

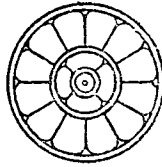
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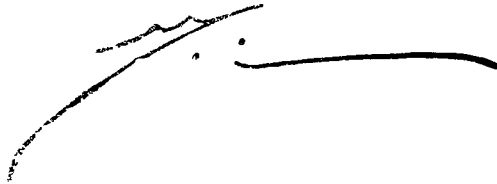


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

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. XVII

No. 4

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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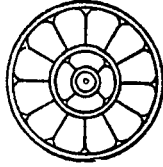
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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

IL Lui plaît d'être ainsi, Il est ainsi.

Et simplement, le secret, c'est d'être dans le "Il Lui plaît".

De ne pas être seulement ce qui est objectivé, d'être aussi Ce qui objective. C'est tout.

It pleases Him to be like that, He is like that.

And simply the secret is : to be in "It pleases Him".

Not to be merely what is objectified—to be also in That which objectifies. That is all.

★

★

Vous parlez de félicité, mais dans le monde matériel il n'y a pas de félicité. Et pourtant, retirez la félicité et le monde tout entier s'écroulera.

You speak of delight (Ananda) but in the material world there is no such thing as delight. Yet, remove the delight and the whole world will vanish.



DIFFICULTIES IN YOGA

BASED ON A TALK BY THE MOTHER

The nature of your difficulty indicates the nature of the victory you will gain, the victory you will exemplify in Yoga. Thus, if there is persistent selfishness, it points to a universal realisation as your most prominent achievement in the future. And, when selfishness is there, you have also the power to reverse this very difficulty into its opposite, a victory of utter wideness.

When you have something to realise, you will have in you just the characteristic which is the contradiction of that something. Face to face with the defect, the difficulty, you say, "Oh, I am like that ! How awful it is !" But you ought to see the truth of the situation. Say to yourself, "My difficulty shows me clearly what I have ultimately to represent. To reach the absolute negation of it, the quality at the other pole—this is my mission."

Even in ordinary life, we have sometimes the experience of contraries. He who is very timid and has no courage in front of circumstances proves capable of bearing the most !

To one who has the aspiration for the Divine, the difficulty which is always before him is the door by which he will attain God in his own individual manner : it is his particular path towards the Divine Realisation.

There is also the fact that if somebody has a hundred difficulties it means he will have a tremendous realisation—provided, of course, there are in him patience and endurance and he keeps the aspiring flame of Agni burning against those defects.

And remember : the Grace of the Divine is generally proportioned to your difficulties.

K. D. SETHNA

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. Mamulal, 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.)

JANUARY 13, 1940

N : After a long time I saw an appreciation of X's new novel by a man who counts. He says it is not a novel in the understood sense. It may be called "an intellectual novel". He has praised X's insight and his power of analysis, but at the same time he says that X has fallen a victim to that power by overuse, so that it becomes monotonous and fatiguing to the reader.

SRI AUROBINDO : Do X's novels have a good sale ?

N : Well, his own publishers say they have a pretty small sale, while another firm says they sell very well. I personally think intellectual novels can't be popular.

SRI AUROBINDO : Somebody has said that X brings out all his psychology through the mouths of his characters in dialogue form and there is little left of the story itself. That is the difficulty with intellectual novels. They may have a lot of analysis and acute discussion but lack the life-push. And it is always difficult to put this life-push in dialogue form. Novels without the life-push cannot grip the public as a whole. It is not that stories with the life-push have no intellectual theme. Both can go together; but the intellectual theme is now enmeshed in the story itself and does not stick out. I understand Proust was an intellectual novelist.

N : X puts in a lot of incidents and most of his characters are rich people.

SRI AUROBINDO : There may be incidents, but everything depends on how they are put in.

P : Nowadays there is an attempt to write novels on the common people, the masses—socialistic novels.

SRI AUROBINDO : But the Socialists themselves have got tired of such novels.

P : These books try to be realistic, depicting things as actually seen.

SRI AUROBINDO : They often exaggerate things.

S (after a lull in the conversation) : Some of the members of the Gita Prachar Party have died on the way.

SRI AUROBINDO : Died ?

S : Yes, Sir. They consider it a great virtue to have such a death—death while on a pilgrimage. They are all well-to-do people.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, then they can afford to die. (*Laughter*)

EVENING

N : This old Judge who has come here seems a typical Bengali. He said that Y has some high realisation. He saw A on the way and declared she had established peace in herself.

S : Didn't he want to meet N ?

SRI AUROBINDO : N is a Buddhist. The Judge should have been told that. He would have said to N : "I see Buddha in your face." Somebody should have told the Judge : "By your ready embrace it seems you have realised Bhakti." He should have been allowed to get some compliments, too.

N : X is not able to get rid of his age-old idea that Y and Z are not doing your Yoga.

SRI AUROBINDO : How is that ? What is his reason for thinking so ?

N : He says they don't mix with people, don't behave well with people, they are not courteous or sociable.

SRI AUROBINDO : Is sociableness part of my Yoga ?

N : I don't think he goes so far as to say that. His grievance is that they are not easy in their behaviour with others. If he makes some allowance for Y, he yet sees no excuse for Z. "Z," he says, "lives in seclusion, isolation, which is not the aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga."

SRI AUROBINDO : But I myself live in isolation !

N : You do it for a special purpose, he will contend.

SRI AUROBINDO : Z's isolation also may be a part of his Yoga. Besides, he has isolated himself with the consent of the Mother. And what is meant by "Sri Aurobindo's Yoga" ?

P : Different people have different temperaments and isolation may be a temporary necessity for Z.

C : But he is not really isolated. He talks with many people, jokes and laughs freely.

N : X asks why Z shouldn't be free and easy with people. He quotes one instance. Z, it seems, went to the length of writing 5 or 6 pages to someone on some difficulty in Yoga when he could have cleared it up by half an hour or less of talk.

SRI AUROBINDO : If he wrote, perhaps he thought that was the best way. By writing, things are cleared more easily than by talking. If Y and Z are not doing my Yoga, then who is doing it ?

N : Exactly what I said.

SRI AUROBINDO (*after a pause*): X claims to be a psychologist. Why doesn't he understand that temperaments differ with people ? Y and Z may be all he says, but

what I object to is bringing my Yoga in. My Yoga cannot be rigidly formulated like that. . . .

Even if Y hadn't been doing Yoga, he wouldn't have run after people.

N : Have you seen Amal's recent article "Can Indians write English Poetry ?"

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. He has paid a compliment to the Ashram. He has said that there is a growing band of gifted poets here. Perhaps he is paying a compliment to himself ! (*Laughter*)

N : He says one must know English prose in order to write English poetry.

SRI AUROBINDO : English language rather.¹

JANUARY 14. 1940

N : Suresh Dev was Vishuddhananda's disciple, it seems.

SRI AUROBINDO : Then how did he say he didn't know what meditation was ?

N : That is what I asked Yogananda.

SRI AUROBINDO : I wondered how he could have had that experience he spoke of if he had not done meditation before.

N : Perhaps he hadn't such a decisive experience as it seems.

SRI AUROBINDO : Is Vishuddhananda dead ?

N : Yes.

S : What were his methods ?

N : A book I read about him was full of the miracles he used to do.

SRI AUROBINDO : Is it he who is said to have brought jewels from his body ?

N : Yes, he spoke of doing some experiment with the sun's rays and called it *Sūryavijñāna* (Solar Science).

P : Yes, he seems to have started a laboratory to utilise the sun's rays for material and spiritual purposes, but the laboratory was not completed.

SRI AUROBINDO : Material purposes possible, but how spiritual ?

P : I don't know.

SRI AUROBINDO : If he wanted to remove some physical obstacles in the body that prevent the inner opening, that may be possible. Or was it by changing the secretion of the glands ?

P : The glands have now gone out of fashion, perhaps.

N : No, they are still going strong. Plenty of researches are being done still.

SRI AUROBINDO : Possibly, after some time they will be quite antiquated.

P : Yes, the researchers may even say the glands don't exist.

SRI AUROBINDO : When I began taking interest in science, the scientists used to believe in a material Monism and Determinism. Now they speak of Indeterminism,

¹ The article meant the same thing but put it by way of a paradox. It said one must know first how to write English prose in order to be able to write English poetry. That is, a writer must master the natural turn of English as found in prose before he can handle properly the special medium of verse.

Pluralism and the Quantum Theory. Now they say electrons are the basis of Matter. One or two decades hence, they will find that electrons are no longer the basis.⁹

P (*after a pause*) : I was looking through Father Heras' pamphlet on the Mohenjo-daro script. He says that the sign somewhat like an open bracket stands for the Tamil *kal*, and the opposite sign is for *lak*—and together they mean "union".

SRI AUROBINDO : If you set your mind to it, you can make up any theory.

EVENING

SRI AUROBINDO (*beginning the talk*) : Have you seen the prophecy by a "Seeker of Truth" in today's paper ? He says that Congress will come to power on the 16th January. There will be peace in India and then peace in the world. The War will stop. He gives a definite date. He has the courage of his convictions.

N : Peace in India will lead to peace in the world ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, through Gandhi, I suppose, and perhaps Gandhi will be accepted as the saviour of the world !

S : It is only two days more. I asked a friend what had become of N. C. Vakil's horoscope.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes ?

P : He writes that Vakil is very busy with a very important thing, which is that his cat has fallen ill and then his wife and other relations, and he has tried homeopathy on them all.

SRI AUROBINDO : Oh, his cat is the most important thing for him ?

P : His wife also is occupying his attention. She is worried because of the War. She is English. She is thinking of her relatives at home.

SRI AUROBINDO : He can then make a horoscope of the War and tell how the relatives will be affected by it.

N : I was wondering how he could be so busy about a cat, but when P said he has an English wife it became clear to me.

SRI AUROBINDO : How? She belongs to the same species, you mean? (*Laughter*)

P : I wrote back that now Vakil would have to make a horoscope for the reading of his horoscope.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is to say ?

P : Judging by the present circumstances, the stars have all changed. Everything is in a muddle.

After this P brought in again the issue of the Mohenjo-daro script. Sri Aurobindo said that the linguistic scheme built up by the Roman Catholic father seemed to be a play of imagination.

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

Ego

Q : Nowadays I notice that the ego comes out in most of my thoughts, feelings and actions, even in trifling and stupid movements where there is nothing to be proud of. Please explain to me why it is so.

SRI AUROBINDO : But that is the case with all human beings. All the action is shot through with ego, acts, feelings, thoughts, everything, big or small, good or bad. Even humility and what is called altruism is with most people only a form of ego. It does not depend on having something to be proud of. 28-3-1936

Q : But why do I feel the presence of ego in such little acts only now. Formally it was found in things done with desire or pride.

SRI AUROBINDO : Perhaps because then you were looking for ego only in the form which people specially call egoism, i.e. pride, vanity, selfishness, insistence on vital satisfactions. But ego is of all kinds—and you are only just now finding it out. 31-3-1936

Q : As most of my activities are “shot through with ego” my life has become a source not of delight as a sadhak’s should be but of trouble. For there is a division in the being. The inner being is very strict that there should be no sense of ego in whatever is done. But the ego never forgets to colour everything !

