the possibility of a human soul being relegated to the animal birth in the normal course. So far it is entirely rational and satisfying to my intelligence. But there is another class of phenomena which has intrigued me.

And that is the tradition that certain Mahapurushas, highly evolved or even even perfected beings, choose to take animal forms and roam on the earth. This is not just an old wives' tale. There is unimpeachable testimony to these happenings even in our modern age. No less an exalted spiritual figure than Sri Ramana Maharshi has testified to this fact more than once. During the days when he lived in the caves on the hills of Arunachala—long before the present Ashram was formed—wild beasts like tigers and leopards, untamed creatures like serpents and mongooses, were regular frequenters of that region. And if human visitors would take fright and seek to harm them, the Maharshi used to ask them to desist, saying that the beasts would do no harm if only they were left alone. And besides, he added significantly, there were many Siddha Purushas living on the hills who came to see him assuming those forms.

Or to take yet another instance. In his interesting biography of Yogiraj Gambhirnath, a remarkable Natha Yogi who closed his earthly career in 1917, Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee—a knowledgeable writer with a keen philosophical mind—records in connection with animals one notable incident narrated by the yogi long after it had taken place.

“The Yogiraj incidentally mentioned that they were not always ferocious creatures, but that sometimes saints with extraordinary yogic powers moved on earth in the shape of serpents, tigers, etc. Different saints might have different reasons for assuming such bodies, but it was fact that they did so. He referred to an event which he experienced on the bank of the Narmada. In the course of his journey in that region one particular spot attracted him. He found an empty cottage there. He entered it and was absorbed in meditation. The next morning a big serpent of extraordinary nature appeared before him, fixed its gaze upon him for some time, and then respectfully crept round him and went away. The sight of the serpent produced an inexplicable spiritual effect upon his mind and he passed into the state of trance. The second morning also the same serpent appeared and behaved in the same way and he obtained the same experience. This was repeated on the third morning as well. On that day a Brahmachari arrived and told him that he was the permanent occupant of the cottage. Of course he was not displeased with him for his occupying the cottage in his absence. In the course of conversation the Brahmachari informed him that an extraordinary Mahatma with spiritual attainments of a supremely high order

was residing in that locality in the body of a serpent and that the Brahmachari had been dwelling in that cottage for twelve years in a prayerful and meditative mood with a view to having a darshan of the Mahatma !

“The Yogiraj told the disciples that this was not an exceptional incident and that there were many such Mahatmas dwelling in subhuman forms voluntarily or compulsorily for various reasons. He came across many such Mahatmas. He referred to his meeting some yogis living and moving in the guise of tigers.”

Many questions arise.

In the first place, could all these things be really possible ? I asked this to the Mother. The Mother says they are quite possible. Possibility conceded, what are the impelling factors, reasons ‘voluntary or compulsory’ ? Why should beings, who have reached the top of the human evolutionary ladder and are freed from all moorings in the lower Nature, choose or be chosen to take sub-human embodiments ? Could it be that only so it is possible to effect radical changes in those orders of animal creation ? Just as the Divine comes down or sends His emanations in human form to work out crucial turns in the evolutionary progression of man, are animal embodiments similarly chosen to consciously work out similar difficulties and effect in the animal life changes necessitated by the general advance in Evolutionary Nature ? Or could it be that certain developed beings are entrusted with different kingdoms in the animal creation ? I do not know.

PRABUDDHA

NAMMALWAR

THE SUPREME VAISHNAVA SAINT AND POET

This essay was first published in July, 1919, in Sri Aurobindo's philosophical monthly "Arya".

MARAN, renowned as Nammalwar ("Our Saint") among the Vaishnavas and the greatest of their saints and poets, was born in a small town called Kuruhur, in the southernmost region of the Tamil country—Tirunelveli (Tinnevely). His father, Kari, was a petty prince who paid tribute to the Pandyan King of Madura. We have no means of ascertaining the date of the Alwar's birth, as the traditional account is untrustworthy and full of inconsistencies. We are told that the infant was mute for several years after his birth. Nammalwar renounced the world early in life and spent his time singing and meditating on God under the shade of a tamarind tree by the side of the village temple.

It was under this tree that he was first seen by his disciple, the Alwar Madhura-kavi,—for the latter also is numbered among the great Twelve, "lost in the sea of Divine Love." Tradition says that while Madhura-kavi was wandering in North India as a pilgrim, one night a strange light appeared to him in the sky and travelled towards the South. Doubtful at first what significance this phenomenon might have for him, its repetition during three consecutive nights convinced him that it was a divine summons and where this luminous sign led he must follow. Night after night he journeyed southwards till the guiding light came to Juruhur and there disappeared. Learning of Nammalwar's spiritual greatness he thought that it was to him that the light had been leading him. But when he came to him, he found him absorbed in deep meditation with his eyes fast closed and although he waited for hours the Samadhi did not break until he took up a large stone and struck it against the ground violently. At the noise Nammalwar opened his eyes, but still remained silent. Madhura-kavi then put to him the following enigmatical question, "If the little one (the soul) is born into the dead thing (Matter)¹ what will the little one eat and where will the little one lie?", to which Nammalwar replied in an equally enigmatic style, "That will it eat and there will it lie."

Subsequently Nammalwar permitted his disciple to live with him and it was Madhura-kavi who wrote down his songs as they were composed. Nammalwar died in his thirty-fifth year, but has achieved so great a reputation that the Vaishnavas account him an incarnation of Vishnu himself, while others are only the mace, discus, conch etc. of the Deity.

¹ The form of the question reminds one of Epictetus' definition of man, "Thou art a little soul carrying about a corpse." Some of our readers may be familiar with Swinburne's adaptation of the saying, "A little soul for a little bears up the corpse which is man."

From the philosophical and spiritual point of view, his poetry ranks among the highest in Tamil literature. But in point of literary excellence, there is a great inequality; for while some songs touch the level of the loftiest world-poets, others, even though rich in rhythm and expression, fall much below the poet's capacity. In his great work known as the *Tiruvaymoli* (*The Sacred Utterance*) which contains more than a thousand stanzas, he has touched all the phases of the life divine and given expression to all forms of spiritual experience. The pure and passionless Reason, the direct perception in the high solar realm of Truth itself, the ecstatic and sometimes poignant love that leaps into being at the vision of the "Beauty of God's face", the Triumph where unity is achieved and "I and my Father are one"—all these are uttered in his simple and flowing lines with a strength that is full of tenderness and truth.

The lines which we translate below are a fair specimen of the great Alwar's poetry; but it has suffered considerably in the translation,—indeed the genius of the Tamil tongue hardly permits of an effective rendering, so utterly divergent is it from that of the English language.

NAMMALWAR'S HYMN OF THE GOLDEN AGE

'Tis glory, glory, glory ! For Life's hard curse has expired; swept out are Pain and Hell, and Death has nought to do here. Mark ye, the Iron Age shall end. For we have seen the hosts of Vishnu; richly do they enter in and chant His praise and dance and thrive. (1)

We have seen, we have seen, we have seen—seen things full sweet for our eyes. Come, all ye lovers of God, let us shout and dance for joy with oft-made surrenderings. Wide do they roam on earth singing songs and dancing, the hosts of Krishna who wears the cool and beautiful Tulsi, the desire of the Bees. (2)

The Iron Age shall change. It shall fade, it shall pass away. The gods shall be in our midst. The mighty Golden Age shall hold the earth and the flood of the highest Bliss shall swell. For the hosts of our dark-hued Lord, dark-hued like the cloud, dark-hued like the sea, widely they enter in, singing songs, and everywhere they have seized on their stations. (3)

The hosts of our Lord who reclines on the sea of Vastness, behold them thronging hither. Meseem's they will tear up all these weeds of grasping cults. And varied songs do they sing, our Lord's own hosts, as they dance falling, sitting, standing, marching, leaping, bending. (4)

And many are the wondrous sights that strike mine eyes. As by magic have Vishnu's hosts come in and firmly placed themselves everywhere. Nor doubt it, ye fiends and demons, if born such be in our midst, take heed ! ye shall never escape. For the Spirit of Time will slay and fling you away. (5)

These hosts of the Lord of the Discus, they are here to free this earth of the devourers of Life, Disease and Hunger and vengeful Hate and all other things of evil. And sweet are their songs as they leap and dance extending wide over earth. Go forth, ye lovers of God, and meet these hosts divine; with right mind serve them and live. (6)

The Gods that ye fix in your minds, in His name do they grant deliverance. Even thus to immortality did the sage Markanda attain. I mean no offence to any, but there is no other God but Krishna. And let all your sacrifices be to them who are but His forms.

His forms he has placed as Gods to receive and taste the offerings that are brought in sacrifices in all the various worlds. He our divine Sovereign on whose molemarked bosom the goddess Lakshmi rests—His hosts are singing sweetly and deign to increase on earth. O men, approach them, serve and live. (8)

Go forth and live by serving our Lord, the deathless One. With your tongues chant ye the hymns, the sacred Riks of the Veda, nor err in the laws of wisdom. Oh, rich has become this earth in the blessed ones and the faithful who serve them with flowers and incense and sandal and water. (9)

In all these rising worlds they have thronged and wide they spread, those beauteous forms of Krishna—the unclad Rudra is there, Indra, Brahma, all. The Iron Age shall cease to be—do ye but unite and serve these. (10)

MYSTICS AND SOCIETY

We are starting an important series of articles on a problem which promises to become more and more central to Modern Life and Civilization in their attempt not only to survive but to be rounded, harmonious, fulfilled. The author first presents us with a general sketch of the wide field he will cover after an "Introduction" which will appear in the next issue.

SYNOPSIS

I. *Mystics and Society* : Attempts have been made from time to time to do away with mystics and mysticism. They have never quite succeeded. We see signs of their revival in our own times. Modern Man is in Search of his Soul, says Carl Jung. The mystic seeks to know himself and God, to determine his real relation with Reality. As a rule he is looked upon as escapist and eccentric. His method of arriving at truth is a little unusual; but, looked at closely, mysticism is a realistic, experiential and realisable ideal in life, both for the individual and the group.

But questions arise : for instance, the place of Mind in Nature. Also we have to consider the modern emphasis on Science and an ordered social existence in terms of industry and organisation. There are new ideals and experiments—in education, propaganda and revolution. We face a vicious circle of history. Men in the mass are no better than before. Yoga is a gate of escape. A renewed interest in the psychology, metaphysics and sociology of mysticism is in the air. There is the question of Change from Within and Change from Without.

Briefly, the yogi or mystic will help us in four ways : (i) he will correct our world-view; (ii) help us to live according to a correct world-view; (iii) apply this to problems of individual and group life; (iv) cure us of the facile but dangerous fallacies of revolution and violence as the only means for bringing about social change or making one "way of life" prevail over another.

Belief in a spiritual evolution of mankind, a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the holy Communion of Saints, *sadhūnām rājyam*—this the modern mind doubts or rejects. Let us, then, look at the issue from four different sides: evolution, civilization, science, and the techniques for heightening individual and social behaviour.

Evolution implies involution and is not finished—according to Nietzsche, Ouspensky, Lloyd Morgan, du Nouy and Sri Aurobindo. There is something beyond man and mind. This the mystics know or believe.

The contribution of the early mystics to civilization is a fact. Mysticism and civilization are not necessarily opposed to each other. It is at a later period

that mysticism broke off and "withdrew". But the mystic is not there to solve human problems with the help of human means. A transformation of consciousness is his real service to the race. This he has continued to do, in spite of opposition and misunderstanding. It is the politicians, the modern tyrants, who do not know the nature of reality and therefore oppose him. "If they did (know the nature of reality) they would not be politicians" (Aldous Huxley).

The validity of scientific knowledge and technique within its own field is not questioned. Only the claim of other fields or areas of experience has to be admitted, fields where other methods of investigation will be needed, for achieving new levels of awareness and effectuation. Physical science gives only one aspect of reality. By mistaking the part for the whole we have created an enormous latent anarchism and meaninglessness from which the majority of people suffer today, existentialists included.

As regards individual behaviour and social planning the claims of the Russian Revolution (and Pavlov) are perhaps the loudest. Some kind of Collectivism, or "Organization Man", seems to be the direction everywhere. But from the mystical or spiritual standpoint the Russian Revolution is at best a heresy and Automation an enormity. "For the radical and permanent transformation of personality only one effective method has been discovered—that of the mystics" and contemplatives.

The "difficult alchemy—the transformation of man" is known only to the mystics. They alone have the knowledge, which is free and infinitely varied. It constitutes not a dogma but a verified science like any other. It will take too long to explain here the conditions of a spiritual society which is the ultimate mystic promise. But safety lies in co-operating with this emergent truth rather than following awful, obsolete formulas that keep us tied to the past, the in-human and the inorganic and prevent our further becoming. The mystic is the Way, the Life, the Door, the maker of "human history". To recognise and render him help is the least we can do. This help is for our own good. He is you. "The land which they see and of which they report to us, is the land towards which humanity is going."

II. *The Doctrine of the Mystics* : "Doctrine hard/ In which truth shows herself as near a lie/As can comport with her divinity" is not the most important thing in mysticism; the moments of insight are more veridical than the "reflections" that follow. In itself, all mystics are agreed, the experience is ineffable, "beyond all expression". Yet doctrine of some kind is almost invariably there. "Mystics themselves philosophize." The need is felt for relation between the empirical and transcendental consciousness, and both in the east and the west we find mystic scholars, Shankar and Eckhart among them, debating brilliantly over the non-discursive and the Indescribable.

Paradox and Mysticism often go together—as may be seen from examples from the Upanishads and Lao-Tse. Essentially the doctrine is quite simple and may be stated as: *Thou art That* or *I and my Father are one*. Or in more academic language, it is, "an ultimate non-sensuous unity in all things", "an undifferentiated aesthetic continuum".

There are degrees of Knowledge. The higher is a "knowledge by identity" and involves "another way of seeing which everyone has but few use" (Plotinus). (Question: Is mysticism the religion of the few ?)

Basically mysticism is a doctrine of salvation, *mokṣasāstra*. It is the way of Return. All this is not necessarily scholastic bagatelle. After his mystical experience Thomas Aquinas said: "My writing days are over." Why did he say this ? We must understand the rationale and limitation of doctrine.

Levels of reality, "many mansions : a modern re-statement can be made of this truth. [†]

There is the science or technique of mysticism, *methodus mystica*, yoga. It consists of detachment and devotion, choice and contemplation, training of will. Mystery and secrecy, there is a reason for them.

Mystical experience and doctrine have a large variety.

Mysticism is a real revaluation of values. It has optimism and dignity, it gives human life a point and purpose as nothing else does. It is an experiential answer to doubts and misgivings about the human condition. It is strong meat, for those who dare.

The doctrine has a metaphorical and symbolical nature. A brief statement of the doctrine is found in the Vedic archetype: (i) passage from mortality to Immortality; (ii) the path of Truth and the way of the Gods, *devayāna*; (iii) human life seen as a Sacrifice, a Journey, a Pilgrimage, and a battle between the Powers of Light and Darkness.

At the top is the secret of the One Reality. The "Ancestors" wait to assist the offspring in harmonising "the dawn that shone out before and those that now must shine". The choice is always ours to co-operate with the Dawn or the Dusk.

But these insights, or doctrines, are part of a psychology of the individual. To this we now turn.

III. *The Role of the Individual*. A high value is given to human life in the mystical view, as an opportunity to find Self, or know God. This is man's "real business". Through the individual He manifests himself in relation as of Himself He exists in identity.

Mystical psychology, though metaphysically sound, is based on experience and verification. By definition intuitive, it is the psychology of beatitude or deification, a "quest of consciousness". It is through the knowledge of the Self that the mystic has sought the knowledge of the world. This knowledge is the *fons et origo* of all extra-sensory perception. There is the evidence of William James: it calls for no premature closing of our accounts with reality. To this the mystics would whole-heartedly agree.

The Double Soul in man, Goethe's *Zwei Seelen*, is part of the traditional doctrine of man. Machine and Freedom, Faith and Works—these are traditionally opposed.

The method of mystical psychology is : detachment and transference—the Witness Self or *Saksi*—breaking of the shell of ego to find the true centre of personality—"the birth of the Self". The true sense of Brahmanical culture,

of the "twice-born", lies in this process.

The presence of mysticism is both a promise and a challenge, a criticism of life in the light of an ideal. For this ascetic denial is not obligatory. But the need of the liberation of the individual soul remains, it is "the keynote of the definitive divine action". The individual is necessary, but, like his prototype ("made in His own image"), God or Brahman, the individual integralises three states of being or consciousness : individual, universal and transcendental. We have nothing impossible in this suggestion. The Self may be conceived as Freedom. The individual has a dual importance : through him the cosmic spirit organizes its collective units and raises Nature from the Inconscience to the Superconscience. Sometimes the individual has to "stand apart", in order to "become ourselves by exceeding ourselves".

How different, all this, from the prevailing superficial psychologies of the psychotic or the "well-adjusted" man ! The need exists for an inner life. Something grows in answer to this need or demand. Two attitudes or lines of activity are possible in pursuit of the ideal : (i) self-perfection and (ii) perfection of environment or society. The priority of the inner process is evident. A perfected human world cannot be created by men or composed of men who themselves are imperfect. To think that it can is the perpetual illusion of reformers and revolutionaries. A divine life must be first and foremost an inner life, but not that only.

The occasional eccentricity and glorified selfishness we meet with are not the heart of the mystical individual response at its best. There is the ideal of the *jivanmukta*, the soul liberated even during earth-life. Neither the Welfare State nor the "hidden persuaders" of Madison Avenue, but the mystic, a psychological Master, "the hidden Remnant", is man's real friend. Only when one is free himself can one free others.

IV. *The Ideal Group* : The mystic and the "outsider" have been always there—as "peculiar people". As a rule, the very term "mystic" indicates a certain aloofness from the crowd. We have the problem of mystics within and without the church. Is the mystic always, and necessarily, anti-social ? Then why should society tolerate his presence ?

Mysticism means : Withdrawal and Return. It is truer to say that in the lives of the greater mystics we may discern, perhaps more easily than elsewhere, "the principles which do or should govern the relations of the individual to the community".

The mystic minority is not to be dismissed as a cultural curiosity. The mystical point of view has lost none of its edge even now and that so many—among them some of the best—should prefer to turn their back upon the social scene is, in a way, the most poignant criticism that could be made of the political animal called the average man, *l'homme moyen sensuel*. But such contrast and opposition, however prominent a feature of most forms of mysticism, are not the last word. A reconciliation is possible and certainly would be desirable.

Crisis and sanctity are related. To the saint life is a perpetual crisis. Two ways are open : the way of peace and the way of violence, to rush in or walk out.

It is sheer blindness to say that what men in the mass have done so far is the only way. History would be unbearable if it were so. In the prison-house of passion and self-division the mystics open the doors of perception, of freedom, a new theme.

What are the chances of a monastic order, or groups of "devoted individuals" today? What is the role of the minority in a culture? Alexis Carrel has something to say. Evidence of the past is there, and the present possibility cannot be ruled out. The conditions of such living together of the minority group are— isolation and discipline. Deliverance from the distress of our times can come only from small groups with the courage to remain small. But, of course, what is holy can never be commanded.

"Return to Religion": this is not enough. False socialization of religion—mechanization and strict authoritarianism—are the chief cause of its failure to regenerate mankind. Also the "religious" society has often been sterile and unprogressive with a misplaced importance put on externals. A great sign of failure is seen when the individual is obliged to flee *from* society to find room for his spiritual growth.

Something more is to be said about the individual. The individual belongs not only to the state, society, nation or race. He belongs to humanity and more than humanity. The liberty claimed by the struggling individual—however crudely or violently expressed—is born of a need and an impulse necessary for his complete development by free growth and association. This growth and association will give rise perhaps more to an *asram* than an old-type monastery, an ashram that will take in all men as they are. But how exactly it will work must be left to itself. The logic of the inert, the fixed and the finite cannot lay down the grooves in which mysticism must live, move and have its being. The plastic stress of the Spirit within will find its own way—provided there are enough like-minded individuals agreed on the ideal, willing and able to fulfil its conditions. Obviously such a community cannot be brought about by a "business deal". It will no doubt be faced, in its early stages, with many problems of a new group life in transition. But that is not an argument against the attempt. The heavenly city is not yet built, but it is also for ever building.

V. *The Prospects Today*: Where do we stand today? Where do we go from here? And how does mysticism come in? We stand on the edge of the abyss, and unless we are careful we may soon find ourselves at the point of no return. This is not an idle threat. The mystics act at all times as a reminder, they tell us to be careful ("It is to be feared that these trifles will one day cost us dear," said Brother Lawrence), to make the choice and the necessary break-through. They are sure to be opposed.

Many modern thinkers have also begun to question the premisses of our condemned, "colossal" civilization. In the Hour of God the wisdom of the ages rings clear, it says what it has always said. The crisis is not so new as fundamental and calls for a definite choice, a greater intuitive knowledge. It must be solved, if the race is to arrive or even to survive.

An informed, integral mysticism might be the answer: "A life of unity,

mutuality and harmony born of a deeper and wider truth of our being." The dreadful message of the Atom Bomb can only be counteracted by the untried powers of the *ātman*, or the Self one in all. There is the law of psychic compensation. In the common crisis mysticism itself might shed some of its historical forms and associations. In any case those who are trying to perpetuate differences, even in this field, are not being faithful to the truth we need. The need for toleration is great if mysticism is to have a future and help man on his onward journey.

To do this the false image of man—presented by science—has to be replaced by something nearer the total truth. Modern civilization has been created without any care or understanding of our real needs or nature. It does not suit us, because concepts belonging to the mechanical world have been applied indiscriminately to man. Conditions have been created which make (not might make) life itself impossible. The spirit and technique of science are part of our heritage but today its dangers and limitations ought also to be recognised. Science does not possess instruments with which to deal with the qualitative aspects of reality, it is not bothered if life has any meaning or not. An "impoverished reality" is its greatest gift.

Starting as an individual revolt against convention and authoritarian rule, unethical science is likely to end by denying all individuality and ushering in a Stateism worse than any tyranny in the past. It is full of danger for the human evolution itself, for a cessation of the evolutionary urge, a crystallisation in a Brave New World, a stable, comfortable, mechanised social living without ideal or outlook. If you ask why this should be so, the answer is : Reason by itself cannot long maintain the race in its progress; it can do so only if it is a mediator between the life and body and something higher and greater within man. Reason cannot deal with life in its wholeness and complexity. It must break in order to utilise. Another way in which it can betray its function—as has happened today in our commercial and acquisitive society—is to be a servant of life and serve infra-rational purposes. Also every "system" fails and is bound to fail. This is so because at the very basis of life there is something which the unaided intellect can never lay hold of. The truth lies in what we are insisting upon: reason is an imperfect light, the rational or intellectual man is not the last and highest ideal of manhood, nor would a rational society be the last and highest expression of the possibilities of an aggregated human life. Man is more and other than mind. The root powers of life are either below or above, in fact both. Reason is but a mediator.

Its closest rival has been faith or religion. We have to see what Reason and Religion are and why a "return to religion" will not be enough. Reason and Spirituality need not be for ever opposites. The social application of the rationalist formula has ended in totalitarian mystiques, the same in the Soviet as in the other Fascist countries. Here is a "red" light. The alternative is a free association of individuals. This perhaps puts off the consummation of a better human society to a far-off day. But that is not certain. In any case, if this is not the solution, there is no solution.

Among other, may be less spectacular, benefits from mysticism would be

the cure of the disease called power and the modern mania for action and “usefulness”. The problem of power is insoluble except by the saint; while as regards action the mystics have a valid, consistent theory of action. But of course we do not turn to mysticism for its benefits alone, for what we can get out of it. Its utilities are by-products. The important thing is that humanity will have to change much before it can hope to gain anything from it. In His will is our only utility. The One World will be a reality, not through compulsive force, conquest, conversion or convenience, but as a free association of free peoples, who will know the laws of freedom and the rules of love a little better than those who came before. It will be, at heart, a continuation of the democratic dream. In all this the mystics—scientists of sanctity and makers of a new order, a gnostic society—may have a part to play. They will of course serve and not lead. Let us be worthy of their service and of Him whom all history serves—call it Truth, Freedom or God.

SISIRKUMAR GHOSE

THE URGE FOR WHOLENESS

(PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE 33RD INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS :
SECTION OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE)

(Continued from June)

MITRA'S hypothesis, to which we must next turn, directly draws its inspiration from Indian psychology. In his *Suggestions for a New Theory of Emotion*, which he also offers 'as a theory of mental life as a whole', he undertakes a laborious examination of the various theories regarding the nature of feeling and emotion. These theories he finds inadequate. His own hypothesis is: "mind is at first a vast store of potential energy in a state of perfectly stable equilibrium quite content and at harmony with itself. The external world enters this mind through the channels of the sense and makes impressions on it. The equilibrium is at once disturbed, and the harmony destroyed. Some of the potential energy is changed into kinetic form and activity is initiated in order to regain equilibrium and the disturbed harmony. I suggest, therefore, that the fundamental yearning of the Ego is for that harmony"¹⁷ The state of perfectly stable equilibrium is mentioned as the state of 'Anandam' of Indian Psychology. "Various are the means," elaborates Mitra, "adopted by the mind to retain and realise even some sort of temporary harmony amidst the incessant attacks from different quarters. It is the main task of psychology to study these ways and means, surrogates and subterfuges, that are employed by the mind for regaining the paradise that has been lost."¹⁸ Reason is "a special modification of the uppermost layer of the mind, as it were, attempting to serve the purpose of preventing extreme dislocations of the harmonious arrangement within"¹⁹ Thus reason too is an expression of 'the primal yearning for harmony'. All emotions of anger, fear, etc. are "different attempts made to recover or maintain the equilibrium that is lost or threatened"²⁰

The author claims that the theory is capable of accommodating within itself the various hypotheses of Freud, Jung, Adler and Bose. Further he claims that a meaning is (now) found for the phrase 'unbalanced mind' in connection with abnormality.

This theory has some striking correspondence with the thesis here presented. The concept of a state 'of perfectly stable equilibrium quite content and at harmony with itself' is the most obvious one. The psychic consciousness, the principal basic fact of our thesis, too, is essentially a harmonious consciousness, tending to harmonise the varied materials of personality. But for Mitra the state is a pure assumption, for us it is a fact verifiable by yogic discipline and by some possessed naturally too. Further, for him it is an antecedent condition, the present state being a disturbance of that harmony and an attempt

to return to the same. This point of the theory seems to accord ill with the essential forward movement of evolution and unless Mitra's supposition implies an inherent possibility and trend, discernible in the evolutionary process, just what our thesis affirms, there is surely here a serious difficulty for the theory.

He talks of birth as the fact that disturbs the original harmony. But human consciousness is a direct continuation of the animal consciousness. If any disturbance at all took place it must have been at the beginning of the evolution of consciousness itself. But consciousness visibly emerges out of a primordial unconscious condition rather than from a conscious 'Anandam' state.