SRI AUROBINDO : There is nothing to be troubled about. You ought rather to congratulate yourself that you have become conscious. Very few people are. They are all ego-centric and they do not realise their ego-centricity. Even in their sadhana. the I is always there;—*my sadhana, my progress, my everything.* The remedy is to think constantly of the Divine not of oneself, to work, act, do sadhana for the Divine; not to consider how this or that affects *me* personally, not to claim anything, but to refer all to the Divine. It will take time to do that sincerely and thoroughly but it is the proper way. 31-3-1936

Q : So many pretensions and excuses are there for self-indulgence. They are more difficult to deal with than even hostile forces’ attacks. Should we not concentratedly deal with them ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, certainly. The mind must become conscious of these things and on its guard—without this consciousness it is not possible to get rid of these vital things—they will go on lurking under all sorts of disguises. 1-4-1936

Q : You have described certain kinds of egoisms—pride, vanity, etc. Are there other kinds ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Any number of kinds, sattwic, rajasic and tamasic. 1-4-1936

Q : If I work for the Mother alone, the interference of the ego would mean that it comes from outside. For I can't do work only for the Mother along with my ego.

SRI AUROBINDO : Of course it is a way. But one has still to be careful about the ego. Even people who sincerely think that they are doing only the Mother's will are yet actuated by ego without knowing it. 4-4-1936

Q : One cannot dissolve the ego in the middle stages of the sadhana. But one can keep it separate from oneself and at a distance, can't one ?

SRI AUROBINDO : In the inner being, yes—the difficulty is to exclude it from the action (thought, feeling, notions etc.) of the outer part of the consciousness. 5-4-1936

The only thing necessary is to do the thing without the ego, but to stop doing it because the ego gets in would end in an entire inaction; for the ego can get into any action. 7-4-1936

Most sensitiveness is the result or sign of ego. 7-2-1936

It depends on the nature of the ego. Some egoists are hard-skinned and not sensitive at all; others are hypersensitive. 11-6-1936

Obviously, unless the object is Nirvana, the small ego has to be attended to,—not indulged, but transformed out of existence. 21-4-1936

The form of ego has to be dissolved, it has not to be replaced by a bigger ego or another kind of ego. It has to be replaced by the true being which feels itself, even though individual, yet one with all and one with the Divine. 23-4-1936.

Q : I find that even the descents cannot change or purify the ego and desire. What will be able to do it then ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It is not descents that can do [it]. It is either psychic rejection or the settling of the higher consciousness in the lower nature or both together that can do it. 10-5-1936

It is rather a wider than a higher consciousness that is necessary for the liberation from the ego. Going high is necessary of course, but by itself it is not sufficient. 15-7-1936

Q : I go on rejecting the movements of ego and it goes on taking new forms. But my rejection seems to be of a negative kind. I am afraid there will be no final change unless a positive thing intervenes.

SRI AUROBINDO : Without persistent rejection it cannot be done. Going up

into the self liberates the higher parts but the ego remains in the lower parts. The most effective force for this liberation is the psychic control along with steady rejection.

15-7-1936

But who has got rid of ego in this Ashram ? To get rid of ego is as difficult as to make a complete surrender.

9-8-1936

There are no details to deal with. All this about "interest" means simply that your vital is asking for appreciation and applause and is not allowing you to do the effort in an unegoistic way for the sake of the Divine, for the sake of the Truth, because it is the thing demanded of you. At every step ego pokes in its nose and wants to be satisfied. All this has no other meaning.

25-1-1936

Q : During one of my daily meditations, I felt as if the ego was disturbing my life and sadhana. So I separated it from myself and kicked it out. Is there any validity in such a feeling ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It has a validity of experience—if the action repeats itself consciously and applies itself to all the movements of the ego, then by an accumulated effort it can get rid of the ego.

19-11-1936

From NAGIN DOSHI

WHAT IS A CHANGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS?*

(1)

WHAT is a change of consciousness? This Aurobindonian phrase needs to be understood precisely by anyone who would understand Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. Another phrase, probably Indian in origin, is popular in India, a 'change of heart'.

But a 'change of consciousness' is a more comprehensive phrase than 'a change of heart'. The latter refers to an emotional disposition or an attitude. But a 'change of consciousness' refers to our state of being. It suggests that another becoming is called for, of which a change of emotional disposition is only a part.

A change of consciousness implies a fourfold self-expansion as pointed out by Sri Aurobindo.¹ The individual must first know himself and discover and utilise all his potentialities. That is the field of occultism. Secondly, he should link the human with the Divine and in so doing sublimate the thought and life and flesh so that these may admit the rule of the soul and spirit. This is the aim of religion. Thirdly, this knowledge must be more than a creed or a mystic revelation. The thinking mind must be able to accept it and correlate it with the principle of things and the observed truth of the universe. This is the work of philosophy, a spiritual philosophy. But all knowledge and endeavour can reach its fruition only if it is turned into experience and has become part of the consciousness and its established operations. This occult, religious and philosophic knowledge must end in an opening up of the spiritual consciousness, in experiences that continually heighten and expand and enrich the consciousness and in the building of a life and action that is in conformity with the truth of the spirit. This is the fourth self-expansion, the work of spiritual realization and experience. An occult knowledge of some new principle that promotes the growth of consciousness, an effort to subordinate our thought, feeling and action to that principle, an endeavour to correlate that knowledge with the observed truth of the universe and a further endeavour to turn the knowledge into experience so that it might enrich our consciousness, these are the four steps indicated by the phrase "a change of consciousness".

Again, Sri Aurobindo remarks that "to be or become something, to bring something into being is the whole labour of the Force of Nature". He goes on to state that "to know, feel, do are subordinate energies that have a value because they help the being in its partial self-realisation to express what it is and help it too in its urge to express the still more not yet realised that it has to be". He goes on to state that knowledge, thought and action are only activities of the powers of being or the powers

* A Paper read at the Seminar of the World Congress convened by the Sri Aurobindo Society in August 1964

¹ *The Life Divine*, pp. 766-67.

of becoming, they are not the being or becoming itself. They are only the means of being, "the means of discovering or formulating what it seeks to be".¹ Thus a change of consciousness is the evolution of being to a richer and higher status through a significant becoming.

In the poetry of Vaughan and Wordsworth, a change means a fall rather than a rise in consciousness, fall from the vision splendid, from the heaven that lies about us in our infancy. At least it means a replacement of rapture or delight by "wise passiveness" or at least a diminution of delight. But there is no reason why *tapasyā* and *ānanda* or the Hebraic and Hellenic modes of consciousness should not co-exist in one and the same personality.

A change of consciousness for the worse is equally possible. Depressing circumstances may turn a person into a cynic and then a villain. A person may, without knowing it, harbour a titan or demon in his consciousness. But the "change" that we are thinking of is evolution leading to a higher state of being. The Mother has said in her message to the World Conference :

"The future of the Earth depends on a Change of Consciousness. The change is bound to come. But it is left to men to decide if they will collaborate for this change or it will have to be enforced upon them by the power of crashing circumstances".

The 'crashing circumstances' spoken of in the message refer to world events rather than to crises in the lives of individuals. But a few like Purandar Das go through a 'significant becoming' in the form of a crisis before they evolve into a richer state of being. Shelley has recorded a significant moment in his life as a schoolboy in his preface to *The Revolt of Islam*. But a significant moment need not always be a crisis—witness the change that came over Tulsidas or Swami Vivekananda. A glimpse of the Mother's face or the impact of a book like *The Life Divine* or *Savitri* may bring about similar changes.

(II)

Let us first see what we generally have in mind when we refer to 'consciousness'. It is obvious that we think habitually of the surface consciousness, the instrumental and not the essential self. In fact the change that is needed is the change over from the instrumental to the essential self.

But let us have a good look at the instrumental self—the details of the surface consciousness as they are known to us. Needless to say, the analysis presented here is based on the statements of Sri Aurobindo on the subject.

The fundamental fact of existence is consciousness which is power.² This power has three ways of operating. First, there is the plenitude of the divine self-

¹ *Ibid*, pp 506-7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 445.

knowledge and all-knowledge. It is the consciousness which is eternally, universally, absolutely aware of itself whether in unity or multiplicity. At the other pole of things is an effective, dynamic, creative Inconscience in which the divine knowledge is veiled. It dwells upon apparent oppositions in itself. Matter, Life and Mind—the three lower powers of being—build upon the Inconscient and seem to be originated and supported by it. No doubt, it is the starting-point of the evolution, but it is a conscious Spirit and not an inconscient being that is emerging in the evolution.

Between omniscience and inconscience, we see consciousness working with a partial, limited self-awareness. In this intermediate status, consciousness is a standing compromise between two opposites. Or rather, it is an incomplete emergence of the knowledge to the surface. This surface is what we call the Ignorance. A change of consciousness means a change of being from its intermediate to the integral status.

Brahman is both the Knowledge and the Ignorance and the simultaneous knowledge of Brahman in both is the way to Immortality.¹ To know Brahman only as Knowledge is to be shut up in a featureless consciousness of unity, ignorant of the manifest Brahman. To know Brahman only as Ignorance is to be aware only of the illusive proportions of things seen in a dispersed, hazy and broken light, half mist, half seeing. The divine consciousness holds the immutable One and the mutable Many in one eternal all-relating, all-uniting self-knowledge.

The intermediate status of being has been formed around Mind.

Mind is a reflective mirror which receives images of a pre-existent fact, external to it and vaster than itself. It represents to itself the phenomenon that is or has been, constructs in itself possible images of the phenomenon that may be and also forecasts new modifications which it seeks to construct out of the meeting of what has been and what may be.²

Man and animal are both mentally conscious beings. But the animal is fixed in vital mind and mind-sense and cannot exceed its limitations, while man has received into his sense-mind the light of another principle, the intellect, which is a ray of gnosis seized by the sense-mentality but made agnostic like the sense-mind in which and for which it works. The sense-mind or physical mind perceives the actual, the physical, the objective and accepts it as fact and this fact as self-evident truth beyond question. All subjective beings and things it accepts on the same evidence insofar as they can become objects of our external consciousness or acceptable to that part of the reason which builds upon the data supplied by that consciousness and relies upon them as the one solid basis of knowledge. Physical science is a vast extension of this mentality, with the same standard of reality—verification by positive reason and objective evidence.³

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 452-53.

² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

But man has also a life-mind or vital mind which is an instrument of desire. It is not satisfied with the actual. It always seeks to extend the limit of experience for the satisfaction of desire. It is not satisfied with the physical and objective only. It seeks too a subjective, an imaginative, a purely emotive satisfaction and pleasure. This vital mind or unquiet life-will disturbs the routine satisfaction which lives penned within the bounds of actuality. It makes a constant demand for unrealised possibilities, for new worlds to conquer.¹

The thinking mind fulfils three main functions. As memory, it relates experience to the successions of Time. Because we cannot keep the past in us on the surface of consciousness, we recover it by that repetitive and linking action of the thought-mind which we call memory. The gaps and divisions created by the ignorance of mind have to be bridged and connected. We call in the aid of various devices of the mind-consciousness for this purpose and memory is one of them.

We summon things which are not within the actual field of our limited superficial mind-experience by the action of the thought-mind which we call imagination, that greater power in us and high summoner of all possibilities realisable or unrealisable into the field of our ignorance.²

Again, the thought-mind coordinates and uses all the materials of self-experience.