His perception of a poised and harmonious state as implied in our consciousness is very correct. He also suggests a view of mind which we shall endorse. His statement that reason itself is "a special modification of the uppermost layer of the mind as it were attempting to serve the purpose of preventing extreme dislocations of the harmonious arrangements within" obviously implies a distinction between an outer consciousness and an inner consciousness, mind being the outer one attempting practical adjustments with the environment. The inner consciousness is our psychic consciousness, the central consciousness marked by 'harmonious arrangements within'. Mind including reason is thus the superficial consciousness evolved out of needs of adjustment with the environment. However, it cannot be forgotten that reason, while being essentially an instrument for coping with the external world more largely and effectively, is capable of paving the way and leading on to a plane of consciousness beyond itself, which is a culmination and fulfilment of the entire mental nature. When the 'harmonious arrangements within' are discovered, the individual also achieves a harmonious arrangement with the reality outside, because the individual having been freed from projections and identifications is able to see straight and clearly. Bose is right in rejecting Freud's principle of reality. Says he, "It is quite unnecessary to assume any separate reality principle. When the opposite wish is unhindered there develops the true grasp of the external world and when there is repression there is falsification of perception resulting in the development of an illusion or a hallucination."²¹

We shall endorse also the position that reason as well as all consciousness is an expression of 'the primal yearning for harmony'. But this is so rather differently for him and for us. His argument is that if his assumption of an original harmony is granted then he can show that the various mental activities, normal and abnormal, are attempts, well-directed or ill-directed, for the attainment of some sort of harmony in consciousness. For us it is a wide survey of the growing evolution from the animalcule to man that suggests a fundamental trend to an increasing wholeness. However, the best evidence for his hypothesis is the experience of the emergence of a new form of consciousness, which presents 'wholeness' as a fact, the 'consciousness as such' as distinguished from the consciousness of subject-object duality of Bose and James Ward or that of so many different polarities of Freud and Jung.

Mitra's suggestion, though not very clearly stated, that his assumption of a state of perfectly stable equilibrium gives the proper meaning to the term 'un-

balanced mind', is further an idea which we heartily welcome. The standard of normality or abnormality has been much discussed in recent psychology. And the best judgment that we possess on the subject is that the average is the normal, that the statistically common characteristics of behaviour, as determined by general social judgment, decide what is normal behaviour at a time in a place. But a science of psychology, seeking the essential nature of mental disorder as of mental health, is bound to feel uncomfortable in a situation like this. If mental health and disease are terms changing their connotation with social standards of behaviour and etiquette then surely it is difficult to have a science of the subject. A practical science of mental hygiene will have to determine the character of ideal mental health and the conditions of its attainment and it is only with reference to such a standard that we shall be able to determine mental disease. The fact is that such a standard of health being not in view and for practical purposes the general opinion on what is abnormal being of consequence, the science of psychology accepted the social judgment as evidence of a fact of truth. From the point of view of pure science this is obviously unsatisfactory.

However, this difficult problem is not altogether insoluble and psychology need not in despair accept consensus of opinion as evidence of truth. Mitra's 'state of perfectly stable equilibrium' is evidently the true scientific norm, which is capable of giving proper meaning to abnormality. But besides this norm necessary to the science of psychology, we need to have a standard of practical working normality, which is determined by the general state of mental health or disease at a time. However, the legal norm of abnormality is yet different. Bose's principle of unity has not yet been much elaborated, but it seems to suggest a scientific norm of mental health perfect and complete.

The thesis we have been defending above and the theory of mental nature we have lately presented must naturally justify themselves in relation to the facts of abnormal psychology. If the facts of abnormal psychology can be satisfactorily explained on our view then that evidently means a fresh support to the thesis. Now mind, as stated before, is the consciousness growing from the animalcule to man out of needs to cope with the environment. This consciousness basically involves the mechanism of projection and identification. That is to say, the organism in its relation with environment learns to cope with it through projections and identifications with external objects. These identifications develop organisations under sentiments which may be related to one another in different degrees of opposition or complementariness. The identifications can also be deep and intense or otherwise and have competition or a contributory relation amongst themselves. Now, when a person possesses identifications, attachments or fixations with objects, ideas and ideals, largely in conformity with the scale of life's values socially accepted or approved at a time, he will be a normal man in accordance with the standard of practical normality. But where this is not the case and the individual's two important identifications or two systems of identifications are seriously at variance with each other, a state of conflict will arise. Such conflict may be conscious or subconscious or one in which one of the tendencies, representing one identification or one

system of identifications, may be conscious and the other subconscious. It may lead to repression and the numerous consequences of repression. If we accept with McDougall dissociation as a distinct cause of mental disorder, identifications being different and varied can build up systems relatively independent, which under abnormal circumstances become dissociated.

The treatment of the mentally disordered will evidently consist in achieving release from the identifications which involve a keen conflict or from the identifications which are morbid in the sense that they involve an adhesion to an object or person much in deviation from the socially accepted scale of values of the times. Such release is made possible by the precedent fact of a will for health and is obtained by the direct or indirect strengthening of the same; an integration into this will for health makes the divergent and conflicting identifications cease by being raised and recovered to consciousness. Freud and Jung, both consider that the fact of raising the subconscious contents to consciousness itself achieves the cure. But as the repressions are made conscious to the patient in the dispassionate presence of the psycho-analyst, he more or less achieves a detached standpoint with regard to his repressed identifications. These identifications then, losing their subconscious autonomous character, receive a new orientation and become integrated to the major trend of the individual's will, which is normally the will for life and health. The cure is at the last instance really achieved by this reintegrated will rather than by the mere fact of a subconscious content made conscious.

The terms identification and projection are here used in an independent sense. The psycho-analysts amongst themselves too are not agreed as to the exact meaning of these terms. Projection means to us the inability to recognise the psychic structure of one's life and hence failure to understand the true causes of one's behaviour. Projection thus basically involves self-evasion and escapism. Projection is for us an abnormality involved in the form of the normal consciousness. The so-called morbid projections, as for example in delusions of persecution, are simply extreme cases of the same. The introjected state is a reaction—the opposite extreme—to the normal condition of projection. Jung's extroversion and introversion have a close resemblance to projection and introjection. They too would be for us abnormal conditions or rather conditions which are largely normal to the present state of evolution of man. In the right normal condition the individual will know himself directly by the process of a deep and intimate self-observation—the deep introspection as characterised before; and the dispassionateness, which such self-knowledge will give, will enable him to know the external reality dispassionately. Projection, an undue emphasis on the external, and introjection, an undue emphasis on the internal, will then both be corrected. This will afford release from identifications with outside objects and persons or inner ideas and ideals, whether in the acute forms of mental disorders or the general form of practical social normality. The individual will know himself as 'consciousness as such' and will react to the external world with the detachment necessary for dispassionate knowledge and action.

Thus our view is capable of reconciling and explaining the facts of normal and abnormal psychology as also those of religious and mystic psychology. A

fuller presentation and working out of the theory into these three great departments of psychology is obviously outside the scope of this address. But perhaps as a general possibility the case has been sufficiently presented.

(To be continued)

INDRA SEN

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THE SERVICE TREE AT THE SAMADHI

(One of the common names of the Service Tree is : The Rusty Shield-bearer)

O THOU faithful bearer of the rusty shields,
Holy Service Tree !
Thy fragrant blessings on my heart's praying fields . . .
Thanksgiving to thee.

O humble crown, green vigil of delight,
Guard proud of God,
Thy blessing-shields borne high by the flaming Knight,
High where no fighter has trod,

Are crushed into pollen of throbbing gold.
O vault of luminous shade,
Look ! Bunches of blossoming lights behold !
And the shadows of old fade . . .

Rustling mystery-tale ! Love with covered face
Bent over the New-born !
One day under the shield of diamond grace
Thy emerald visor will be torn.

JANINA

LOVE'S ETERNAL HOME

DARK powers have reigned for aeons on this earth
And hindered Thy gold-sheer embodiment !
Now when Thy Love burns on the world, self-sent,
When Thy Compassion has now bodied forth,

And Thou, the Power Supreme of God, hast come
And pitched Thy Sun-Light's tent in Matter's base,
O may some glimmering new-born godly race
Become Thy eternal Love's eternal home !

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SRI AUROBINDO'S CONCEPTION OF PERSONALITY

Excerpt from an article by Gunther Roger in KAIROS (the leading Catholic theological journal in the German language), 1962, 3-4, pp. 228f.

... FINALLY it seems that one conclusion is inescapable: Sri Aurobindo's teaching about the person does not appear to us as a foreign element; it is intimately connected with Christian thought, but these connections are to be thought of as inner and not as outer. Sri Aurobindo was not a Christian. As a true Indian thinker he was completely undogmatic and went on his way according to his own feelings and his own experience. The Indian idea of manifestation also has a somewhat different character from the Christian. It means the self-manifestation of God in different human beings, e.g. in the authors of the Vedas. This manifestation has not been narrowly connected with a single historical person and can always renew itself.

But there are also common things which cannot be overlooked even in those regions which belong in theology to the *mysterium stricte dictum*. One indication may be permitted. In his book, *Welt und Person* (Wufzrburg 1955), Guardini writes: "The Christian personality is fulfilled only when man has entered into the existentiality of Christ and consequently no longer says to Christ 'You' in a narrow or strict sense, but has his being in him and with him in the presence of the person of the Father." Let us compare this saying of Guardini with the teaching of Sri Aurobindo. Even though there may be identity in form, there is this difference, that Christ is at the same time Jesus of Nazareth. Indian tradition does not live by a historically incarnated God but primarily by that Christ who lives in the heart of all human beings and whom the Indians call Atman or Ishwara. In this latter approximation to what is Christian we may accept Sri Aurobindo as a preparer of the way. He knows about the birth of God in the soul, about the descent of Krishna, because they have become for him reality. He knows so much by his own experience which Christians could not know better or say in any better way. But behind this formulation the gulf between him and Christianity becomes obvious, because here (with Christians) the accent is on the "material", on the historical event... My remarks are concerned only with the thought and the sayings of Sri Aurobindo; they have to stop in awe before the secret of the personality of Sri Aurobindo.

One last remark: Why are we concerned with Indian philosophy? Europe has begun in recent times to search with renewed force for the true being of man. Asian peoples, and above all India, possess such a profound knowledge

of man, carefully preserved through the millennia, that we may expect by this spiritual exchange much inspiration and mutual deepening. Mankind stands today before one great problem : the unity of the world. This one world, this one humanity, this one God, this one Self stand in the centre of all our questions. Along this line the eminent Indians of the last century worked—Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Tagore, Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo especially seems to be an appropriate go-between because he, as hardly anyone else, has deeply experienced both worlds. He does not have to judge either one from the outside. What may we expect from him beyond that ? Inspiration for a new kind of integral education as it has already been realized in Pondicherry—the best endowment for a better and happier human race, for a “Life Divine upon Earth.”

UNFAMILIAR INDIA

II. "THE INDIA WE CALL IMMEMORIAL"

"THE Ganges, though flowing from the foot of Vishnu and through Siva's hair, is not an ancient stream. Geology, looking farther than religion, knows of a time when neither the river nor the Himalayas that nourished it existed, and an ocean flowed over the holy places of Hindustan. The mountains rose, their debris silted up the ocean, the gods took their seats on them and contrived the river, and the India we call immemorial came into being. But India is really far older. In the days of the prehistoric ocean the southern part of the peninsula already existed, and the high places of Dravida have been land since land began, and have seen on the one side the sinking of a continent that joined them to Africa, and on the other the upheaval of the Himalayas from a sea. They are older than anything in the world. No water has ever covered them, and the sun who has watched them for countless aeons may still discern in their outlines forms that were his before our globe was torn from his bosom. If flesh of the sun's flesh is to be touched anywhere, it is here among the incredible antiquity of these hills."—(E.M.FOSTER)

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When the Himalayas were young and small—a chain of humble hills and not the giant that for thousands of years has raised his brow into the highest heaven—there was a mighty river, named the "Siwalik" by geologists, which ran from the head of the Sind gulf to the Punjab and thence along the embryonic mountain range of the north through Simla and Nainital to Assam. The whole river-flow above the Deccan was exactly opposite to what it is now. And what was notable in the north was not any Himalaya Mountain but a Himalaya Sea which geologists have called "the Tethys": to the shores of this Sea flowed the Siwalik. Then an earth-movement in North-west Punjab dismembered the one Siwalik system into three subsidiary river-system: (1) The present Indus from North-west Hazara; (2) the five Punjab tributary rivers of the Indus; (3) The rivers belonging to the Ganges system which finally took a south-easterly course. Late in time did the drainage of North India take its present shape which has influenced Indian history at many a turn and corner.—(Based on D.N.WADIA, *The Vedic Age*, p.85)

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"The greater part of the Indo-Gangetic plain is built up of very late alluvial flood deposits of the rivers of the Indus-Ganges system, borne down from the

Himalayas and deposited at their foot. But most of this terrain became firm and dry enough to be habitable for man only some 5000-7000 years ago. Buried beneath this mantle of clay and sand are valuable geological records linking up the Deccan with the Himalaya system. Its geological structure, composition and history therefore possess no great interest though, humanly speaking, it is of the greatest economic as well as historical importance. It has no mineral resources, but its agricultural wealth and fresh underground water stored in the more porous and coarser strata, accessible by ordinary wells and tube-wells, are the highest economic asset of India. Though devoid of records other than those of the yesterday of geological time, these alluvial plains are the stage of the main drama of Indian history since the Aryan occupation." — (D.N.WADIA, *The Vedic Age*, p. 82)

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"We have comparatively very scanty data on Early Man and his environment. Surface finds from the Punjab, Rajputana, Gujarat, Central India, Central Provinces, Karnatak, Mysore, South India, Bihar, Assam and Bengal testify to the widespread existence of man who fashioned rough stone implements mainly of quartzite. These were similar in shape and make to those known to be palaeolithic tools in Europe. . . . It would appear that practically every part of India except the great Indo-Gangetic plain has given traces of its hoary antiquity. But excepting a few areas, nowhere is the stratigraphical sequence of the Stone Age cultures worked out. Until this is made available, it would be hazardous to opine in what part of India Early Man originated, and what the exact relation is either in time or between the Stone Age cultures. . . . The accepted geological antiquity of, and the favourable climatic conditions on, the eastern coast of South India, and the reported finds from the pre-laterite Boulder Conglomerate at Vadamadurai would, however, give ground for a view that Early Man in India originated in South India, and migrated towards the Punjab at the close of the First Ice Age." — (H.D.SANKALIA, *The Vedic Age*, pp. 131-132)

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"When did man begin to inhabit South India ? The answer is suggested by the examination of fossil remains of fauna found along with primitive stone tools in the terraces of river valleys like the Godavari and the Narmada, and of mountain ranges like the Siwaliks. The antiquity of human life in these regions goes back about 500,000 years. . . ." — (K.NILAKANTA SASTRI, *A History of South India*, p. 50)

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Whether or not Early Man in India originated in the South, the drama of civilisation—as far as archaeology can tell us—begins in the North or rather the North-west. At Harappa in West Punjab and at Mohenjo-daro in

Lower Sind at about 2500 B.C. we find a fully developed civilisation, generally called the Harappa Culture or the Indus Valley Civilisation. It is connected at the same time with the cultural spirit that we know as Indian and with several characteristics of the cultural spirit of the ancient Near East.

What its relation is to the Rigveda cannot be said with certainty. Modern scholars usually put the Rigvedic hymns later than the end of this early civilisation : *circa* 1500 B.C. But some carry them to a time before its beginning and regard the Harappa Culture as a sort of derivative from the Rigvedic. Those who put the hymns earlier describe the Aryans as for all practical purposes native to North-western India : the others speak of an Aryan Invasion from abroad, in two waves respectively of about 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C. No specifically Aryan signs, like sacrificial implements, have been unearthed by archaeologists in the period after 1500 B.C., though a number of cultures with certain affinities to early Iranian culture have been found. But specifically Aryan signs have not been found in any pre-Harappan culture, either. Below Harappan sites has been found the culture which has been termed Amri. It is a culture linking up with parts of Baluchistan. And chronologically, beyond even Amri and related cultures, is the primitive one dug up at Kil-e-Gul-Mohammed in Baluchistan. The Carbon-14 test dates it to *c.* 3500 B.C.

What was the outstanding contribution of the Indus Valley Civilisation to the world's values ? Walter A. Fairservis Jr., one of the authorities on Antiquity, sums up very well this contribution, so far as external life and its organisation go, in comparison to what the Near East had to give : "it would seem that agriculture, animal husbandry, metallurgy, the potter's wheel, the wheeled vehicle, brickmaking, astronomy, mathematics, monumental building, concepts of morality, writing—all had their origin in the Near East. . . . We find the peoples of the Mediterranean world using cotton and fired brick, employing the elephant for war and labour, and using drains and reservoirs to maintain their cities. These appear to be Indian contributions to the development of civilization; they demonstrate that although the world owes its civilization's origin to the ancient Near East, the evolution of the phenomenon of civilization was not entirely one-sided." ("The Ancient East", *Natural History*, Nov. 1958, pp. 506, 512)

All this, of course, is true if the Indus Valley Civilisation and not the Rigvedic is the older. Once the latter is thought of as preceding the former we reach an antiquity even beyond that of the civilised Near East. As regards the theory that primitive Aryans broke in from foreign countries on an old Dravidian India, Sri Aurobindo writes : "But the indications in the Veda on which this theory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. There is no actual mention of any such invasion. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan on which so much has been built, seems on the mass of the evidence to indicate a cultural rather than a racial difference. . . . It is always possible that the bulk of the peoples now inhabiting India may have been the descendants of a new race from more northern latitudes, even perhaps, as argued by Mr. Tilak, from the Arctic regions; but there is nothing in the Veda, as there is nothing in the present ethnological features of the

country to prove that this descent took place near to the time of the Vedic hymns or was the slow penetration of a small body of fair-skinned barbarians into a civilised Dravidian peninsula." (*On the Veda*, pp.30-31)

From the character of the Rigvedic culture Sri Aurobindo draws some inferences about its background and antecedents: "The invariable fixity of Vedic thought when taken in conjunction with its depth, richness and subtlety, gives rise to some interesting speculations. For we may reasonably argue that such a fixed form and substance would not easily be possible in the beginnings of thought and psychological experience or even during their early progress and unfolding. We may therefore surmise that our actual Sanhita represents the close of a period, not its commencement, nor even some of its successive stages. It is even possible that its most ancient hymns are a comparatively modern development or version of a more ancient¹ lyric evangel couched in the freer and more pliable forms of a still earlier human speech. Or the whole voluminous mass of its litanies may be only a selection by Veda Vyasa out of a more richly vocal Aryan past. Made, according to the common belief, by Krishna of the Isle, the great traditional sage, the colossal compiler (Vyasa), with his face turned towards the commencement of the Iron Age,² towards the centuries of increasing twilight and final darkness, it is perhaps only the last testament of the Ages of Intuition, the luminous Dawns of the Forefathers, to their descendants, to a human race already turning in spirit towards the lower levels and the more easy and secure gains—secure perhaps only in appearance—of the physical life and of the intellect and the logical reason." (*Ibid.*, pp. 13-14)

If the Rigveda antedates the Harappa Culture, what may we legitimately surmise of it in terms of time? Much of it seems to have been composed in the Indo-Gangetic plain, on the banks of the Saraswati, though part of it points to the Punjab and perhaps even further west. But geologically we know that the greater portion of this plain has been habitable by man for only the last 7000 years or so at the utmost. Therefore, if the Harappa Culture started in its recognisable form in c. 2500 B.C. the Rigveda cannot go back from this date to beyond 5000 B.C. That is the farthest we can reach, on our data, into antiquity for 'the India we call immemorial'.

But it is far enough to make India responsible for most of the contributions to civilised life which now are ascribed to the Near East. Or at least we can think of simultaneous and perhaps even connected developments in these two parts of the ancient world. And, in matters of the deepest inner life, the remote antiquity of the Rigveda will undoubtedly prove India the first nourisher and uplifter of the world's soul. For nowhere in the old Near East is there anything to match or even approach the wide-winged light-drunk soar in the Rigveda of the human to the divine, the finite to the infinite.

K.D.S.

¹ "The Veda itself speaks constantly of 'ancient' and 'modern' Rishis (*pūrvah nūtanah*), the former remote enough to be regarded as a kind of demigods, the first founders of knowledge "

² The "Iron Age" here does not connote the time when the metal iron came into use. As the subsequent phrases indicate, it refers to the psychological stage designated by the traditional expression "Kali Yuga" (K D S)

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Prophet of Indian Nationalism (a Study of the Political Thought of Sri Aurobindo—1893-1910) by Karan Singh. Published by George Allen Unwin Ltd. Ruskin House, Museum Street, London. Price 25s. nett in U.K. only. Pp. 163.

We cordially welcome the book by the Governor of the State of Jammu and Kashmir as a sincere attempt at understanding the incalculable service that Sri Aurobindo has rendered to India in the cause of her political independence. Like all great political leaders whole-heartedly devoted to her interests, Sri Aurobindo did his utmost and sacrificed his all; unlike others, he did much through his powerful pen and infinitely through the silent eloquence of his rare personality. Sri Aurobindo's India is not a mere country but the Mother aspect of the Divine—Mother not only of the land that is India but of the entire world. Unlike others clouded by limited ideas of *Ahimsā*, Karan Singh makes bold to see truth in Sri Aurobindo's fiery revolutionary activities once his sublime views of our Motherland have been accepted. "India," the author affirms, "was indeed the Mother, but a mother in chains, a mother enslaved and humiliated by alien aggressors, a mother oppressed and starved by her foreign rulers. What is the duty of sons who find their mother, their goddess, reduced to this pitiable plight? If we accept Sri Aurobindo's premise, there is only one answer that he could and did give: they must strive by every possible means to liberate her from shackles. In this task there can be no compromise, there is no question of bartering or bargaining with the Mother's liberty. Full and complete emancipation can be the only demand. And in the struggle the children must be prepared willingly to sacrifice everything in the service of the Mother, for is it not from her that everything they have is derived?"

The Prime Minister, Nehru's *Foreword* to the book is a genuine and warm confirmation of its contents adding his personal reminiscences of Sri Aurobindo's influence over his youth during his student days in England. The world can no longer remain in the dark as regards a most significant event in the political development of India. Here is a bare fact, nay, a dynamic statement by the Premier:

"The great anti-partition movement in Bengal gained much of its philosophy from him (Sri Aurobindo) and, undoubtedly, prepared the day for the great movements led by Mahatma Gandhi."

The present-day-generation is quite aware of the fact that Sri Aurobindo deeply felt for the revival of true Indian culture, so much so that he considered it to be a pre-requisite for India's true political freedom. To hasten that revival he left no stone unturned. Just in one deeply penetrating sentence Karan Singh brings to the fore the inner significance of Sri Aurobindo's march across the political field:

“As spiritualism was the keynote of Sri Aurobindo’s approach to political thought and action, the regeneration that he aspired towards was no mere growth of national chauvinism but a deep spiritual rebirth.”

There are many who fondly cherish an absolutely wrong belief that he left politics for good ‘due to frustration and fear of re-arrest’. This is far from the truth. To quote Sri Aurobindo himself :

“ . . . I suddenly received a command from above, in a Voice well-known to me, in three words, ‘Go to Chandernagore’.” “(This) first-hand account of the matter,” the author asserts, “must be accepted as authoritative, despite the conflicting versions put forward by many of his detractors. Indeed it was in clarification to such versions that he made his statement.”

A small slip in accuracy may be noticed in Chapter 5, p. 64. The *Yugantar*, started on March 12, 1906, by Sri Aurobindo’s younger brother Barindra Kumar Ghosh, was a weekly in Bengali—not in English, as the author states.

We hope the book will stimulate further studies of Sri Aurobindo on the part of the rising generation. The more our young men turn to his thought, the more treasures of wisdom they will gain from their labours, be their study in Sri Aurobindo’s political aspect or in his spiritual.

C.K.

WORLD UNION IN THE MOTHER'S WORLD WORK

SRI Aurobindo, in the penultimate chapter of *The Human Cycle*, written after the First World War, foresaw "the coming of the Spiritual Age." Now, in the aftermath of another world conflict, we can see several of the signs, which the Master foretold, being fulfilled. At the threshold of the New Age, we may note carefully the two conditions which, he declares, must be "simultaneously satisfied."

The first condition is the yogic preparation of individuals. The second is the preparation of the "common human mind" and heart. The first naturally is the chief concern of all disciples. But the second is also an important sphere of work for those who feel the call for it. It is this sphere that is taken up by World Union. In the last interview the Mother accorded World Union's General Secretary in November, 1961, she twice used the phrase "the preparation of the world," with reference to World Union's work.

To be sure, this movement is but one of many which are preparing the world for the coming in fullness of the Spiritual Age. The Mother has said to us, "I am working in all movements." Yet, just as it is essential that we consciously co-operate in our further evolution as *individuals*, is it not also important that some of us consciously co-operate in the *collective* progression ?

Sri Aurobindo stresses the difficulty of the task of world preparation. He says that the two conditions that must be simultaneously satisfied "are most difficult to bring together". He adds: "...it is the unpreparedness, the unfitness of the society or of the common mind of man which is always the chief stumbling block." As we read on, and find Sri Aurobindo picturing the signs of the Spiritual Age, we cannot miss having a deep sense of the fullness of time having now drawn near. Indeed, the Mother has told us concerning the role of World Union in today's world, "Now is the time most propitious for the endeavour. For a new Force or Consciousness or Light—whatever you call the new element—has manifested into the world, and the world has now the capacity to become conscious of its unity."

Concerning the World Union phase of Her work in the world, She has told us, "I have been looking deeply into World Union and this is what I see as your task: To say to people everywhere, 'The world is one. (This is a fact.) Let us become conscious of it, and live up to this unity.'" She added, "World Union's work is a wide one, spreading the awakening by every means and educating its members."

That World Union work is not to be lightly undertaken is shown by what the Mother has told us concerning what is required of us for effective service in this movement: "Old methods cannot do for this new work. Not only a new consciousness must be firmly established but also a new process must be found before anything truly effective can be done." Further She has said, "Your

way of work must be deeper than mental. Discussion will kill any idea, however divinely born. Treat ideas like flowers on the way; don't cling to them. Yours is a work of eternity. Victory is in the hands of the Lord."

Whether it is our President's faithful witness, among his contacts in New Delhi and elsewhere, to the great new hope which his Master has opened for mankind; or our Vice-President's high adventure in presenting the same to President Kennedy and others during his intensive work for India's and the world's cause a few months ago in Washington and Moscow; or our other Vice-President's witness by correspondence with old friends in East Africa or new friends in Australia or Germany; or the General Secretary's commending to a large association of non-governmental organisations in London, through a strategically situated co-worker there, the proposal for the International Co-operation Year set forth in point 6 of our manifesto below; or another worker in this movement ardently and skilfully convincing his old friends in a kindred movement that their cause can find new life and fulfilment within the larger, unitive World Union stream; or our Assistant General Secretary's arranging Puraniji's tour of thirty lectures in West Germany; or yet another worker's stimulating the formation of a university study group on "The Ideal of Human Unity"—we aspire to be faithful, in a quiet, vigilantly non-sectarian way, to the Mother's commission to "spread the Awakening by every means".