The ego-sense is another device of mental Ignorance by which the mental being becomes aware, not only of objects, occasions and acts but also of himself—of that which experiences them.³ The ego-sense is not a result of memory. It was already and always there as a point of reference or as something in which the mind-sense concentrates itself so as to have a co-ordinant centre instead of sprawling incoherently all over the field of experience; ego-memory reinforces this concentration and helps to maintain it but does not constitute it. Ego-sense is the basis, memory the thread on which experiences are strung by the self-experiencing mind. But it is the co-ordinating faculty of mind which, relating together all the material that memory provides and all its linkings of past, present and future, relates them also to an 'I' who is the same in all the moments of time. Thus the ego is the lynchpin invented to hold together the motion of our wheel of nature. The ego-sense in the life-stuff and the ego-idea in the mind maintain a constructed symbol of self, the separative ego which does duty for the spirit or true being. The executive mind or will is force of being in conscious action. The true will, the force of spiritual being, is intrinsic, automatic in action, self-existent and self-fulfilling. The action that does not have this sovereignty carries in it the sign of a disabling segmentation of the consciousness. What we ordinarily call will is the force of a mental construction or of a vital impulse.

This is what 'we' are. This is the surface consciousness. We become aware that we have within us a mind-self, a life-self, a physical self. Each has its own dis-

¹ *Ibid*, p. 373.

² *Ibid*, p. 463

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 562-66.

tinct nature, its influence, its action on the whole of us, but on our surface all these influences and all this action, as they come up, mingle and create an aggregate surface being which is composite, an amalgam of them all, an outer persistent and yet shifting and mobile formation for the purposes of this life and its limited experience. But this aggregate, because of its composition, is a heterogeneous compound, not a single harmonious and homogeneous whole. It is difficult to create out of its confusion and conflict some kind of order and guidance. That is why we act from whatever comes uppermost at the time and seizes the instruments of thought and action. Man does set up a sort of regulated chaos, though his direction is only partial. Man is in his self a unique person. But he is also in his manifestation of self a multiperson. He will never succeed in being master of himself until the person imposes itself on his multipersonality and governs it.¹ This can only be imperfectly done by the surface mental will and reason. That is why one or the other part being in him rules till his inmost soul principle becomes the Central being again.

(To be continued)

V. K. GOKAK

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 797-99.

TO A MENDICANT

MAD beggar crouched behind the church
I heard your litany in Sunday light
Presuming like intrusion to a Trappist cell.

But you attended voices I could never know
Who bargain honor in the market square of sense
Where everyman removes his face
To show a badge of infidelity.

When morning fades
And afternoon wears long penumbras
Of release
You will have followed
Destiny's compassion to its source

And I will not permit myself
A backward glance.

MARILYN WIDMAN

AN INQUIRY INTO MODERN PSYCHOLOGY IN LIGHT OF SRI AUROBINDO'S PSYCHOLOGY

I. INTRODUCTION

The Importance of the Individual

In a democracy it is assumed that respect for the individual is desirable. But aside from the basic assumption there has been an increasing concern for individual growth and development. *The Pursuit of Excellence, Education and the Future of America* states :

The greatness of a nation may be manifested in many ways—in its purposes, its courage, its moral responsibility, its cultural and scientific eminence, the tenor of its daily life. But ultimately the source of its greatness is in the individuals who constitute the living substance of the nation.¹

The relevant questions become : How may individual capacities, initiative, and independence be preserved and developed ? How is it that in the heart of a mechanized society, "...a good many astonishingly free, flexible, creative and independent individuals exist..." ? How may young people be prepared "...to keep their individuality, initiative, creativity in a highly organized, intricately meshed society..." ? How may outstanding individuals be rescued from the lowered aspiration, the ennui, and the habits of mediocrity sometimes induced by life in a large and complex society ? How may the informal standards of harmony and predictability in performance be replaced by emphasis upon individual achievement ?

With questions of such import the problems of the individual become one "...of the gravest issues in the future of our society."

Every democracy *must* encourage high individual performance. If it does not, it closes itself off from the main springs of its dynamism and talent and imagination, and the traditional democratic invitation to the individual to realize his full potentialities becomes meaningless.²

II. A PROBLEM AND A SURVEY OF THE STUDY

The Problem

What possibility is there for each person to realize fully, his individuality ? How can he develop his dynamism and creativity ? What sort of education will help him ?

¹ *The Pursuit of Excellence, Education and the Future of America* (Panel Report V of the Special Studies Project, New York : Doubleday and Company, 1958), p. 1.

² *Ibid*, pp. 14-16.

Exactly what is the individual ? How can he best be educated ? As a social being ? As a psychological being ? Just what is his nature ?

Statement of the problem. Is it possible to discover the reality of human nature ?

Justification of the problem. This question, perplexing mankind through the ages, has followed him into the present era; in this day men hope to find the master-key that may reveal the nature of the human being. As new theories are produced it seems possible that some discovery of the reality of human nature may result.

Limitations of the study. It is assumed by the writer that the problem, although holding wide social implications, can best be pursued within the discipline of psychology. The confines of the study permit, even within this field, only a presentation of major tendencies and issues.

Definition of Terms. The definitions of terms are made according to *Webster's New International Dictionary*, but some connotations are inferred.

Being. This term can be defined, perhaps, as "...Existence, as opp. to non-existence; specif., life; conscious existence..."¹ But the definition of this word is a central issue in the study; "...Being is no doubt the fundamental object of inquiry, things in themselves and things in their nature .." but the problem is that it is "...only through consciousness that we can approach Being..."²

For the dialectical intellect is not a sufficient judge of essential or spiritual truths; moreover, very often by its propensity to deal with words and abstract ideas as if they were binding realities, it wears them as chains and does not look freely beyond them to the essential and total facts of our existence.³

Intellectual statement is actually an account to our intelligence; it is a justification by reasoning of a point of view which preexists in the turn of mind or temperament or in some tendency of the nature. It is a seeing of things which "...secretly predetermines the very reasoning that claims to lead to it..." Reason can be conclusive only if its perception of things is both a true and a whole seeing. Here what is needed is that the thinker see the nature and validity of human consciousness, the origin and scope of human mentality. Only then can he "...know the truth of our being and nature and of world-being and world nature..."⁴

Existential. "...Involving or pertaining to existence..." or "...Assertive, either explicitly or by implication, of existence or actuality, as opposed to mere possibility, conceivability, or ideality, or to mere explication..."⁵ It is here equivalent to *experiential*.

¹ William Allan Neilson, ed., *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* (Springfield : G. and C. Merriam Company, 1961), p 247.

² Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (New York E. P. Dutton and Company, 1951), p. 441.

³ *Ibid*, p. 440-41.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 441.

⁵ Webster's *op. cit.*, p. 894.

Individuation. "...Act of individuating or state of being individuated; process by which the individual develops his or its peculiar character..." Also the ..."development of the individual from the universal or the determination of the individual in the general..."¹ Implied in the definition is the perfecting of the individual, each according to his nature;

not to subordinate or lose himself in the mass, but to find and express that truth of being in himself and help the community and humanity in its seeking for its own truth and fullness of being must be his real object of existence...²

Organicism. "...The doctrine that life and living processes are the manifestation of an activity possible only in virtue of the state of autonomous organization of the system, rather than because of its individual components..."³

Preview of the Study

First, a review and interpretation of the main issues of modern psychology is presented. Next comes the question of scientific approach in psychology and the resulting problem of reality. The final section is devoted to the question of reality as applied to human nature and the existential psychology that may reveal the nature of the human being, making individuation possible.

Present Status of the Problem

The problem involves a survey of facets of both Eastern and Western psychology; to the writer's knowledge there have been only a few studies making this comparative study in the context of modern psychology. One is a study by Indra Sen that indicates a relation of yoga and modern psychology to education. Another is conducted by Jobst Mühlring and is quoted widely in the present study. Neither, to the writer's knowledge, has demonstrated through research the difficulties of science in the system of Western psychology. Mühlring has made a notable contribution in linking Eastern and Western psychology and in observing the import of their relationship; Sen has contributed to that objective also.⁴ But both of the men, to the writer's knowledge, have published only in India. Considering that in the United States "...the output of psychological books and articles... is greater than the total output in all other countries combined..." it seems this presentation in comparative psychology should be considered in the West, but particularly because it may throw light upon psychological inquiries into human nature and individuation.⁵

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1268.

² Sri Aurobindo, *op. cit.*, p. 930.

³ Webster's *op. cit.*, p. 1719.

⁴ Jobst Mühlring, "The Future of Psychology," *Mother India*, 12 : 20-26, April, 1960; 12 : 14-18, May, 1960, and Indra Sen, "Education and Yoga," *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual*, 4 : 134-67, August, 1945.

A. A. Roback, *History of American Psychology* (New York : Library Publishers, 1952), p. 402.

The Hypothesis

The study is conducted upon the hypothesis that the truest, most comprehensive psychology is existential or experiential and of dynamic, spiritual magnitude. The intention is not to proceed with a negative or destructive method against current psychologies "...but simply to present positively and constructively a complementary hypothesis built upon broader foundations..."¹

(*To be continued*)

MILIANA DRACHMAN

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *On the Veda* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo International University Centre, 1956), p. 3.

EVERLASTING GLORY

A MAN may carve his way to honours great
 Or deck his high-held head with diadem,
 A train of followers may bear his hem,
 Men deem him bodied glory aureate,
 World ween him champion-moulder of its fate,
 But if his soul is not a missioned gem,
 A fiery humble force of gnostic realm,
 He can be lured to some low glittering state
 Seeming more golden than the fire-pure gold,
 Or be flung down to common swarming ground—
 Where bliss-born diamond love's in poverty found
 Afflicted, trampled, ossified, encoaled—
 To learn—from starved nude body turned desouled
 And in utter sacrifice forever bound
 To Cross-humility—how to be sound,
 Firm-footed ere he be divinely bold,
 A deathless glory and a golden trust
 Of Heaven in the midst of lowly dust.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

TWO MYSTIC POEMS IN MODERN BENGALI

HERE is the first one as I translate it :

BARITONE¹

Let us all move together, one and all,
Together into the cavern of the ribs,
Raise there a song of discordant sounds—
Red and blue and white, kin or alien.

Listen, the groan plays on :
Dreams as if possessed
Swing, like bats on branches;
Is now the time for the dance ?
Come, let us all move together, one and all.

Let the streams meet in the body, one and all,
Yes, let the bones brighten up still more;
Let us all go around the fire
And scrape and eat of the very Liver, the Muse's self—
Let us go, let us go, one and all.

DIPAK MAJUMDAR

Can you make any sense out of it ? This seems to be surrealist with a ven-

¹ চলো সব দল মিলে যাই
পাঁজবেব গুম্ফাব ভেতব
শব্দেব বিকাবে গান গাই
লাল নীল সাদা আঙ্গপব

বেজে যাচ্ছে আর্তনাদ, শোনো ।
ভুতে পাওয়া স্বপ্নগুলি ঝোলে
গাছে গাছে বাদুডেব মত ।
এখনি কি স্কুক হবে নাচ ?
এসো সব দল মিলে যাই ।

সব স্রোত মিলুক শবীবে
অস্থি পাক উজ্জ্বলতা আবে
চলো যাই অগ্নিকুণ্ড ঘিবে
শিল্পেব যকৃৎ কুবে খাই—
চলো যাই, যাই চলো যাই ।

“ব্যাবিটোন”—দীপক মজুমদার—(‘দেশ’ পূজাসংখ্যা, ১৩৭০)

geance. Anyhow there is no doubt that it is a puzzle, a veritable Chinese puzzle. The puzzle however appeared to me interesting. I felt that the poet, through this cryptic—*mantric*—collocation of words and images, attempted to give expression to an uncommon experience. It was as though I entered into a Tantric experience—but of the left-handed path (*vāmācār*).

There is a Tantric discipline which speaks of the *body-fulfilment* (*kāyāsiddhi*), a spiritual consummation in and through the body; the body-consciousness, according to this view, is the greatest reality. And whatever is achieved must have its final and definitive expression and manifestation there, in that concrete reality.

The body, the body-consciousness, our poet says here, is to be a confluence, where all the streams of consciousness, all the movements of the being, flow in : movements of life-force, movements of the mind, secret urges of the subliminal physical consciousness—pure and impure, things foreign to its nature, things that are its own, elements friendly and unfriendly, all assemble in a market-place, as it were, the result being a huge horrid discordant music, a groaning, a bellowing of a queer orchestra—the bass, the lowest note of the system that the human vehicle is.

There is a call for all the parts of the being to precipitate to the very foundation of the being, coalesce and evoke a wild and weird, doleful and discordant symphony—a painful cry. Unrealised dreams, that had faded into oblivion, are now like possessed beings and hang like bats on darkling branches : they are about to begin their phantom dance. Even so, the body, the material precipitate into which they gather, gives them a basic unity. These elements with their ardour and zeal kindle a common Fire. There is a divine Flame, Agni, burning within the flesh, burning brighter and brighter, making the bones whiter and whiter, as it were—the purificatory Flame, *pāvaka*, of which the Vedic Rishis spoke, Master of the House, *grhapati*, dwelling in the inner heart of the human being, impelling it to rise to purer and larger Truth. But here our modern poet replaces the Heart by the Liver and makes of this organ the central altar of human aspiration and inspiration. We may remember in this connection that the French poet Baudelaire gave a similar high position—and function—to the other collateral organ, the spleen. The modern Bengali poet considers that man's consciousness, even his poetic inspiration, is soaked in the secretion of that bilious organ. For man's destiny here upon earth is not delight but grief, not sweetness but gall and bitterness; there is no consolation, no satisfaction here; there is only thirst, no generosity but narrowness, no consideration for others, but a huge sinister egoism.

The cry of our poet is a cry literally *de profundis*, a deep cavernous voice surging, spectral and yet sirenlike, out of the unfathomed underground abysses.

The cry has nothing in it, very evidently, like the thrill of a skylark's throat.

Something of the purer atmosphere of the heights and heavens we breathe in our second poem. We move no more here in the darker left-handed labyrinthine, path, but swim in a lighter clearer air through which passes the right handed path. Here it is in its serene simplicity :

I EMBARK¹

Trampling my own shadow
 on a long, long path I came
 And saw a river of gladness.
 I pushed the bank with my left foot
 And with my right landed into the boat.

Here a straw canopy over the head,
 A wooden floor to sit upon,
 A sure helm and an oar within reach
 And a sail to unfurl in the sky :
 All were there—

A whole lungful of breath
 Grew into a flight of white pigeons
 That found the sky.

PURNENDU PRASAD

Kasmāi devāya haviṣā vidhema ? To which god then shall we dedicate our offering ?

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

¹ নিজেৰ ছাষাকে আমি দূৰ পথ মাডিয়ে মাডিয়ে
 একটু খুসীৰ নদী দেখতে পেলাম।
 ডাঙাটা বাঁ পায়ে ঠেলে ডান পায়ে

নায়ে উঠলাম।

এখানে মাথায় ছই, বসাব মত পাটাতন
 নিৰ্ভৰ কৰাব হাল, হাতেৰ নাগালে বৈঠা,
 আকাশে মেলাব মত পাল

সব আছে।

এক বুক নিঃশ্বাস পায়বাব মত বাঁক হয়ে
 আকাশ পেয়েছে।

‘নায়ে উঠলাম’—পূৰ্ণেন্দুপ্ৰসাদ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য (প্ৰবাসী, কাৰ্ত্তিক ১৩৭০)

THE LEADER

O MOTHER, who shall ever sound the mystery of Your fathomless Love ?
If only the blind and the lame and the mutilated and the profane
Knew the omnipotence they harbour in their breast, all would change.
The hungry dog whining in the rain is made from a deathless substance.
The furious bull straddling across the path is the Lord Himself.
The nubile princess luxuriating in the revelry of senses
Crystallises for an opulent instant the potency of Your transcendence.
Death, too, is the soul's cosy tavern for the night
In its long strenuous walk towards an immortal life.
Seen under a serene light, each face is a sculptured poise of the Formless.
On the bosom of rocks a fiery joy is engraved, compassion animates cruel Fate.
A handful of earth becomes the palpitating heart of the All-Beautiful.
A glass-bead, an orange peel reveal That which has no name.
Transparent eyes recount epic tales of heroic conquests with God as the only witness.
Unknown to the beings, the spirit in them yearns and communes with the Reality.
The humblest soul sojourns nightly to its home beyond the mystic shores sealed
off by a deep sleep.
The muffled ecstasy of life in the porphyry, the gamut of passion in the mimosa,
Ease of movement and careless exuberance in a fawn, the majesty of a swan,
A rapture and a harmony that elevate man on sudden occasions,
Mark the early trajectory of Your assault on the yet unconquered peaks.

Now soft and sweet and tender, now adamant, relentless and tyrannical,
You change the technique according to the nature of Your subject.
The sails resistant to the strong winds of Your grace
Take the vessel to its destination through a contrary process.
Baptism of fire purifies the ore, transmutes the sordid into sublime.
Weak with the weakling, subtle with the cunning, comedian with the fool,
Lover with the beloved, Master with the servant, Teacher with the disciple,
Kali to the strong, Krishna to Your comrades, Mother to Your children,
You draw each one to Your breast through roads that seem to deviate.

If a lotus could appear in a corner of this lifeless Universe,
Wonder not, O soul, should a new race possess the Earth with the Mother as Leader.
The impossible becomes inevitable through the miracle of a boundless Love.

NIRANJAN GUHA ROY

ENGLISH IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

(On April 23 the four-hundredth year of Shakespeare's birth came to an end. We may give it a parting salute with the following pieces of linguistic information about him and his plays.)

“How then did Shakespeare speak ?

“We can tell from his highly idiosyncratic spellings, and it is not surprising that he spoke as a Warwickshire man would, with that country flavour—as Tennyson spoke with a Lincolnshire inflexion, and Wordsworth with a North Country burr. In Elizabethan times disparities of speech were much wider, local dialects stronger, the patterns richer and more diversified. Grandees at Court spoke with the accents of the regions they came from—as they continued to do up to the end of the Victorian age. It is familiar knowledge that Sir Walter Raleigh ‘spake broad Devonshire to his dying day’, and that is corroborated by his peculiar spellings. His not well-educated Lady, Elizabeth Throckmorton, wrote largely by ear : in her phonetic spellings we can hear the accents of her voice.¹

“Characteristic of old Warwickshire was the deeper ‘u’, which we saw reflected in the corporation accounts in the spellings ‘goones’ for ‘guns’. Shakespeare said ‘woonder’, where we say ‘wonder’, and so with that sound consistently : ‘woone’ for ‘won’, or ‘one’. The word ‘smother’ is spelt ‘smoother’. Several of the vowel-sounds are deeper, as in Warwickshire or Staffordshire dialect today : one said ‘smoake’ not modern, rather too refined, ‘smoke’, and, more heavily, ‘sturre’ for ‘stir’. On the other hand there was the light Midlands ‘u’, an inversion of southern usage : it seems from his spellings that Shakespeare said ‘kuckoo’, as proper Midlands folk still do. Other vowel-sounds were deeper, especially the long ‘a’ : Shakespeare said auncient and daunger, inchaunt and awnser.²

“Another feature was the stronger enunciation of consonants indicated in Shakespeare’s spellings, shedde, kisse, mustresse, chidde, comming, musique, starre, farre, jarre—the ‘r’ being rolled. The terminal ‘y’ had more value as we see spellings like legacie, perjurie, solitarie. One excellent vowel-sound has been lost from modern standard English, though one still hears it among old-fashioned provincial people in words like ‘fruit’, pronounced by them ‘friwt’, as the Elizabethans did. This vowel-sound appeared in words like ‘truant’ and ‘fuel’, spelt by Shakespeare ‘trewant’ and ‘fewell’. Then there is the ‘er’ sound that was pronounced broadly ‘ar’ in that age : we still preserve it in words like ‘serjeant’ and ‘clerk’. Altogether, the language as Shakespeare spoke it had a much stronger and warmer sound. With a

¹ Cf. my *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 164, 219.

² Cf. Fripp, *Shakespeare, Man and Artist*, I, 379-85, II, 859-60.

broader range and more emphatic enunciation, it was better suited to dramatic declamation : compared to our modern speech, having more character, at once more masculine and more truly poetic. It would be good to hear a Shakespeare play once more as the Elizabethans heard it."

A. L. ROWSE

William Shakespeare: A Biography (New York & Evanston, 1963), pp. 54-55

★

★

"The Elizabethans did not hear what we hear. The vowel sounds of the King's Men were purer than ours, they sounded each part of a diphthong and they avoided the *mixed* vowel. Probably there were no absolute standards of pronunciation, any more than there were of spelling, but the English spoken in London seems to have been blended of our Cockney and Northern dialects with a touch of West-Country. The *k* was sounded in *knight* and probably the *g* in *gnat*, and the *gh* in *knight* had only lately become archaic and affected. The termination—*ion* was dissyllabic. *Swan* rhymed with *man*, *pull* with *dull*, *water* with *fatter*, *daughter* with *after* (pronounced *arter*), *would* with *fool'd*, *brush* with *bush*, *coal* with *Karl*, *bald* with *gnarled*, *seam* with *same*.

"The Elizabethans probably heard something like this :

If music be the food of luv, ply on.
Give me excess of it; that soorfaying,
The appeteet my sicken and saw dee.
That strine agen, it had a deeing fahl;
Aw, it kime o'er mee air, leek the sweet soond
That braythes upon a bank of veeolets,
Stayling, and giving odour."¹

A. A. REESE

Shakespeare : His World and His Work (London, 1953)

¹ If music be the food of love, play on.
Give me excess of it; that surfeting,
The appetite may sicken and so die.
That strain again, it had a dying fall;
O, it came o'er my ear, like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour. (*Twelfth Night*, I, i. 1-7.)

WHOM GOD PROTECTS

THE LIFE-STORY OF A SPIRITUAL ADEPT

(Continued from the April issue)

3

WHERE was Kuda ? — This young boy of six could no longer bear the noise and jostling of the crowd; releasing himself from Brindavan's hand he had come quietly away, out in the open. He felt relieved and went still further away from that seething mass of humanity, imagining that it would still be sometime before the singing began.