Deeply grateful for the Mother's Guidance during the five years of our experimental evolution thus far, we have been led recently to sum up what World Union now stands for before the world :

A WORLD UNION MANIFESTO

World Union exists to serve the Great Awakening. That the Awakening has already begun is evident.

It will mark an end to the domination of materialism, usher in the Spiritual Age, and turn mankind from threatening disaster to its true destiny.

There are seven elements of this Awakening which form World Union's manifesto. We offer them in the form of a friendly challenge to all men everywhere.

LET US AWAKE !

1. Let us become aware of *the basic reality of life*, the fact that, as attested by both the spiritual giants and the scientists, Life is One. The unity that must undergird an era of peace and progress is, in reality, *already* here. We have not to create it but *wake up to it*.

2. Let us awake to *a truth which is of the utmost urgency for this age* : the fulfilment of the ideal of human unity in a perfected society—the modern humanitarian ideal of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—is possible only through spiritual awakening and development which eventually (1) creates an unshakable consciousness of Oneness; (2) dissolves egoism, individual and

collective; (3) endows with an extraordinary wisdom; and (4) canalizes a new power of action, both positive and preventive. *There is no other solution to the world problem.* Of this we are certain, and we must foster the awakening to this truth by every means.

3. Let us become aware of *the most promising approach to world peace* : There is a great new hope for the resolution of the world conflict in the Science-and-Spirituality-approach to peace and progress for all mankind. For the people of both rival blocs, and all of us in between, here is a master-solvent, a common denominator of creative potency. In fact, far beyond its peace-making potentialities, the Science-and-Spirituality approach to life as a whole is very creative, as we have indicated in our brochures on this theme.

4. Let us awake to *the grand secret*—the fact that each of us can answer the two all-important questions that Life thrusts before us with *one sovereign answer* : (1) The question : “How can I, *as an individual*, find the utmost self-fulfilment; how can I develop to the full all the latent possibilities within me ?” (2) The question : “How can I, *as a world-citizen*, become a force for peace and progress ?” *The sovereign answer* is this : Because of the spiritual basis of Life, it is precisely by the pursuit of self-knowledge and self-development in an integral way that I can prepare to become a force for peace and progress.

5. Let us awake to *the crowning truth* that the three perennial problems of the human dilemma—the problem of egoism, individual and collective; the problem of wisdom *vs.* mere intellectual knowledge; the problem of power—can be solved only by the spiritual development which will crown the long process of our human evolution. As we are challenged to co-operate consciously in our further evolution as *individuals*, so let us also pursue consciously our further *collective* evolution.

6. Let us come alive to *a mighty resource*, largely untapped, a vast potential for peace and progress, in the world's thousands of non-governmental organisations, with their tens of millions of members, who can set an example of unity and co-operation in projects for the realisation of their common ideals. World Union proposes that all such societies of humanitarian purpose unite in a grand world-wide co-operative endeavour during 1965, designated by the United Nations as the International Co-operation Year, in fostering the creative collaboration of Science and Spirituality. Each co-operating society would be expected to encourage its members to try to make up the world's dangerous deficit on the side of *spiritual* development—as compared with our *scientific* development—by each one's concentrating during '65 on his own inner development—a world-wide mobilisation of spiritual resources.

7. Let us become aware of *the natural and happy goal of the world's political evolution*, a world union of free peoples, not only co-existing, trusting the forces of peaceful evolution to effect necessary changes in society, but also seeking maximum progress through an ideal balance of spiritual and scientific development.

It is these seven elements of the Great Awakening for which the World Union movement stands. *Are these objectives not worthy of our utmost united endeavour?*

World Union is *everybody's movement*, i.e. a movement in which all who share such ideals as brotherhood, equality, freedom can find help towards self-fulfilment and towards the fulfilment of the gigantic world-task which confronts every individual and every society in the world family in this supreme crisis.

The question before each of us is: Will I offer myself for the Great Awakening in this Hour of Destiny? World Union is ready to try to be helpful to you in your answering that fateful question.

The elements of the above Manifesto have not been concocted; they have grown as we have grown, integrally developed under the Mother's Blessing and Guidance. Thus World Union workers are endeavouring to canalise to the world family something of the Master and the Mother's invincible vision of a new Divine Order on earth. If the distinctive mark of the Integral Yoga, the avataric mission, of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is its goal of nothing less than a transformed humanity, a kingdom of God on earth, should the work of World Union not be the prayerful concern of every disciple, whatever may be his own sense of call as to his form of service to the Divine?

The Hour of God, which the Mother has seen at this year's beginning as confronting all of us, has raised questions about the various possibilities as to the fate of mankind. It has been surmised that the whole of the present humanity "will not and even cannot make the right endeavour needed to answer the urgent call of the hour". We have been told that Sri Aurobindo says, "The answer might, indeed, be only individual." And we are left with the assurance that a few "exceptionally developed individuals, who can effectively answer the call of the present hour and on whom therefore the successful issue of the momentous world-crisis rests, exist on earth at the present moment."

But let us mark well that, in portraying the Life Divine, Sri Aurobindo was not content to stop with the above statement of "the answer", as his use of the verb "might", instead of "may", suggests. He goes on, in the remaining pages of his *magnum opus* to picture the Divine Life *on earth* in terms of "a new consciousness in which *humanity itself*¹ shall find its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment by the revelation of the divinity that is striving for birth *within it*. This is the sole true supermanhood and the one real possibility of a step forward in evolutionary Nature." The self's return to itself *via* evolving Nature would be, he says, "not through a frustration of life but through a spiritual completeness of itself in life."

Sri Aurobindo has looked all the difficulties full in the face, and yet has been unshaken in his Vision of the divine triumph on earth ultimately in a transformed humanity. He says, in *The Human Cycle*, "It is the readiness of this common mind which is of the first importance; for even if the condition of society

¹ All Italics ours—J.H.S.

and the principle and rule that govern society are opposed to the spiritual change, even if these belong almost wholly to the vital, to the external, the economic, the mechanical order, as is certainly the way at present with human masses, yet if the common human mind has begun to admit the ideas proper to the higher order that is in the end to be and the heart of man has begun to be stirred by aspirations born of these ideas, then there is a hope of some advance in the not distant future."

In these days of our preparation for that Hour of Destiny, it will help us much if we ponder the whole of the Mother's prayer of September 5, 1914, which ends, "In an infinite love for the world, let us fight." Let us, indeed, "Prepare for the Hour of God"; not only prepare ourselves but help—all of us by our spiritual growth and some of us by our external service as well—to "prepare the world," as She, the World's Mother, has bidden us.

The Mother's "Let Us Prepare for the Hour of God" is indeed a Call, a Call which, in Her infinite compassion, She addresses surely not only to a few select individuals but to the human family. Therefore, while we must take most seriously the Mother's statement that "It will be settled in 1967," let us not ourselves settle for the final vision. Dare we abandon the "third dream" of Sri Aurobindo? Rather, shall we not aspire to match the all-daring vision of the Master and the Mother with a faithfulness born of their Grace? And the Mother's continued gracious guidance of World Union workers in these fateful days implies that one may "prepare for the Hour of God" while feeling the steady inner urge to offer oneself for the work of "the preparation of the world"—Her world.

JAY HOLMES SMITH

Students' Section

THE DESCENT OF THE BLUE

ACT 9

SCENE I

(Motilal Roy's residence. Aurobindo is in meditation in a small ill-lit room. Time : early in the morning. Suddenly there appears before him his familiar Figure of Vasudeva.)

VASUDEVA : I am glad that you have come over here as I wished. It is high time you plunged deeper into Yoga. You will feel more and more that it is I who am doing Yoga within you. Now I want that nothing may stand in your way. Hence my chosen place for you is Pondicherry, South India. There your concentrated Tapasya will hasten the descent of a force which will facilitate the descent of a far higher Force to consummate your work.

*(The Figure disappears.
Enter Motilal Roy.)*

AUROBINDO : Pondicherry, Pondicherry.

MOTILAL : How do you mean ?

AUROBINDO : I am to start for Pondicherry. The sooner, the better.

MOTILAL *(taken aback)* : But why ? Anything wrong ?

AUROBINDO : Nothing of the sort. I have just got an *adesh*—a higher command to move straight to Pondicherry.

MOTILAL : *Adesh* ! Then let me make the necessary arrangements.

SCENE 2

(The steamer leaves Calcutta in the small hours of the morning of April 1, 1910. Bijoy and Aurobindo.)

BIJOY : Now you are Jyotindranath Mitter, and I am Benkim Chandra Basak. Are we justified in passing ourselves off as other than we are ?

AUROBINDO : No, not in the eyes of a puritan.

BIJOY : I am the last fellow to go in for puritanism. But why, of all places, Pondicherry ?

AUROBINDO : It is His choice.

BIJOY : For how long will you be there ?
 AUROBINDO : As long as He wills.
 BIJOY : What will be your plan of work there ?
 AUROBINDO : I will follow whatever plan He reveals to me.
 BIJOY : I am afraid your work will be much more inward than now.
 AUROBINDO : I feel so.
 BIJOY : Then we have no place there.
 AUROBINDO : How ? My work will be for all, for all the world.
 BIJOY : The purpose ?
 AUROBINDO : Supreme transformation of the world.
 BIJOY : Of what nature ?
 AUROBINDO : Ascent of man into the Spirit, descent of the Spirit into man.

SCENE 3

(31st March, 1910. Srinivasachari's house, Pondicherry. Srinivasachari with his friend, Subramanyam. Moni arrives from Calcutta. He presents an introductory note (2 x 2 inches) to Srinivasachari from Aurobindo.)

SRINIVASACHARI (*reading the note most carefully*) : My dear friend, I find it difficult to believe you. Aurobindo Ghosh has chosen Pondicherry for his stay !

SUBRAMANIYAM : Unbelievable, impossible.

MONI : I am shocked to see that you do not take this not to be genuine. It is in Aurobindo's own handwriting.

SRINIVASACHARI : Can anybody imagine that such a great national figure will come over to Pondicherry, a French pocket ?

MONI : I give you my word of honour. If I am telling a lie, you may do anything with my life.

SRINIVASACHARI : You want simply a house for him ?

MONI : Yes.

SRINIVASACHARI : Nothing further ?

MONI : For the present, no.

SRINIVASACHARI : Then I too give you my word of honour that as soon as he arrives here I will arrange for him a house.

SUBRAMANIYAM : That's a fine idea.

MONI (*turning towards Srinivasachari*) : Well, Sir, I think it would be better if you kept it ready for him beforehand.

SRINIVASACHARI : When is he coming ?

MONI : On April 4.

SUBRAMANIYAM : If not ?

MONI : If not, you may do with me anything you like.

SRINIVASACHARI : The time is so short. I am thinking of giving him a public reception.

MONI : I beg your pardon. He is coming over here *incognito*.

SRINIVASACHARI : Where have you put up ?

MONI : I am coming straight to you from the station. I don't know where to put up.

SRINIVASACHARI : Well, you will be in my house. (*He takes Moni into an adjacent room, and returns to his friend, Subramaniam.*)

SUBRAMANIYAM : He may be a spy.

SRINIVASACHARI : I don't think so.

SUBRAMANIYAM : Anyhow, it is better to be on one's guard.

SRINIVASACHARI : I shall be on the alert. But I must find a suitable house for Aurobindo Ghosh. Pondicherry will be blessed by his presence, be it long or short. But in this petty town can I find an accommodation to his liking ?

SUBRAMANIYAM : You may have a talk with Shanker Chetty. His house is three-storeyed. He can easily spare the needed accommodation.

SRINIVASACHARI : It is a good suggestion. I will at once act on it.

SCENE 4

(*April 4, 1910. The 'Dupleix' touches at Pondicherry. Moni and Srinivasachari are moving in a boat swaying from side to side towards the steamer amid high waves. Their eyes scan the places on the upper deck.*)

MONI (*pointing to two figures*) : Oh, there, there !

SRINIVASACHARI : Oh, yes, thank God. (*His face is lit up.*) I will take Aurobindo Babu to his appointed place. You come later with your friend and with the luggage. I shall give the coolie the necessary instructions.

BIJOY (*on the upper deck, pointing his finger towards Moni as the boat comes still 'nearer'*) : There he is! Moni is coming with a friend. Is he your friend ?

AUROBINDO : Yes. Moni has done the job.

(*Time : 5 p.m. Tea is served in Aurobindo's cabin. Aurobindo and Bijoy come down to the lower deck, receive Srinivasachari and Moni and take them to the tea-table.*)

SRINIVASACHARI : I am sorry I suspected your emissary. I have instructed him to come a little later with your companion and your luggage. You and I will move away in a *pousse-pousse*¹ waiting for us.

AUROBINDO : First have a cup of tea before we land.

SRINIVASACHARI : Thanks, Aurobindo Babu, thanks. The fish-looking biscuits play upon my nerves.

AUROBINDO : Biscuits are biscuits. No real fish. What objection then ?

SRINIVASACHARI : My conscience would prick me all the same.

¹ "Push-push" : a three-wheeled vehicle pushed from behind by the rickshawalla and directed by the passenger himself with the help of a rod attached to the small front-wheel.

(Moni and Bijoy, amused, exchange glances, and smile. Then they both empty the dishes.)

SRINIVASACHARI : My heart is too full of joy at your arrival to speak anything. One of my friends has suggested to me that Shanker Chetty's house would suit you best. So I have taken a part of it for your use. Come along with me to the shore. We have first to board a catamaran.

SCENE 5

(Shanker Chetty's house. Some months later. Aurobindo in a room on the top floor. Moni and Bijoy.)