People of all sorts, men and women with children in their arms, were still going towards the abode of Mahaprabhu, lantern in hand to light their way.

Kuda walked on. It was still dark as the moon had not yet risen. Lights were dimly burning in distant houses. When he remembered that he had come quite far from his own people, he was still not afraid. As the darkness deepened still more, he stopped and wanted to return. He had no idea that he had come on a different route, but imagining he was on the right one he started to walk again. Faintly, he could see the path lit by the lanterns carried by people still walking on the streets. Gradually he saw, that there were fewer and fewer people, the few still there were not close together. He then started following a small band, thinking they too were going towards the temple. They were four or five persons, the person at the head and another mid-way had lanterns in their hands.

These did not even know that Kuda was following them, as they never looked behind to see, nor were they going to the assembly, their destination was somewhere else. After walking for sometime Kuda thought that probably these people were not going where he wanted to go. He asked, "Where are you going? Are you not going to listen to the Kirtan singing?"

There was a woman in the party, she turned towards him and asked, "Whose child are you, my boy?"

Kuda said, "I want to go where they are going to sing Kirtan. Won't you go there?"

It was then that the man who was in the lead saw him. In the East one could just see the moon, rising behind a cluster of trees and making that quarter bright. The man came near and, peering at Kuda, saw a beautiful fair little body with hardly any clothes on. He asked, "Tell me, whose child are you?"

Kuda only replied, "Take me to my master, please."

The man and his party understood that this boy was a visitor to Navadvip and from his speech that he must have come from East Bengal. The man looked with meaning to the two women who were with him and said something that Kuda could

not at all understand. Then the man said, "Come, I will take you there." So saying, he caught hold of his hand and started to walk. The moon having risen higher, it was light and Kuda felt no fear. Gradually they came to the river Ganges.

There were many rows of boats lying anchored. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the boats seen at Navadvip were so numerous that it was difficult to count them, a thing unimaginable to-day. However, the boat onto which the party climbed was a big one, full of a lot of things. One among them took Kuda in and made him sit on a clean bed in one of the compartments; a lamp was burning in a corner.

Kuda now had a good look at the man. He was a tall, powerful man with large eyes, long hair falling down to his shoulders, a clipped moustache but with shaven chin. Kuda, it seemed, liked his appearance, as if with this man there was nothing to be afraid of.

Now, Kuda began to put one question after another to him,—where were they taking him, where did they live, was Buda there where he was being taken, why had they come here leaving the Kirtan singing and why had they brought him here? And so on. The man told Kuda that they were now on the Ganges, to-morrow morning he would see many beautiful gardens full of flowers, if he remained quiet like a good boy, to-morrow they would take him to his master.

The boat was in all readiness to leave; and at the man's order, since he was also the owner of it, it set sail. The great novelty of a boat journey kept Kuda quiet. He was also very eager to see new places. Moreover, his amazingly benignant mind that considered no one a stranger was a great gift of God. His idea was that whoever looked after him was his very own. Thus it was not at all difficult for those people to win over Kuda's affections. When they arrived at a big town after two days and three nights in the boat, Kuda had already become one of them.

In India, at the time when this happened, children, boys and girls, were stolen everywhere and sold. It was difficult to ascertain with what intention these people took Kuda with them, but they were gentle commercial people with fine manners—so Kuda took them to be good folks. They, too, took all care of Kuda.

Even on the boat journey they had started to call Kuda by another name, Panchoo; they explained to him that Kuda was not a nice name, Panchoo a far better one as it was also the name of the Lord. To this also Kuda raised no objection. They had a house on the bank of the Ganges, a one-storeyed brick building with a nice garden, where they lived. They had a son also, named Bidhu. It did not take long for these two boys to become good friends. As Kuda raised no problem, they too enforced no strict rules on him. Occasionally, if he strayed a little too far while playing, the master of the house used to warn him not to do so, as there were child-lifters who might catch him and take him away in a sack. Within a few days of Kuda's arrival here, Bidhu's father went away alone to a destination, of which he spoke to none. No one accompanied him this time. He returned after an absence of about twenty days. Kuda noticed also that Bidhu's father used very often to leave for sometime, after staying for four or five days at home.

Along with Bidhu Kuda had another companion here, a girl, whose family belonged to this part of the world. She was six years old, married too; her name was Parvati. They grew very fond of each other. On the high banks of the Ganges, they played about in great happiness. Kuda used to entertain her and Bidhu with his songs and dancing. It was Parvati who told him the name of this town—Bhagalpur. She knew a great deal about the place, what were the big festivals, how many kinds of toys came on those occasions, fireworks, what were the kinds of sweets that were available, all this information she readily gave to Kuda. Kuda, eyes wide in astonishment, used to listen to her eagerly.

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Parvati did not get much time to play, as her people were rather poor, and she had to help in a lot of household work in spite of her young age. Occasionally she was roundly scolded by her mother when any work was not satisfactorily done, and this often caused a good deal of pain to Kuda. He used to be very surprised too to see Parvati at work in the house. Although it was true, that she did not get as much time to come and play with the others, yet she filled the short intervals of play in such a way that no one could feel her absence when she was not there.

Parvati's people had their hut just beside the garden belonging to Bidhu's people. From the very beginning Kuda was reluctant to stay in-doors, loving the open always, he used to come quite often to Parvati's hut. At times he used to eat the simple food Parvati's mother gave him with a great affection, he too used to eat it with a great relish. Parvati figured in Kuda's later life too, as he never forgot her. In this way when Kuda had passed a year of his life in his new surroundings playing about joyfully and captivating everyone's heart, something quite unforeseen happened in his life.

One morning, playing all by himself, he had strayed far from the house on the banks of the river. Kuda could not yet manage his clothes and thus used to go about quite naked—in those days children of his age were rarely encumbered with clothes, sometimes they wore a loincloth but Kuda did not have anything except a tiny little bell and an amulet on a string around his waist. He used to dislike the loincloth intensely, but if Bidhu's mother pressed him, he used to say, "When I shall leave home as a Sadhu, then I shall wear it." Thus even on that day he had no clothes on.

Oblivious of his whereabouts, when he had come quite far along the bank of the Ganges, startled he saw a terrifying figure in front of him. The figure had long matted locks, burning red eyes, a big vermilion mark on his forehead, a human skull in his hand, a leopard-skin wrapped around his waist and loins. As he saw Kuda, he made signs to the boy to come near him.

Frightened Kuda did not advance any further, and asked from a safe distance, "What are you saying?"

The Kapalik¹ said, "Come here near me, where do you stay?"

Kuda was still more frightened, he had never before been so frightened of any man. He thought this must be the kidnapper of boys that Bidhu's father had warned him about and ran for all his worth, without looking to right or left, till he reached home, in one burst of speed.

When he arrived at the door he turned round and saw the Kapalik coming behind him very rapidly. Bidhu's father was there too; Kuda pointing behind him said in a plaintive voice, "There, see who is coming."

The Kapalik began to talk to Bidhu's father, watched by the frightened Kuda, but he could hear nothing of what was said. The Kapalik left after a long conversation with Bidhu's father, who asked Kuda with a smile, "Would you like to go to the Bhairav babu?"

Kuda said, "No, no, I shall not go to him, he is the Kidnapper of whom you spoke the other day."

Bidhu's father said, "Not at all, why should he be the Kidnapper, he is a Sadhu and a good man, he will love you. He will show you the Goddess Kali and you could stay with him."

Of all the idols Kuda was most afraid of the image of Kali; so with a vehement shake of his head in denial he quickly went in to his new mother and told her all. Kuda had begun to address Bidhu's mother as his own. She, too, gave him a mother's affection. She took him on her lap and said, fondly stroking his head, "No, why should you go to him, you will stay with me, what do you say?" Hearing this, Kuda too calmed down.

(To be continued)

PRAMODE KUMAR CHATTERJEE

(Translated by Kalyan K. Chaudhuri from the Bengali)

¹ A follower of a certain *sava* sect (the left-hand order).

THE DESTINY OF THE BODY

THE SEER-VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

PART TWO : THE CONQUEST OF SLEEP

VIII. THE MASTERY OF THE NIGHTS

Sadhana can go on in the dream or sleep state as well as in the waking.

(Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga, II*, Tome Two, p. 575)

To make use of the nights is an excellent thing, it has a double effect : a negative effect, it prevents you from falling backward, losing whatever you have gained—that, indeed, is painful—and a positive effect, you make some progress, you continue your progress. (The Mother, *Bulletin*, Vol. XII No. 4, p. 91)

THE Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo has for its goal the total transformation of our nature as well as the complete liberation of our being. But in our normal waking state we are conscious only of a very restricted field and action of our nature, the rest of it remaining and functioning behind the opaque veil of our surface personality. But, since all that we 'become and do and bear' in our outer life is prepared and governed by these concealed zones of activity subconscious and subliminal to our waking awareness, it assumes an "immense importance for a yoga which aims at the transformation of life to grow conscious of what goes on within these domains, to be master there and be able to feel, know and deal with the secret forces that determine our destiny and our internal and external growth or decline."¹

Now, as we have noted before, sleep like yogic trance opens the gate to these subliminal worlds and allows us an entry into the more significant realms of our existence. And although it is a fact that in the ordinary undeveloped state of our consciousness most of our sleep-experience remains unknown to our cognition and even the little that manages to reach our recording surface does so in the form of dreams and dream figures and "not in that condition which might be called an inner waking and which is the most accessible form of the trance state,"² through a proper and methodical self-disciplining we may grow in consciousness in sleep itself so much so that in the end we may follow in uninterrupted awareness our passage through various realms of our inner being and the return journey therefrom. "At a certain pitch of this inner wakefulness this kind of sleep, a *sleep of experiences* can replace the ordinary subconscious slumber."³

¹ *On Yoga, II*, Tome Two, p. 110.

² *The Life Divine*, p. 383.

³ *On Yoga, II*, Tome Two, p. 142.

It is then that we have veridical dreams, dream-experiences of great value, conveying truths that are not so easy to get in our ordinary waking state. Thus problems are solved in our dream consciousness, which our waking consciousness could not possibly cope with; we are provided with warnings and premonitions and indications of the future, and with "records of happenings seen or experienced by us on other planes of our own being or of universal being into which we enter."¹

Our sleep-existence, if we are conscious in it, renders us another valuable service in the exploration of our subconscious nature that contains much that is obscure in us but not distinguishably active in the waking state. A conscious pursuit of the subconscious wanderings of our sleep-consciousness brings to our notice a class of dreams that "arise from the revenge of our inner being freed for a moment from the constraint that we impose on it. These dreams often allow us to perceive some of the tendencies, tastes, impulses and desires of which we would not otherwise be conscious so long as our will to realise our ideal held them down, hidden in some obscure recess of our being."² For it is one of the most disconcerting discoveries made in sadhana that what we have thought to have settled and done with in the upper layers of our consciousness are obstinately retained by our glutinous subconscious. And just for that reason, as Sri Aurobindo has pointed out, these dreams provide us with a useful indication, for "they enable us to pursue things to their obscure roots in this underworld and excise them."³

Thus we see that the fields of our sleep if properly cultivated can yield us a great and effective aid on our road towards self-knowledge and self-mastery, also in the pursuit of our nature-transformation. But how to acquire a cognition of the activities of our nights ? How to transform the nature of our sleep ?

The procedure to deal with sleep and dreamland may be said to have three main limbs: (1) how best to enter the state of sleep? (2) how to remain conscious in sleep itself? and (3) how to retain the memory of our dream-experiences even when we come back to the waking awareness ?

In our quest for the answers to this triple query, to whom else should we turn than to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the supreme masters of the fourfold worlds of our being, *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *susupti* and *tūriya* ? So we make no apology for quoting *in extenso* from their luminous writings in an attempt to offer some hints to aspiring seekers.

HOW BEST TO ENTER THE STATE OF SLEEP ?

"You must lie flat on your back and relax all the muscles and nerves...to be like what I call a piece of cloth on the bed, nothing else remains. If you can do that with the mind also, you get rid of all stupid dreams that make you more tired when you

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 382.

² *The Mother, Words of Long Ago*, p. 36.

³ *On Yoga, II*, Tome Two, p. 582

get up than when you went to bed. It is the cellular activity of the brain that continues without control, and that tires much. Therefore *a total relaxation*, a kind of *complete calm, without tension* in which everything is stopped. But this is only the beginning.

“Afterwards, a self-giving as total as possible, of all, from top to bottom, from the outside to the inmost, and an eradication also as total as possible of all resistance of the ego, and you begin repeating your mantra—your mantra, if you have one or any other word which has power over you, a word leaping from the heart, spontaneously, like a prayer and that sums up your aspiration. After having repeated a few times, if you are accustomed to it, you *get into trance*. And from that trance you pass into sleep. The trance lasts as long as it should and quite naturally, spontaneously you pass into sleep. But when you come back from this sleep, you remember everything, *the sleep was but a continuation of the trance*.

“Fundamentally the sole purpose of sleep is to enable the body to assimilate the effect of the trance so that the effect may be accepted everywhere, to enable the body to do its natural function of the night and eliminate the toxins. And when it wakes up, there is no trace of heaviness which comes from sleep, the effect of the trance continues.

“Even for those who have never been in trance, it is good to repeat a mantra, a word, a prayer before going into sleep. But there must be a life in the words, I do not mean an intellectual signification, nothing of that kind, but *a vibration*. And on the body its effect is extraordinary : it begins to vibrate, vibrate, vibrate... and quietly you let yourself go as though you wanted to get into sleep. The body vibrates more and more and still more and away you go.”¹ [Italics ours.]

HOW TO RETAIN THE AWARENESS OF DREAMS ?

The first part of this discipline should naturally deal with the question how to recognise our dreams and, above all, to distinguish between them, for as we have seen before, they vary greatly in their nature and quality. Often in the same night we may have several dreams which belong to different categories and thus have different intrinsic value. Now, as regards the procedure which we should adopt to retain the memory of our nights, let us listen to the words of the Mother :

“...There is almost always a considerable divergence between what our mental activity actually is and the way in which we perceive it, and especially the way in which we remain conscious of it. In its own sphere, this activity determines what vibrations are to be transmitted by repercussion up to the cellular system of our cerebral organ, but in our sleepy brain, the subtle vibrations from the suprasensible domain can only affect a very limited number of cells; the inertia of most of the organic supports of cerebral phenomena reduces the number of their active elements,

impoverishes the mental synthesis and makes it unfit to reproduce the activity of the internal states other than *by images*, oftenest very vague and inappropriate....

"The cerebral rendering of the activities of the night is at times so much distorted that a form is given to phenomena which is *the exact opposite of the reality*....

"(But) if one knows how to translate in intellectual language the more or less inadequate images by which the brain reproduces these facts, one may learn many things which the too limited physical faculties do not permit us to perceive.

"Some even succeed, by a special culture and training, in acquiring and retaining the consciousness of the deeper activities of their inner being *independently of their cerebral transcription* and are able to recall and know them in the waking state in all the plenitude of their faculties....

"How (then) to cultivate this field of action ? how to acquire a *cognition of our activities of the night* ?...

"The same *discipline of concentration* which enables a man no longer to remain a stranger to his inner activities in the waking state, also furnishes him with the means of removing the ignorance of those, still richer, of the diverse states of sleep.

"Usually these activities leave only rare and confused memories behind them.

"One finds however that at times a fortuitous circumstance, an impression received, a word pronounced is enough to *reawaken suddenly to consciousness the whole of a long dream* of which the moment before there was no recollection.

"From this simple fact we may infer that our conscious activity participates very feebly in the phenomena of the sleeping state, as in the normal state of things they would remain *lost for ever in subconscious memory*....

"One who wishes to recover the memory of a forgotten dream should in the first place fix his attention on such vague impressions as the dream might have left trailing behind it and follow the indistinct traces as far as possible.

"This regular exercise would let him go farther every day *towards the obscure retreat of the subconscious* where the forgotten phenomena of sleep take refuge and thus mark out a route easy to follow between the two domains of consciousness.

"One practical remark to be made from this point of view is that the absence of memory is very often due to the *abruptness* with which the return to consciousness takes place. At this moment, in fact, new activities break into the field of consciousness, drive out forcibly all that is foreign to them and afterwards make more difficult the work of concentration necessary to recall the things thus expelled. This is facilitated, on the contrary, whenever certain mental and even physical precautions are observed for a peaceful transition from one state to another."¹ [*Italics ours.*]

Thus, the slipping away of the memory of our nights can be greatly remedied

¹ The Mother, *Words of Long Ago*, pp 38-44

Cf. Sri Aurobindo : "(The disappearance) of the dream consciousness (taking) away its scenes and experiences with it ... can sometimes be avoided by not coming out abruptly into the waking state or getting up quickly, but remaining quiet for a time to see if the memory remains or comes back." (*On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 587.)

and a power developed of going back in memory from dream to dream, from state to state, till a sufficiently coherent knowledge of our sleep life is built up.

But this training of the faculties of memory, as we shall presently see, does not prove sufficient to link the totality of our sleep-existence with our waking awareness. For that we have to grow conscious in the state of sleep itself.

HOW TO GROW CONSCIOUS IN SLEEP

The training of our physical memory to follow back the thread of our dream-activities fails to give its full dividend for the simple reason that in this way we are "able to transform into conscious phenomena of the waking state those alone which were already so, be it most fleetingly, during sleep. For *where there was no consciousness, there can be no memory.*"¹ [Italics ours.]

We should therefore seek, in the second place, to extend the participation of consciousness to a greater number of activities in the sleeping state. Now, "the daily habit of going with interest over the various dreams of the night, thus transforming their vestiges little by little into precise memories as well as that of noting them down on waking are very helpful from this point of view.

"By virtue of these habits, the mental faculties will be induced to adapt their mechanism to the phenomena of this order and to direct upon them their attention, curiosity and power of analysis.

"It will then produce a sort of *intellectualisation of dream*, achieving the double result of interspersing the conscious activities more and more intimately in the play, hitherto disordered, of the activities of the sleeping state and of augmenting progressively the scope of these activities by making them more and more rational and instructive.

"Dreams would then take on the character of precise visions and, at times, of dream revelations."²

But along with this participation of mental consciousness, this revelatory intellectualisation of dreams, we must try to cultivate a still higher and deeper mode of consciousness in sleep. In fact, our sleep-life should be as much a part of sadhana as the waking one, and the developing consciousness that we attain in our waking state through spiritual endeavour and aspiration should extend itself fully and continuously also to the sleep state. It is true that at the beginning and for a long time it becomes difficult to maintain the consciousness at the same pitch at night, for "the true consciousness comes at first in the waking state or in meditation, it takes possession of the mental, the vital, the conscious physical, but the subconscious vital and physical remain obscure and this obscurity comes up when there is sleep or an inert relaxa-

¹ *Words of Long Ago*, p. 44.

² *Ibid*, pp 44-45

tion.”¹ But with the growth of an intense sadhana in our waking state, when we develop our inner being, live from in without and our subconscious is enlightened and penetrated by the Mother’s light, this disparity and this dislocation of consciousness disappears, and our “sadhana goes on in the dream or sleep state as well as in the waking.”²

THE LURE OF THE DREAM-CONSCIOUSNESS

At this point of our discussion we would like to address a note of warning to the seekers after the mastery of their nights.

Through a proper cultivation of the fields of sleep-existence, when the inner sleep consciousness begins to develop and along with it appear dream experiences as distinct from ordinary dreams, there is often an irresistible pull on the consciousness to withdraw from its waking status, go within and follow the development there even when there is no fatigue or need of sleep—so alluring are the experiences of dream-consciousness, so overwhelming is the charm thereof !

But this attraction of the sleep world must not be allowed to encroach on the waking hours and the “wanting to get back to something interesting and enthralling which accompanies the desire to fall into sleep”³ should be effectively curbed. Otherwise there may be an undesirable unbalancing and “a decrease of the hold on outer realities.”⁴

(To be continued)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *On Yoga, II, Tome Two, p. 573.*

² *Ibid, p. 575.*

³ & ⁴ *Ibid., p 143*

ESSAYS ON SAVITRI AND PARADISE LOST

PHILOSOPHY

(Continued)

THE last principle is Grace. Without this, nothing could be, Savitri's descent into birth is an act of Grace. The resurrection of Satyavan is the result of Grace. In fact, the whole of human phenomenal existence would lose its meaning without it.

Grace is the causeless aid, the power that saves, guides, uplifts, supports and encourages as an inner influence or an overt miracle. It makes the impossible a possibility, the unknown to be known, the unheard to be audible. This makes Christ intervene between man's doom and God's anger. It opposes death in Savitri and laughs at the fate to come. It comes as a light or as a presence; or perhaps as a sudden revelatory intuition; it may enter as a ray of hope and illumine like a flash of occult lightning. Its ways of working are many and varied. It works in all and nothing is below its hand of solicitude.

As a principle, it comes from the Eternal Shakti in her highest aspect that stands between the veiled and inscrutable distances of the transcendental Reality and the phenomenon of man's existence and thought. It is the great mediatrix. But it is not the creative power. Yet the creatrix consents to create due to its intervention, and Time as the great annihilator withdraws its cosmic dance of destruction due to its mediation. Its task is to preserve and awake and render effective the light and bliss and power that remain above as uncreated influences and presences.

But this too can work under certain conditions. There must be some readiness on the part of the being to listen to its call. That is why we see Aswapathy aspiring, and preparing himself for the great ascent that is the prologue to the descent of Grace. No doubt this Grace helped his journey across the vistas of the cosmic planes; but its aid could not be, unless he was open to its inner influence. He faced the sons of darkness, of evil; he encountered the demons, goblins, gods; he was in paradise he rested in the realm of the soul. But nothing could stop his journey or satisfy his deeper need to see and experience the highest Reality and gather from her the boon that she should consent to be born as a woman to save this ailing world. Behind all this was the hand of Grace. But strangely enough we do not meet it in *Paradise Lost*. Archangel Gabriel's advent on earth, ordered by God, before man's fall, was not an act of Grace but only a warning. Christianity has only one example of the action of Grace—that of Christ's sacrifice for man. But in *Savitri* we find the action at many places. We see it save Savitri from the clutch of the Nihil. It saves Aswapathy from the demon-hordes. It leads Satyavan to Savitri, and their mutual recognition is a cardinal way of its working. Savitri's reliance on something greater than fate almost

prophetically is due to its working unseen behind the scene. But Narada's warning is not an act of Grace; it was an excuse for Grace to work and lead Savitri to make her supreme choice. Here the Miltonic warning by the Archangel is analogous. Where Savitri stood out firm, there Adam wavered and fell. Grace could not work in Adam but in Savitri it came out indomitable and clear. One became a ready instrument of Grace and the other fell back too shy and weak to bear the divine burden.