MONI : You have fasted for the last 23 days. When are you going to stop it ?

AUROBINDO *(with a smile)* : Today.

MONI : Today ! What shall we prepare for you ?

AUROBINDO : Nothing special. Normal food.

BIJOY : All your ways are strange. How was it possible for you to carry on your eight-hour walk, your literary activity and meditation, every day with no omission of any item during such a long fast ? May I know ? And now instead of starting with bits of fruit and suchlike things you'll take a full normal meal !

AUROBINDO : Do Yoga, and you will understand. You are aware that in the Alipore Jail I fasted for ten days. I was then in the thick of Yogic practices. No doubt, I began losing weight. But I could easily lift above my head a big pail of water, which I could not do before.

MONI : Is it ever possible to prolong life without food ?

AUROBINDO : Certainly.

MONI : But how ?

AUROBINDO : By drawing energy from the Vital Plane instead of depending on the physical elements and nourishment.

MONI : I shall try it. Bijoy, do you want to follow me ?

BIJOY : Most gladly, and by all means. But first you come out successful. After all, life is very precious.

MONI : Not for nothing did Rabindranath sing, "Ekla Chalo Re" ("Walk your way alone").

BIJOY : But not for long are you to walk alone. I shall dog you the moment I see a particle of success in your risky adventure.

AUROBINDO *(with a smile)* : Moni, it seems you are putting the cart before the horse.

(Bijoy bursts into a roar of laughter. Moni looks crestfallen.)

SCENE 6

(*Shanker Chetty's house. K. V. Rangaswamy Iyengar, the zamindar of Kodailam, comes to meet Aurobindo.*)

K. V. IYENGAR (*bowing down*): I have come to place myself at your feet.

AUROBINDO: How do you mean?

K. V. IYENGAR: My Guru while leaving us for his heavenly abode advised me to take spiritual help from you.

AUROBINDO: Me! How could he know of me?

K. V. IYENGAR: His words have come literally true.

AUROBINDO: How?

K. V. IYENGAR: He said to me that a Purnayogi from the North would be coming to the South seeking refuge. Now that you are no more in the vortex of the country's politics and have come here for a life of seclusion, I am sure you are that very Purnayogi.

AUROBINDO (*giving a smile*): Is it so?

K. V. IYENGAR: I will come to you again with whatever help I can afford for your service. Pray give me your blessings. (*Bowing down he looks up at Aurobindo's face.*)

AUROBINDO: My blessings are already with you.

SCENE 7

(*Subramanya Bharati, the greatest poet of Tamil Nad, visibly excited sweeps into Aurobindo's room.*)

AUROBINDO: Why so excited?

BHARATI: There is a grave reason for it. The British Government have conspired with the French Administration to have us, the political refugees, moved out of Pondicherry.

AUROBINDO: Well?

BHARATI: We must escape. Immediately or as soon as possible.

AUROBINDO: Where?

BHARATI: To any of the three places—Jibuti, Indo-China or Tripoli.

AUROBINDO: "Mr. Bharati, I am not going to budge an inch from Pondicherry. I know nothing will happen to me. As for yourself you can do what you like."

BHARATI: Your stand bewilders me. No, it inspires me. I will follow you, irrespective of what others may do.

AUROBINDO: Rest assured, nothing will happen to us.

BHARATI: I truly feel that not only Pondicherry is hallowed by the touch of your feet, but the whole of South India. No mere sentiment, this.

SCENE 8

(Aurobindo's house. 41, Rue François Martin. Time : evening. Aurobindo and his associates.)

(Enter Biren, Aurobindo's cook.)

BIREN *(addressing Aurobindo)* : I have been here in your service for six months. Now I long to go home. But before that I must disclose my identity. I was employed by the Bengal Intelligence Department to keep watch over you and send reports on your movements. I mean you and your associates. To my extreme amazement, I have always received the kindest possible treatment at your hands. None of you have felt the least bit of suspicion about me except, I fear, Moni Babu, and that too very recently.

MONI : How do you think so ?

BIREN : You always dress well and look smart. But you chose to shave your head the very day I shaved mine.

MONI : How does that prove I suspect you ?

BIREN : I have shaved my head of set purpose, to get identified by the secret police here, and you have shaved to foil my purpose and puzzle them. Anyway, that is immaterial. I now want to take leave of you. But before I do so, I must make a clean breast of what I was here for.

MONI : Can you satisfy us that you are a B.I. spy ?

BIREN : What more proof can I give than an offering to you, my master, of all my savings from the Government pay ?

(He brings out of his pocket a sum of Rs. 50 and places it at the feet of Aurobindo. Tears run down his cheeks.)

Sir, you have been all kindness to me. Be more kind to me and forgive me my gravest misdeed. *(In a choked voice)* If you do not, my life-long remorse will be my life-long death. *(In a trembling voice)* You, Sir, . . .

AUROBINDO *(compassionately)* : I wish you well. We will forget all this. Love your country. Live a better life.

CHINMOY

(To be continued)

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY

JOHN Fitzgerald Kennedy, President of America, Prince of high idealism, Freedom incarnate, Helper of humanity.

The Inaugural Address of Kennedy on January 20, 1961 is eloquent evidence that the mantric utterance is no longer India's monopoly. Sentiments there are in that soul-stirring Address that are as deep as the Atlantic in their outlook, the ideals as high as the Himalayas and the resolutions as powerful as Atomic Power.

"...my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

This ringing call for self-giving to the Motherland is a reminiscent echo of the Seer-Voice of India's soul—Sri Aurobindo—speaking to her young hopefuls more than half a century ago :

"There are times in a nation's history when Providence places before it one work, one aim, to which everything else, however high and noble in itself, has to be sacrificed. Such a time has now arrived for our Motherland when nothing is dearer than her service, when everything else has to be directed to that end. . . . Train yourself body and mind and soul for her service. . . . Work that she may prosper. Suffer that she may rejoice."

The President does not stop with his fellow Americans. From his head and heart go forth an all-embracing call to all mankind :

"My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man."

Nature seems to have bestowed half of her material power on America and half on Russia. How the Leader of America can take the lead in bringing the world out of its orbit of Cold War into a noble scheme of One World and One Law can be seen in the following almost prophetic utterance :

"Today this country is ahead in the science and technology of space, while the Soviet Union is ahead in the capacity to lift large vehicles into orbit. Both nations would help themselves as well as other nations by removing these endeavours from the bitter and wasteful competition of Cold War. The United States would be willing to join with the Soviet Union and the scientists of all nations in a greater effort to make the fruits of this new knowledge available to all, and, beyond that, in an effort to extend farm technology to hungry nations, to wipe out disease, to increase the exchange of scientists and their knowledge, and to make our own laboratories available to technicians of other lands who lack the facilities to pursue their own work. Where nature makes natural allies of us all, we can demonstrate that beneficial relations are possible even with those with whom we most deeply disagree, and this must some day be the basis of world peace and world law."

Hope is strength. Hope is progress. When the Sun of hope is eclipsed, the

inevitable fear of bondage looms large. Kennedy, with his breadth of outlook and depth of insight, can help immensely to restore this hope to man.

"The hopes of all mankind rest upon us; not simply upon those of us in this chamber, but upon the peasant in Laos, the fisherman in Nigeria, the exile from Cuba, the spirit that moves every man and nation who shares our hopes for freedom and the future."

If America wants to be friends with all the world, who or what can be her enemy? Says her mouthpiece President Kennedy:

"We are not against any man, or any nation, or any system, except as it is hostile to freedom."

It seems that in Kennedy's dictionary two words are complementary, enriching and fulfilling the sense of each other and constituting together the master formula of the language: Freedom, Peace.

"We will make clear that America's enduring concern is for both peace *and* freedom; that we are anxious to live in harmony with the Russian people; that we seek no conquests, no satellites, no riches; that we seek only the day when 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'"

We may well recollect the momentous words of one of his illustrious predecessors, the 3rd President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Neither are we to forget the immortal utterance of their 16th President, Abraham Lincoln:

"Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere."

True, poverty and ignorance are man's bitter foes. Just to replace poverty by affluence, and ignorance by knowledge, is not enough. Material success is not all. The quest of the spirit is of vital importance.

"For the first time," says Kennedy, "we have the capacity to strike off the remaining bonds of poverty and ignorance, to free our people for the spiritual and intellectual fulfilment which has always been the goal of our civilization."

President Kennedy is, as it were, the lineal descendant of the American nation's traditional leadership. As George Washington is the Father of the United States, as Abraham Lincoln is its Saviour, as Franklin D. Roosevelt is the Voice of America, even so John Kennedy is the Noble Defender of World Freedom and World Peace.

'Defender of World Freedom and World Peace' is certainly a great and responsible role. But is that enough for a man of Kennedy's calibre? Who knows that in 'the Hour of God' that has set in, a man of high capacity and of unquestioned good-will for all, a man of a synthetic cast of mind, of faith and trust in God's omnipotence, a man seeming to have already caught an image of the One World to be—who knows that he will not prove a Man of Destiny and launch

a world-scale offensive for 'the Hour of God' upon his own country as well as upon the rest of the world and help establish over this dark miserable world a New World Empire of Peace and Power, Truth and Knowledge, Health and Happiness, a world one with its Creator ? It is not suggested that Kennedy, the mere man, has that superhuman power. The world must not forget that, despite the extremely poor resources at his disposal, Churchill could successfully stem the Hitlerian tide upon England and become the instrument of a Higher Power, simply by his faith and determination. Who knows that, like Arjuna in the Battle of Kurukshetra, like Churchill in the Second World War, Kennedy will not be an instrument of God's conquest of His own world for Himself ? Not for nothing perhaps has this young soul been called to the great Chair of the new world.

By sympathy and understanding he has won a high place in the heart of India. Her circumstances have now conspired to bring him nearer to her soul. The gulf between Matter and Spirit is going to close. The two Poles will meet.

MADAL

THE POETRY OF T. S. ELIOT

(Lecture Notes)

INTRODUCTION (*continued*)

To go back to the earlier poetry—apart from the imagery and Laforguian allusions we should perhaps take into account the influence of the Bergsonian philosophy which also, to some extent, breaks through in the “Four Quartets”. For instance, in the “Rhapsody on a Windy Night”—when the moon hypnotises the deserted street, in pure Laforguian imagery—the dissolution of orderly thought into the irrational, one might say a surrealist string of discontinuous mental impressions, obeys the laws of instinctive consciousness according to Bergson, letting images pour into *memory*, the receptacle of Time—a process which works by free association rather than by logic. All this gives the whole a dream-like effect.

The “Rhapsody” has for speaker a man experiencing a ‘vision of the street’: he soliloquizes in response to visual images. His is the consciousness corresponding to that of the woman of the “Preludes”.

The “Rhapsody” has for its structure five strophes, divided into a clock-time sequence (or, as Bergson would say, a ‘spatial structure’), which announces the hours—“Twelve o’clock”, “Half past one”, etc. This structure is spatial as the times synchronise with the speaker’s pauses at street lamps. But these images, seen in the light of each lamp, pass into his memory to make up there *subjective time* where space is non-existent.

If “he” is to come near to knowing himself, he has to pursue these images of his memory in relation to his own conscious deeds—the dead geranium, the pin, the twisted driftwood, the rusty spring, the paper rose, the mechanical toy, the reek of airless places—all depressing images that besiege the speaker’s memory, and that he cannot evade. From this then he comes to the realisation that it is the memory of all these images which is (apparently) the sum total of his mind and therefore constitutes (Oh unhappy thought) the sum total of his consciousness. Is this consciousness then shut in as in ‘the solitary room’? So it is that the *pity*,’ diverted in the Fourth Prelude to the slums and their creatures—

‘I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hands across your mouth and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.'—

comes back to the poet, or the mask—*persona*—through which he speaks, in the shape of terror for his own trapped human situation, and the knowledge pierces him with a

'last twist of the knife.'

We need not read too much Bergsonian philosophy into the two poems, the "Preludes" and the "Rhapsody", but this should serve to show how thoroughly Eliot considered the problem of relating consciousness to externalities.

We could say that the dramatic organisation and its attendant imagery of Eliot's poetry was strongly influenced by Laforgue and the Symbolists of the early twentieth century and the psychology probably arose from a close study of Henry James with the philosophical background of Bergson.

"La Figlia Che Piange" : O quam te memorem virgo¹
(*"Young Girl Weeping"*)

The key to this poem is—the doubling of the poet's personality. There is *the girl—the lover—the poet*. Here, the so called lover is the poet himself. Thus he bids her :

'Stand on the highest pavement of the stair—
Lean on a garden urn—
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair'

and then declares in explicit terms :

'So I would have had him leave,
So I would have had her stand and grieve.'

This much-praised poem is among the best of the shorter pieces. The influences bearing upon it were various : Rossetti's "The Blessed Damosel" and probably some of the characteristic imagery from Tennyson's "Maud".

It was, of course, from Laforgue that Eliot drew the trick of doubling, as also perhaps the apologetic irony at the close.

Eliot's work certainly shows his disgust for the futilities of urban life, the clutter of drawing-room paraphernalia and dustbin 'necessities'—and scorn for the pretty-pretty. So he threw these images side by side with contrasted abstract suggestions and philosophic thought-sequences.

¹ "Maiden, by what name shall I know you ?" (Phrase from Aeneas to Venus).

For three years, after 1911, Eliot wrote almost no poetry. There is, for critical purposes, a gap from "La Figlia Che Piange" to the poems of 1915. After completing his graduate studies at Harvard and going abroad for the second time, he began to investigate new techniques of composition under the stimulus of Ezra Pound. Having passed the summer in Germany, he travelled from Margburg to London on the declaration of War in 1914. Hethen went to Oxford (Merton College).