Grace as a concept is almost a universal one, differing only in its implication. But the Grace Sri Aurobindo speaks of in *Savitri* differs from that of the Vaishnava concept—this concept brings in a personal character, rather than something universal in nature. Again, Sri Aurobindo's idea differs from the Roman Catholic where Grace is conditioned and not universal. What we find in *Savitri* is the twofold aspect of universal and personal, it is both conditional and unconditional. It can intervene where hope cannot be nor any solution; or it can answer a prayer. In its universal aspect it aids the process of evolution, standing between transcendence and the cosmic phenomenon. It may work from within as an aspiration to overcome the present limits or as an overt outpouring of itself into the vessel of soul, mind and life to give the needed force, the requisite patience, fortitude or courage or a sudden withdrawing of all hindrances. Its way of working seems always unforeseen.

Be it the Divine Will or the Grace, both are aspects of the one undivided Spirit—the single consciousness. This abides above the evolving world of inborn ignorance and above also the saving flame of the soul. These three form one unit of the lower hemisphere as the other three form the upper unit. Taken as a whole this is the basic idea of Sri Aurobindo's scheme of creation. With this as the background we can proceed further to examine other relevant matters that occur in *Savitri*.

The cosmos that Sri Aurobindo conceives is infinite, out of which a certain light is thrown so that we seize what applies specially to the terrestrial creation. Other creations are beyond our grasp. But he does speak of other earths and suns and heavens, implying realities that are extra-terrestrial.

The Upanishads tell us of the seven suns. These are representative godheads in the different zones of consciousness beginning with the highest and ending with the most physical—the visible solar body. Sri Aurobindo accepts this theory. They represent the concentration of light, energy and power in the regions of supermind, in the world of the Gods, in the triple foundations of mind and life and body, in the planes of the inner realities of soul and in the supreme unmanifested Brahman. Each has its own peculiar field of consciousness and works in its own characteristic manner. Yet none are like the Monads of Leibnitz, but fuse with one another and work in harmony.

There are also the seven earths. These are occult realities. Only the most crude and manifest is the geological unit we can physically perceive. Standing behind and above are the earths of cause, of ideal, of ideation, of sense, of subtle physical reality and of soul. They are closely linked with man's psychological hierarchies as spoken

of by the Upanishads and Sri Aurobindo. These govern the existence of the earths, of man and everything that breathes on the soil of earth.

There are the heavens as well, the highest point of harmony of each part of consciousness. Thus Sri Aurobindo reveals to us the existence of the life-heavens, the thought-heavens, the heavens of the ideal, the heavens of the gods and of the soul. Here the pure substances of all the parts of consciousness reside and from there influence and help their corresponding powers below. They are the very essence of all these and represent the functions, *raison d'être*s and causes of modes of consciousness. But they do not share man's toil or his defeat or his struggle. They live apart and indifferent to the grossness of outer nature.

Stars have an occult significance; they occupy an important role in *Savitri's* cosmological field. Generally the stars are the powers of new creation. Also they signify the pointers in the path of the Infinite. They guide and reveal; they are also the hands of fate. Sri Aurobindo does not ignore their astrological implications.

On the whole he accepts the modern scientific view of the universe. But to this he adds his own spiritual and occult experience. This gives a totality to his concept and, instead of the empirical ground of uncertainty, it lends him the sureness of a seer. Thus when he travels with Aswapathy or Savitri across the cosmos, we feel the universal components, not as mere outer facts but inner and concrete realities. Even when Savitri escapes into the nameless void, the all-negating Nirvana, the experience is tangible and unmistakable. But Sri Aurobindo does not harp on the outer universe as such. He speaks rather of inner and occult realities of which this physical universe is the sign.

Closely linked with the concept of the cosmos is the concept of the gods. What are these gods? There are the Vedic pantheon, the Dravidian deities, the Puranic gods, the Greek gods, the Christian angels, the Germanic powers, and the primitive gods—to which of these does he point? Gods in their innate significance are powers, presences and formations of occult realities put out specifically to lead, control, supervise the workings of different domains of consciousness. They occupy different stages, heavens, worlds and planes and their functions too are varied. Thus Sri Aurobindo accepts all concepts of gods and yet he rejects the totalitarian aspect which is ascribed to them by the different religions. As there is an ascending scale of planes of consciousness, there is also a corresponding gradation of the gods. Close to the earth are the deities of subtle matter, spoken of as nymphs, maenads, etc. in Hellenic myths. They are subtle-physical forces that infiltrate down something of the higher influence by their intervention and presence. Above are the gods of the little life, entities of small vital powers. Still higher are the gods of life proper, full of joy and 'voluptuous innocence'. They gambol in the heady stream of their desire. Most of the Hellenic gods and Saxon deities belong to this domain. They can be intensely cruel, and yet full of compassion. They also seem to be the replicas of man with all his moods. Higher still is the region of mind and its equivalent gods. Powers of an ideal, of one moral code, of a single outstanding idea—they are the gods of intelli-

gence—the Puranic deities, the Semitic God, the Christian angels and all presences that work on man when he becomes a mentalised being from the status of a vital and emotional creature. These gods too are relentless in their working and they work within the fixed boundaries of their domains. They live in the insubstantial heavens of their ideals, happy in ease, content in their fantasy.

The domain of the real gods begins after one has ascended beyond the intelligence. Here is the dominion of the Vedic gods—the beings in charge of cosmic powers. With their wider span and intenser power they can control to a certain degree human destiny. Varuna, Indra, Agni and the Maruts belong to this sphere. Here also are the gods that aid the evolutionary march of the world by their constant pressure and guidance from above as revelation and inspiration. Some of the Brahminical gods are here too. But in *Savitri* we have only a hint and not any clear description. Upon the Overmind plane are the largest of these gods and powers, emanations and typical deities. Kali, Saraswati, Laksmi, Durga and other emanations of the Divine Energy reside on this plane—the furthest limit of mixed Knowledge-Ignorance. Krishna also is here. Crossing beyond this region, we transcend the formations and divisions of the gods. Here are the vistas of Virat, the unique of the Upanishads. It is to this supreme height Savitri ascends to receive the boon of New Life and New Birth. There is no division, no concentration of energy on a particular aspect of consciousness. There is no shadow of Ignorance here but one supernal and total Truth-consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo rarely names any of the gods he indicates for he is not concerned with their names but with their essential nature and being, personality and formation of the consciousness and energy and he regards all else as superfluous. He does not rely on myth or folk-lore but what he has experienced enters into his poem as a definite character. He has experienced all elemental beings and gods and angels, from the most close to the earth to the most ethereal, but he does not give them any name or accept the names ascribed to them by the different religions. This is because he has risen beyond religion into the sphere of spirituality. Also, religion to him is a product of man's evolutionary nature like ethics and aesthetics and begins with limitation. He does not accept ignorance, so he ignores its by-product.

There is a hierarchy in this creation. There is a gradation in the fields of consciousness. The whole of Book II and Book VI reveal to us Sri Aurobindo's vision of creation as a hierarchy. Sri Aurobindo rejects the concepts of a heaven shut away impermeably from earth. There is a gradation everywhere; even our grossest human sheath is not a water-tight compartment, it admits influences from subtler worlds and itself is the seat of psychological centres.

We have, to begin with, matter. It is the most inert, opaque, asleep, blind to the pressure of the Spirit. But in it is the concealed energy, the fountain of power. Greater is the subtle-physical, which does not leave the limits of the outer matter but admits vaguely something of the influence from above. Higher still is the region of life and beyond it the apex of thought. Then there are the three large steps between

the Reason and the Overmind. Sri Aurobindo has descriptions of them to show us their specific luminosities.

The Overmind occupies an important place in *Savitri*. It is from here that Savitri reaches beyond into the Gnostic ethers. This is shown as the consciousness where the veils covering the unitary principle of Truth are created. It shuts away Satyavan from her. Death as a principle derives from this height. Ignorance as a dividing power has its distant origin here, though Overmind itself is not ignorant in the sense of being unaware of the basic Oneness.

Then we have the subliminal curve. This runs parallel to the hierarchies named just now. But the components of it stand behind these as inner principles. First we have the world-soul. It is a silent illumined gulf, the point of rest for the souls between the stages of births. It is ever blissful, silent and pure. Then there are other subliminal spheres standing behind the formations of mind, life and matter, as supports to and *raison d'être*s of these apparent waves of existences.

These inner fields determine much of the events and occurrences that manifest in these phenomenal parts, their growth and fulfilment, their maturity and the attainment of their inherent nature and the mission of their existence. From above come the waves of pressure from larger dominions of Mind which too influence and condition the growth below. Sri Aurobindo conceives the world and man not as a separate and disjointed result, occurrence or formation, but as a continued and harmonious process, an extension, a projection and an interdependent marvel of becoming. Man is all that the world is. And the world is what the inner and supernal hierarchy of consciousness is.

In man's body too there are these psychological processes, the reflection of the hierarchies. In "The Book of Yoga" and in Book Ten, in the final phase of struggle between Death and Savitri, we come across descriptions of this process. Tantra shows us their inner reality; but Sri Aurobindo realises them as practical principles. As in all things, he does not speak from the books, but from his own experience: he gives us facts and truths which surpass fiction.

(To be continued)

ROMEN

BRAHMAN DEVOURING BRAHMAN !

I AM on my bed, reading Dr. Munthe's "The Story of San Michele". Quite an absorbing book.

Of a sudden my attention is distracted by a soft flutter of delicate wings. A big moth is on the wall. The lizard's eye, that never misses anything worthy of its stupendous appetite, is on the alert. Now it is about to catch the moth. (I am looking with a witnessing yet intense curiosity at this cruel Game of life !) Fortunately, the moth flies away farther off, as though sensing the imminent danger. (I am relieved but with a presentiment that the Eventual will soon come about.) The lizard is where it is, still, perhaps despairing over the sumptuous dish it has just missed, but yet resolute. Its eyes are shot wide-open, gleaming, afire with a new vitality which was dormant just a while ago. Its head is erect. Its whole body, generally sluggish, shabby and flabby, having now assumed a different *rupa*, is quite a marvel. It's all a hidden spring, a sudden and most often sure leap. I am waiting to see its next move with awe and wonder. Yet if I wish I can easily drive it into its hole and thus save the poor moth; or I can simply put off the light, thus being partial to none.

Am I a sinner because I did neither ? Or am I to be retributed because I am the cause of providing food for the ever-hungry lizard ? Should I never read at night with the light on, or should not the sun ever rise because with its dawning light an unending drama of life and death begins ?...

While these thoughts criss-crossed my mind—the perpetual battle-field of Sin and Virtue, of Impulse and Resistance—the moth hovered out of its distant safety and, as it were, offered itself up to the lizard. (What reckless heroism ! or what selfless sacrifice ! thought I. Or is the credit to be given entirely to the hypnotising power of the lizard ?...