Eliot did not need Pound to teach him satire; his studied ironies were evidently aimed at particular people, those such as: "Aunt Helen" "Cousin Nancy" and "Mr. Apollinax". "Mr. Apollinax" is aimed at Bertrand Russell under whom he had studied at Harvard in the Spring of 1914. The technique of this poem is exaggerative contrast of a mythical figure (Priapus, the old man of the sea, or a faun, or a galloping centaur) with the modern one. The juxtaposition of flesh and sentiment is reminiscent of Prufrock's debate between action and suffering.

In "Gerontion"¹ 1919, an old man's lost power to love and his lost hope of spiritual rebirth create a symbol of physical sterility and psychological paralysis. This monologue, like "Prufrock" employs the allusion-technique already used in "Burbank" (which, according to Professor Grover Smith of Chicago University, fulfils Eliot's idea of the historical sense in poetry). To make the past seem present, because the memory of it exists in the educated consciousness, and at the same time to exercise an awareness of present-day imagery—these are the intentions in "Gerontion". In writing this poem Eliot drew upon Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists,² whose iambic pentameter variations influenced his own verse just as the past influenced his contemporary subject-matter, where a 'stream-of-consciousness' technique—the association of ideas—and the device of rumination are used.

It has been suggested, by some critics, that Eliot's "Gerontion" was perhaps written in response to James Joyce's "Ulysses" (a work supposed by some intellectuals to be a modern classic, in which frankness of language spares the reader neither the sordid nor the indecent in its realism). But unless Eliot saw an early manuscript of "Ulysses" long before it was released for publication it is most doubtful, as "Gerontion" was written in 1919 and published in 1920, while Joyce's book was published in Paris in 1922. The only correspondance to be found in the two works may be that in "Ulysses" there is the suggestion, through the meaning, that history endures.

In a sense the old man of "Gerontion" is history itself, just as the 'decayed house' in which he sits is himself waiting to die.

What are contrasted in the poem are the secular history of Europe, which the life of Gerontion parallels, and the unregarded promise of salvation through Christ.

¹ Cf *Géronte*, in Molière's comedies, the typical old man whose absurdities are held up to ridicule. *i.e.* "Le Médecin Malgré lui"—also cf John Henry Newman's poem (1801-90) "The Dream of Gerontius".

² *Tourneur, Chapman, Middleton, Shakespeare, Johnson.*

Gerontion symbolises *civilization gone rotten*.

The mysterious foreign figures which arise shadow-like in his thoughts—Mr. Silvero, Hakagawa, Madam de Tornquist and Fraulein von Kulp¹—are the inheritors of Desolation.

The images of 1) "Depraved May" and 2) 'The tiger springs in the new year' are symbols of 1) Divine wrath and the power of inner life;

2) The springs of sex which murder and create.

'Depraved May' is the season of denial or crucifixion—the passion of the Cross; the poison tree, the wrath-bearing tree, is both the yew tree of the crucifixion and the death-tree of the hanged traitor—Christ and Isacraiot—redemption and the universal fall.

"The Ariel Poems": They are picture-images remembered in childhood that pass through the consciousness like a stream of significant symbols hunting at the real meaning of life, its Truth and Purpose. So one might look at these poems which Eliot has chosen to call "the Ariel Poems". It seems that Eliot here again expresses himself through four apparently differing 'moods', which yet have on closer study some connecting link of association.

It would not be perhaps too much to suppose that in these four poems Eliot is still seeking the right mould to express his central afflatus which is to emerge in the greater composition of "The Four Quartets."

"The Journey of the Magi" opens with a realistic image of what might easily have taken place towards the end of that most illustrious journey of Christian tradition. The Magi came from the East—by way of Isfahan and Bagdad, through the mountains to the west of Jordan, down into the valley north of Jericho—till they 'came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel'. But this was 'a long time ago'—in another life perhaps? And did they attend a Birth or a Death? Was it the Birth of a new consciousness or the Death of an old regime? And does this not remind us of what came much later—the Crucifixion? Was that not a Death sown in the Night of our Ignorance that a New Light might have Birth?

"A Song for Simeon": is this not a 'song' addressed to the Jews, sung to the memory of the son of Jacob and to the second of the tribes of Israel—they who were betrayed to the Romans, 'the Roman hyacinths' symbolic of the 'spring', the early part of the Roman occupation at a time when 'The winter sun creeps by the snow hills' around Jordan?

"Not for me the martyrdom, the ecstasy of thought and the prayer"—this refers to the Jews, who will not get back their heritage until they return to the land of their fathers, the land of Israel. And the last two lines:

'Let thy servant depart
Having seen thy salvation.'

echo Luke ii.29: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

¹ Representatives of Teutonic and Franco-Latin Europe and Japan.

“Animula” : The key to this poem lies in the significance of two lines—the first :

‘Issues from the hand of God the simple soul’

and the second :

‘Issues from the hand of time the simple soul’—

intimating that one can come to that state of consciousness—‘the pure in heart’—the simple soul—by one of two ways : by the hand of God, by implicit trust in the Divine, which is the ‘Sun-lit Path’ to realisation, or by the long and arduous process of time and experience. One can live one’s life according to the simple pleasures of child-like wonder—

‘Fragrant brilliance of the Christmas tree,’

and Nature—

‘in the wind, the sunlight and the sea’;

or according to, say, ‘Guitierrez, avid for speed and power’, which is the symbol of *man of the achine age*, ‘Boudin, blown to pieces’—symbol of *man killed in the war*,—‘Floret, by his boarhound slain between the yew trees’—symbol of some *imaginary figure of legend and romance*. All are examples of seeking and approaching realisation through life experiences.

“Marina” is of course associated with the heroine of Shakespeare’s “Pericles”. The quotation is from Seneca—

Hercules Furens—“What place is this, what region, what quarter of the earth ?”

Eliot here once again puts before the reader the eternal questions :

What is the purpose of this earth ? Why are we here ?

Life is likened to the waves of the sea—there is wave after wave of experience. Men are seeking like animals satisfaction in the senses, striving to find some rock of stability; but where is there any stability in satiety ? The soul evolves through all this surge and suffering of life, and in spite of all the petty difficulties, a leaking boat that needs repairing—in spite of

‘This form, this face, this life’,

there is another life beyond this one, a new hope, a new ship. And that hope rings out from soul-experience :

‘And woodthrush calling through the fog
My daughter.’

(To be continued)

NORMAN DOWSETT

SANSKRIT SIMPLIFIED

BOOK ONE

LESSON XII

1. Here are some simple sentences in which Atmanepada forms of a number of roots are used in the three main Tenses. Translate the sentences and study the forms. Practise *sandhis* also.

१. सः संस्कृतं भाषते। २. आर्याः पूर्वम् संस्कृतम् अभाषन्त। ३. अहम् अपि संस्कृतं भाषिष्ये। ४. जनकं जनीं च वन्दे। ५. रामः जनन्याः कौसल्यायाः पादौ अवन्दत। ६. सुविनीताः ते बालाः ऋषिराजम् अवन्दन्त। ७. योगसाधकः सर्वत्र ईश्वरम् ईक्षते। ७. तस्मिन् सरोवरे त्वं कमलानि ईक्षिष्यसे। ९. विनयम् शिक्षते इमौ सुबालौ। १०. विश्वामित्रात् रामलक्ष्मणौ अस्त्रविद्याम् अशिक्षताम्। ११. वयं तस्मात् मुनिवरात् वेदविद्यां शिक्षिष्यामहे। १२. यः सत्सङ्गं सेवते सः सज्ज्ञानं (सत्-ज्ञानम्) लभते। १३. युवाम् वृक्षवाटिकायाः कति (how many) आम्नाणि अलभेथाम्? १४. यदि त्वम् विद्यया विनयेन च सम्पन्नः भविष्यसि तर्हि (then) त्वम् वृद्धानाम् आशीर्वादान् लप्स्यसे। १५. सुजनाः सद्गुणानां लाभाय नित्यम् एव यतन्ते। १६. मकरेण गृहीतः (caught) गजः बहु अयतत, परं परमेश्वरस्य साहाय्यं विना मोक्षम् न अलभत। १७. कः विजयाय न यतिष्यते? १९. पवनस्य लहरीभिः (breezes) कम्पन्ते वृक्षाणाम् शाखाः (branches) पर्णानि पुष्पाणि च। १९. वने व्याघ्रस्य सन्दर्शनात् (sight) अकम्पन्त तेषां सर्वेषाम् हृदयानि गात्राणि (limbs) च। २०. यूयम् अपि कम्पिष्यध्वे यदि (if) पुरः एव वनराजः (lion) गर्जिष्यति। २१. न केवलं ब्राह्मणाः मोदन्ते मोदकैः परंतु सर्वे अपि तथैव कुर्वन्ति। २२. पुत्रम् दृष्ट्वा (having seen) माता च पिता च उभौ (both) अमोदेताम्। २३. मोदिष्यन्ते मयूराः वर्षाकाले घनानां गर्जितैः। २४. याः बालाः तत्र वर्तन्ते तासां माता महासाध्वी। २५. तदा यूयं सर्वे तस्मिन् एव नगरे अवर्तध्वम्। २६. विक्रमस्य सभागाम् महःपण्डिताः महावीराश्च अवर्तन्त। २७. अभ्यासात् वर्धते विद्या, विद्यया वर्धते यशः। २७. तेषां कुमाराणां ज्ञानं शौर्येण गुणैः च सह अवर्धत दिने दिने। २९. यदि त्वं सुकृतानि सेविष्यसे तर्हि तव सुखानि अपि वर्धिष्यन्ते। ३०. सत्येन शोभते वाणी आर्याणाम्। ३१. दिग्विजयी (conqueror of the four quarters) रघुः सर्वस्वदानेन अशोभत अधिकतरम् (more)। ३२. शोभिष्यन्ते वसन्ते सुवर्णमञ्जरीभिः सहकाराः (mango trees) वृक्षवाटिकानाम्। ३३. बालाय रोचते मिष्टम् (sweetmeat) पण्डिताय सुभाषणम्। ३४. वीराणां वदनानि विजयेन वपुः (body) च ध्रुणैः (wounds) व्यरीचन्त (वि-अरोचन्त looked beautiful)। ३५. रोचिष्यन्ते ऋषिभ्यः वेदमंत्राः। ३६. विद्यते हृदये

हृदये राजमानः (shining) महाप्रभुः। ३७. तस्य भूपस्य सभा सुष्ठु (very well) अशोभत यतः (because) अविद्यन्त तत्र महापण्डिताः। ३८. संवत्सरात् (year) परम् (after, more than) तव दुःखानि न वेत्स्यन्ते। ३९. अयम् आत्मदेवः न जायते वा न म्रियते वा। ४०. तस्मिन् सूर्यवंशे दिलीपः नाम महाराजः अजायत। ४१. मरणात् परम् पुनर् अपि वयं जनिष्यामहे। ४२. योधाः योधैः युध्यन्ते समराङ्गणे। ४३. गौतमः मारेण सह अयुध्यत, अन्ते च धैर्येण विजयम् अलभत। ४४. 'अहम् न योत्स्ये' इति गोविन्दम् उक्त्वा (having said) अर्जुनः तूष्णीम् स्थितः (remained)। ४५. पूर्वं शतात् परम् अम्रियन्त आर्यलोकाः। ४६. यः जायते स म्रियते इति कः न जानाति (know)? ४७. पापाः निजैः पापैः एव मरिष्यन्ति। ४८. ये धर्मम् मुञ्चन्ति ते अचिरेण (soon) एव विनश्यन्ति। ४९. ज्ञानम् मोक्षयति मनुजं (man) मायायाः बन्धनात्। ५०. अन्येन क्रीडनकेन (toy) विना सर्वदमनः बालसिंहम् न असुञ्चत्। ५१. शकुन्तला घटेन वृक्षकान् असिञ्चत्। ५२. मेघाः मधुरेण जलेन धरणीम् सिञ्चन्ति वर्षासु। ५३. सः यात्रिकः गङ्गाजलेन शिवलिङ्गम् सेष्यति रामेश्वरमहातीर्थे। ५४. भूपाः सचिवैः (ministers) सह मन्त्रयन्ते एकान्ते। ५५. श्वः अहम् मित्रैः संमन्त्रयिष्ये अस्मिन् उद्याने। ५६. युधिष्ठिरः राजसूययज्ञे ऋषिवरान् नृपवरान् च न्यमन्त्रयत (नि-अमन्त्रयत invited)। ५७. भक्ताः भगवत्कृपाम् एव मृगयन्ते अवलम्बन्ते च। ५८. मृत-मातृकः (whose mother had died) सः बालः वृथा (in vain) एव मातरम् अमृगयत इतस्ततः। ५९. मृगयिष्ये अहम् अनवधानात् (due to negligence) प्रभ्रष्टम् (dropped, lost) महामणिम्। ६०. रणे शूरयते शूरः, स्वैणः (coward) शूरयते गृहे। ६१. दानवीरः प्रदाने च विद्यावीरः च विद्यार्जने (acquisition of knowledge) रणवीरः च' रणे शूरयिष्यन्ते। ६२. ते अशूरयन्त राजन्याः (क्षत्रियाः) विजयार्थम् रणाङ्गणे। ६३. लप्स्यसे परमार्थान् त्वं यदि त्वं शूरयिष्यसे। ६४. स्वतेजसा (by their heroism) प्रकाशन्ते वीराः मृत्युञ्जयाः (conquerors of death) सदा।

2.

(a) The *visarga* of सः and एषः is dropped before all consonants and vowels except अ, when the usual *sandhi* takes place.

सः बालः=स बालः and not सो बालः।

एषः दाता=एष दाता and not एषो दाता।

सः चतुरः=स चतुरः and not सश्चतुरः।

एषः तरङ्गः=एष तरङ्गः and not एषस्तरङ्गः।

सः or एषः पर्वतः=स or एष पर्वतः।

सः अहम्=सो अहम्=सोऽहम्।

एषः अश्वः=एषो अश्वः=एषोऽश्वः।

(b) No *sandhi* takes place when the dual form of a noun, pronoun or verb, ending in ई, ऊ or ए is followed by any vowel. The ई of the pronominal plural form अमी also does not combine with a following vowel. e.g.

मुनी एतौ । २. बन्धू इमौ । ३. गङ्गायमुने एते । ४. द्वे फले अमृतोपमे । ५. अमू ओषधी उत्तमे । ६. युध्यते ऐक्ष्वाकू आहवे । ७. पद्यं प्रेक्षावहे आवाम् । ८. अमू अमरधेनू उज्ज्वलकलेवरे । ९. अमी अश्वाः । १०. अमी आगच्छन्ति बालकाः ।

N.B. There are some other cases of no *sandhi*, but they are rather rare and so we do not mention them just now.

3.

श्लोकः ३३

धर्मं तत्परता, मुखे मधुरता, दाने समुत्साहिता
मित्रेऽवञ्चकता, गुरौ विनयिता, चित्तेऽतिगम्भीरता ।
आचारे शुचिता, गुणे रसिकता, शास्त्रे सुविज्ञानिता
सत्त्वे सुन्दरता, हरौ भजनिता सत्त्वेव संदृश्यते ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—धर्मं in the practice of piety, तत्परता devotedness, मुखे in the mouth (peech), मधुरता sweetness, दाने in giving, समुत्साहिता enthusiastic readiness मित्रे towards a friend अवञ्चकता guilelessness, गुरौ toward one's master विनयिता obeisance, चित्ते in the mind, अतिगम्भीरता great serenity, आचारे in conduct, शुचिता purity, गुणे in virtue, रसिकता taking of delight, शास्त्रे in scripture, सुविज्ञानिता be'rg well-versed, सत्त्वे in the being, सुन्दरता beauty, हरौ towards God, भजनिता worshipfulness, सत्सु in good-natured souls, एव only, संदृश्यते is seen or met with.

धर्मं तत्परता, मुखे मधुरता, दाने समुत्साहिता, मित्रे अवञ्चकता, गुरौ विनयिता, चित्ते अति-गम्भीरता, आचारे शुचिता, गुणे रसिकता, शास्त्रे सुविज्ञानिता, सत्त्वे सुन्दरता, हरौ (च) भजनिता (इति एतत् सर्वम्) सत्सु एव सदृश्यते ।

Translation :-

It is only in good and noble natures that we find devotedness in the practice of piety, sweetness of speech, enthusiasm for giving in charity, guilelessness towards a friend, a spirit of obeisance towards the Guru, great serenity of mind, purity of conduct, taking of delight in virtue, being well-versed in scriptures, beauty of being and worshipfulness towards God.

श्लोकः ३४

(शिखरिणी)

नभोभूषा पूषा कमलवनभूषा मधुकरो
वचोभूषा सत्यं वरविभवभूषा वितरणम् ।

मनोभूषा मैत्री मधुसमयभूषा सुमनसः
सदोभूषा सूक्तिः सकलगुणभूषा सुविनयः ॥

सार्थदपच्छेदः—नभोभूषा the adornment of the sky (नभस्—न. sky भूषा—स्त्री. adornment), पूषा the sun (पूषन्—पुं. sun), कमल-वन-भूषा the adornment of beds of lotuses, मधुकरः the bee, वचोभूषा the adornment of speech (वचस्—न. speech, word), सत्यम् the truth, वर-विभव-भूषा the adornment of great wealth (वर best विभव—पुं. wealth), वितरणम्—नै. (liberal) giving, मनोभूषा the adornment of mind (मनस्—न. mind), मैत्री amicableness, friendliness, मधु-समय-भूषा the adornment of spring-time (मधु—पुं. the spring), सुमनसः flowers (सुमनस्—स्त्री. न. flowers—used in the plural only), सदोभूषा the adornment of an assembly (सदस्—न. assembly), सूक्तिः beautiful speech सु+उक्ति—स्त्री. nice speech), सकलगुणभूषा the adornment of all virtues, सु-विनयः modesty and good manners.

पूषा नभोभूषा (अस्ति), मधुकरः कमलवनभूषा (अस्ति), सत्यम् वचोभूषा (अस्ति), वितरणम् वरविभवभूषा (अस्ति), मैत्री मनोभूषा (अस्ति), सुमनसः मधुसमयभूषा (अस्ति), सूक्तिः सदोभूषा (अस्ति), सुविनयः (च) सकलगुणभूषा (अस्ति) ।

Translation :-

The sun is the adornment of the sky, the bee that of lotus-groves, truthfulness that of speech, liberal giving that of great wealth, the spirit of friendliness that of mind; flowers are the adornment of the spring, charming speech that of an assembly; (but) the adornment of all adorning virtues is modest and decent behaviour.

श्लोकः ३५

भाषासु मुख्या मधुरा दिव्या गीर्वाणभारती ।
तस्माद्धि काव्यं मधुरं तस्मादपि सुभाषितम् ॥

सार्थदपच्छेदः—भाषासु among languages, मुख्या foremost, मधुरा sweet, दिव्या divinely beautiful गीर्वाण-भारती Sanskrit, the language of the gods (गीर्वाण—पुं. god भारती—स्त्री. language, speech), तस्मात् हि even more than that, काव्यम् poetry, मधुरम् sweet, तस्मात् अपि even more than that (poetry in general), सुभाषितम् a charming perfect verse.

(सर्वासु) भाषासु मधुरा दिव्या (च) गीर्वाणभारती मुख्या (अस्ति) । तस्मात् काव्यम् मधुरम् हि । तस्मात् अपि सुभाषितम् मधुरम् (अस्ति) ।

Translation :-

Foremost among all languages is Sanskrit, the sweet and divinely beautiful language of the gods. There even poetry is sweeter, and sweeter still is a charming and perfect poetic verse.

श्लोकः ३६

ब्राक्षा म्लानमुखी जाता शर्करा चाश्मतां गता ।

सुभाषितरसस्याग्रे सुधा भीता दिवं गता ॥

सार्थपदच्छेदः—ब्राक्षा grapes, म्लान-मुखी pale-faced (म्लान—वि. pale, faded, wearied), जाता p.p. became, शर्करा candied sugar, च अश्मताम् stony state, गता acquired, सुभाषितरसस्य अग्रे before (in front of) the relish of a charming verse, सुधा nectar, भीता afraid, दिवम् गता went to heaven.

सुभाषितरसस्य अग्रे ब्राक्षा म्लानमुखी जाता, शर्करा च अश्मताम् अगता, सुधा (तु) भीता (सती) दिवम् गता ।

Translation :-

Before the relish of a charming poetic verse, the face of grapes turned pale, candied sugar turned into a stone and nectar out of fear left for heaven.

4. Translate into English :-

१. गङ्गानदी हिमालयात् प्रभवति । २. शशी सन्तापम् हरति, शान्तिम् च वितरति । ३. स्वर्गस्य नन्दनवने यः कल्पतरुः वर्तते सः दैन्यम् हरति, इच्छितम् फलम् च यच्छति । ४. श्रीहरेः कृपा सर्वम् एव सम्पादयति (accomplishes) सर्वेषाम् । ५. माणिक्यं मौक्तिकं चन्दनं च सर्वेषां प्रियाणि । ६. के न इच्छन्ति रत्नानाम् लाभम् ? ७. शैलानां गुहासु सिंहाः निवसन्ति । ८. साधवः अपि गुहासु निवसन्ति ध्यानं च कुर्वन्ति परमेश्वरस्य । ९. वैष्णवाः वृन्दावनं गच्छन्ति तत्र च श्रीकृष्णस्य उपासनाम् समाचरन्ति (do) ! १०. सायं पूर्णः चन्द्र उदयति प्राच्याम् (in the east) सूर्यः तु अस्तं गच्छति पश्चिमे दिग्दिग्भागे । ११. सायंकाले प्रभातसमये च आकाशः अरुणः भवति । १२. प्रभुः एव त्रैलोक्यस्य परमः पिता । १३. सर्वेषु दीपकेषु धर्मः एव सर्वोत्तमः दीपकः । १४. यथा चन्द्रेण रात्र्याः आकाशः प्रकाशते तथा एव सुपुत्रेण कुलम् अपि प्रकाशते । १५. मूलानि हि पादपानां पादाः तैः च ते रसम् पिबन्ति । १६. यतः वृक्षाः पादैः पिबन्ति ते पादपाः उच्यन्ते (are said to be) । १७. वज्रम् देवराजस्य अमोघम् अस्त्रम् । १८. दुर्जनाः सत्पुरुषाणाम् कृते भयरूपाः । १९. शिशिरे पद्मानि प्रणश्यन्ति (प्र-नश्यन्ति) । २०. वातात् पादपानां भयं जायते, यतः प्रबलः पवनः तान् उन्मूलयति । २१. पार्वती महादेवी विश्वस्य माता, सा च यदा प्रसन्ना भवति तदा दिव्यतायाः वरान वितरति । २२. यः कः अपि (any one who) स्वे (one's own) हृदये महेश्वरम् सदैव स्मरति, तम् स महादेवः सर्वत्र, सर्वथा, सर्वदा, सर्वतः च संरक्षति । २३. सर्वे जीवाः सर्वेश्वरस्य सन्तानाः अतः, एव परस्परम् बान्धवाः । २४. सः सर्वमयः देवः विष्णुः कुत्र न वर्तते ? २५. श्रीकृष्णस्य वदनम् अरविन्दम् इव (like, as) सुन्दरम्, चरणौ च अपि तथा एव सुन्दरौ । २६. वटस्य हरिते पत्रपुटे शयानम् बालं मुकुन्दं मनसा सततं स्मरिष्यामः । २७. हे देवदेव, त्वम् एव असि अस्माकं माता, पिता, बन्धुः, सखा, विद्या, द्रविणं च । २८. सर्वेषाम् मङ्गलानां महाधाम (great abode) हरिः यत्र विराजते तत्र एव सर्वाणि सुमङ्गलानि वर्तन्ते । २९. कुत्र लाभः, कुत्र जयः, कुत्र वा सर्वाः सिद्धयः ? ३०. यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णः

अस्ति तत्र एव ते सर्वे सम्भवन्ति । ३१. यथा आकाशात् भूमौ पतितं तोयं समुद्रं प्रति प्रवहति तथा एव अस्माकं सर्वे अपि चिन्तनप्रवाहाः प्रवक्ष्यन्ति परमेश्वरं प्रति । ३२. आलस्यम् एव सर्वेषां मनुष्याणाम् महारिपुः, स च अस्माकं शरीरे एव वसति विनाशयति (destroys) च सर्वं सत्त्वम् । ३३. ये जनाः उद्यमं सेवन्ते ते कदापि न अवसीदन्ति । ३४. कानि अपि कार्याणि उद्यमेन विना न सिध्यन्ति । ३५. उद्योगं विना केवलाः मनोरथाः निष्फलाः (fruitless) भविष्यन्ति । ३६. सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य मुखे मृगाः स्वयमेव कदाचित् न प्रविशन्ति । ३७. यदा रात्रिः गच्छति सुप्रभातम् च भवति तदा सुप्तानि (asleep, closed) पद्मानि प्रबुध्यन्ते (wake up, open), सौन्दर्यलक्ष्मीः च तेषाम् सुस्मितेन सर्वान् आनन्दयति । ३८. निमीलितस्य (closed) कमलस्य कोशे स्थितः भ्रमरः किम् विचिन्तयति ? ३९. तस्य आशा कथम् निराशायाम् अवसीदति (ends) । ४०. रात्रौ गजः तडागम् आगच्छति, कमलिनीम् (lotus-creeper) च शुण्डया (with the trunk) उन्मूलयति सद्द्विरेफम् (with the bee) कमलम् च पुनः कदाचित् न उन्मीलति । ४१. इत्थम् निमीलिते अरविन्दे मधुकरः (bee) म्रियते । ४२. कृपणाः (misers) निजम् धनम् स्वयं कदापि न स्पृशन्ति, तस्मात् तेषाम् मरणात् परम् सर्वम् एव तद् धनम् परेषाम् हस्ते पतति । ४३. यद् धनं सुपात्रे दानाय सद्द्व्ययाय च न प्रयुज्यते (used) तद् अन्यथा अनेकशः विनश्यति एव । ४४. अस्मिन् लोके शूराः सन्ति, पण्डिताः वक्तारः अपि वर्तन्ते, किंतु दातारः (donors) अतिविरलाः (very rare) एव भवन्ति । ४५. पापम् मा आचर, तत्रापि तीर्थक्षेत्रे तु तत् कदापि मा कुह; यतः तीर्थक्षेत्रे कृतस्य पापस्य केन अपि उपायेन निवारणं (removal) न भवति । ४६. परोपकारात् पुण्यम्, पुण्यात् स्वर्गम्, स्वर्गात् च सुखम् लभन्ते जनाः । ४७. परेषाम् पीडनं एव पापम् तत् च दुःखाय भवति । ४८. इदं शरीरं परोपकारार्थम् एव विद्यते, तेन च नदीवत् (like a river), वृक्षवत् (like a tree), गोवत् (like a cow) च परोपकारः सर्वदा सर्वथा च कर्तव्यः ।

N.B. Please practise *sandhi* in all these sentences. Change of *tense* and *number* may also be tried wherever possible.

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