The moth is now in the lizard's jaws. Its wings are fluttering desperately. Brahman the Eater devouring Brahman the Eaten ! Life struggling vainly to free itself out from the impassible jaws of Life !

Enough ! I jump out of my bed. The lizard instinctively hides itself under my tennis racket. Oh ! I can now smash it into two in a second. (I don't take pride in this superior strength of mine, rather I envy the cool-blooded devourer) But Something holds me back, and says :

"Who are *you* to interfere with *my* Play ?"

Trembling I made bold : "Revered Sir, Unknown and Unknowable, I too am one of the players of *Your* Game, even as the lizard is, am I not ?"

I took up the book I was reading and laid myself on the bed. I fell a-brooding. Always this grim face of Reality teases me out of thought. Yet what a killing paradox Man is ! When I consider my own body with a scientific eye, I see it is as none other than an unending battlefield, though I see not the rude slaughter and the crude blood,

It is a solidification of this very Drama of life and death. Then insensibly questions arise : To do away with it, should I then destroy myself ? And even if I did so, would I really put an end to this eternal Dance, the quintessence of Life ?...

“If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.
.....
They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings.”

I hear a gentle ruffle. With its prize in the mouth the lizard is triumphantly running away, perhaps having a good laugh at my inactively active mind, or perhaps priding itself on its power of hypnosis ?..

Comes ringing into my ear :

“Dig deeper, deeper yet
Till thou reach the grim foundation-stone
And knock at the keyless gate.”

BIBHASH JYOTI MUTSUDDI

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness, by *Satprem*, translated from the French by Tehmi, published by India Library Society, 416 Broadway, New York City. Price : Rs. 50:- in India. Available from Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

Oozing and forming out of the golden peak of consciousness revealed by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, a crystal icicle glides down, glowing in the aura of Grace. A marvellous book is born. Yes, although ‘Of making many books there is no end’¹ rarely is a book *born* with a personality capable of ‘an action.’²

If the prime importance of Satprem’s work lies in the greatness of its theme, the ‘message’ of the Master and the Mother,

¹ *Ecclesiastes*, XII 12

² Said Martin Luther, “Every great book is an action.”

Calling the adventure of consciousness and joy
And conquering Nature's disillusioned breast,¹

the next, nay, almost simultaneously remarkable thing about it is the treatment which achieves a synthesis, at once soothing and stimulating, of Sri Aurobindo's Life and Yoga. Extending over seventeen chapters, an indispensable introduction and a valuable Appendix, the book not only communicates a sense of oceanic vastness with its discourses on Sri Aurobindo's Yoga but also conveys a feel of surging speech, like waves at intervals, with episodes from his Life. Indeed, what can be more thrilling than to recall (as the author suggests), after reading a powerful quotation from *On Yoga* II, Tome I, about the 'texture of mind' being 'a substance of eternal and indestructible peace', that "Sri Aurobindo was then directing a revolutionary movement and preparing guerilla warfare in India"? Thus several times Satprem provides occasion to realise to some extent why Sri Aurobindo has said that nothing of his Life was on the surface for men to see. Yet, most faithfully, the author has put forth glimpses of the Life he lived, not with the slightest air of audacity to attempt an interpretation, but with a reverential amazement at the mighty Silence that was the Life, the Silence that was the Action. Nothing on the surface for men to see, we cannot but marvel at the mere surface which, even when realised a little, proves so simple a justification of his Yoga, "the first secret" of which, to quote Satprem, "is undoubtedly to have always refused to cut life into two—action, meditation, inner, outer, and all the gamut of our false separation..."

Yet, the book "presents just one aspect of Sri Aurobindo, the most practical one." This has been declared at the very entrance. This is wise and humble, since indeed Sri Aurobindo and the Mother constitute, as subjects of exposition, almost an impossibility beyond their own words (and Providence be thanked, they do not depend on bare words to be realised). Hence our author does not spare any opportunity to quote their words,—words which can open avenues for undreamt-of adventures, "for those who yearn for a truth of life and not only a truth with eyes closed." The book has been written from the point of view of the West, where a desperate search for new values has been extensively manifested in various forms in the recent past. If "The first sign of a new man probably is that he awakens to a terrible lack of something, which neither his science, nor churches, nor his fleshy pleasures can give him", then signs too in the West are unmistakably distinct. On the one hand there are those outbursts of disillusionments and frustrations in art and literature and in all spheres of society and, on the other, there is the most interesting statement coming very recently from an important quarter of science, declaring a state of lull there, which could not be anything else unless there arrived a new genius to revolutionise the fundamental conceptions. If Einstein stressed 'the mysterious' as 'the source of all true art and science', missile-expert Werner

¹ *Savitri*, Book I, Canto I

Von Braun believes in an 'immortal soul'. But the chasm between such a belief and its relevance to the fretful life of today not only remains the same, but unfortunately widens as bad engineers attempt to bridge it. Two of the most pathetic intellectual somersaults of our time will be witnessed in the late Mr. Aldous Huxley's claim to 'change man's mind' by drugs (which of course may not be necessary if the theory of Positive Eugenics fathers a future humanity of choice-drawn breed !), and in Mr. Arthur Koestler's pilgrimage to the East in quest of a spiritual panacea and his ultimate discovery that he had nothing to learn from the East.¹

To a West, embittered by 'manufactured hatred' and betrayed by its own intellectuals, the present book will be a welcome challenge—of Love and Faith. "Only the seeker must understand that he is being born to another life and that his new eyes, his new senses are not yet formed, like those of the new-born child who alights in the world. It is not a diminution of consciousness but a passage to a new consciousness : *The cup (has to be) left clean and empty for the divine liquor to be poured into it.* Our only resource in these circumstances is to stick to our aspiration and to make it grow and grow, exactly through this terrible lack of everything, as a fire into which we throw all our old things, our old life, our old ideas, our feelings—simply, we have the unshakable faith that behind this passage there is a door which opens. And our faith is not senseless; it is not the stupidity of the credulous but a foreknowledge, something in us which knows before us, sees before we do and which sends its vision to the surface in the form of a need, a seeking, an inexplicable faith. *Faith, says Sri Aurobindo, is an intuition not only waiting for experience to justify it, but leading towards experience.*"²

The entire book is charged with this warmth of assurance. The reader will easily prove himself a 'good-conductor', as this warmth, which is the power of Truth in action, is destined to pass into him. The first title of the book is 'Sri Aurobindo', and we may remember the Mother's words : "What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme."

As soon as one commences reading the book one ungratefully forgets that brief bracketed phrase in the title page, 'Translated from the French by Tehmi'—perhaps the only occasion when ungratefulness means in reality the highest compliment.

And glory to the India Library Society, New York, for having proved the best of ambassadors to the West !

MANOJ DAS

¹ The account of his sojourn, titled *The Lotus and The Robot*, is under ban in India and, as a friend from America assures, Indians have nothing to lose due to the ban. However, many might have read parts of his account as they first appeared in *Encounter*.

² The quoted passage is from the book under review, whereas the italicised words therein occur in Sri Aurobindo's *On Yoga II*, Tome II.

IMPARTIAL HISTORY

(We propose to publish from time to time extracts from articles which strike us as presenting national or international events and issues in an impartial light coloured by no political prejudices but charged only with love of truth, freedom, human welfare, honourable peace and genuine world-harmony.)

THE UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM

ALISTAIR COOKE'S 'LETTER FROM AMERICA'

(The Listener, March 4 1965, pp. 321-22)

...Lots of people will remember the howling row....: how the U.N. and the President of the United States insisted that Korea was a disciplinary action to restore South Korea to its original integrity, if that was the word; and how the Commander-in-Chief of all the U.N. forces, General MacArthur, said he had never heard of a war that you were not allowed to win, or of granting the enemy 'a privileged sanctuary'; and how General MacArthur was fired for wanting to expand the war, or—as we should say in the present soulless jargon—to escalate it.

But Korea *was* different from all previous wars, and in one rather creepy particular. The side which had absolutely overwhelming force was not allowed to use it. The United States did not have overwhelming manpower—the Chinese had that—but it did have the bomb. But it has been agreed in the twenty years since the second world war ended that no good nation will use the bomb except from the desperate necessity of retaliating against a bad nation that has just used it. I wonder if we realize how unique this prohibition is.

Today, the United States is able to destroy the Soviet Union and China, and all their industries and arsenals, and most of their people, but it cannot do anything against students who throw rocks at embassy windows. The United States *could* take over Vietnam, North and South, in about an hour, and Cuba, and any other small country that was being a nuisance; but big countries no longer take over little countries (unless both sets of inhabitants are coloured) because the big country would be called a colonialist-imperialist; and nothing robs a big country so quickly of its reputation among all the little countries that revel in the new rules.

So there was no way to end the war in Korea, except by doing the unforgivable thing of showing the power you had in reserve. (I am not jeering at these rules : I think that if we abandoned them, if we gave up a general international agreement about what constitutes aggression, we should be back in the jungles of the nineteenthens.) Unfortunately, the ingenuity of the bad guys had gone beyond the piety of the good guys when they wrote the charter of the United Nations. The U.N. condemned something called aggression but assumed that aggression would go on being what it

had always been: the ultimatum, the attack at dawn, the invasion. Since 1945, no bad guy in his right mind is going to offer an ultimatum or march across a border by the light of day. We should have learned from the Nazis in Scandinavia that the best way to get a country to crumble and fall into your lap is working by agitation from the inside: what we now call infiltration and subversion. It is also vaguely conceded that the good guys have a right to retaliate. But nowhere in the United Nations charter will you find the words 'infiltration', 'subversion', 'retaliation', yet these words trace the plot of Korea and Hungary and Vietnam. The moment we, or any of our allies or dependants, strike back at the infiltrators and the men stirring up trouble from within, then the communists brand us as 'aggressors'...

I think it is essential to consider these general changes in the history of war and its definition, in order to understand the unique ordeal that the United States faces in Vietnam. The first thing people on the outside ask is, how did the United States get there in the first place? It is always dangerous to pin down the causes of a war to a particular date; pick a date and you have already picked your argument. But everybody is agreed—and by everybody I mean the Vietnamese, and the French, and the British, and the Americans, and the Russians—that the independent history of Vietnam started in May 1954, when the French, after nine years and huge losses, were beaten by the native communist forces that arose in the country during the second world war. France lost the Asian outpost of her empire. By an agreement signed at Geneva the communists were to control the twenty-two provinces north of the seventeenth parallel. South Vietnam was to comprise the thirty-nine southern provinces. Both parts of the country were to hold elections to decide their future, either together or apart. A supervisory committee was set up, with Britain and the Soviet Union as co-chairmen.

That is as far as the history books go, except to add, eleven years after the Geneva agreement, that 'the elections to determine the country's status and future have not yet been held'; because the agreement to recognize North and South Vietnam as independent countries with their own future in their own hands was no more agreeable to the communists in the north than the agreement to separate North and South Korea was agreeable to the communists in the north. However, the communists did not invade. They infiltrated. They recognized, as the Asian people recognized long before us, that the new kind of war, and the one in which their geography had taught them to excel, was guerilla warfare. The North Vietnamese sent their guerillas into South Vietnam. This was a violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreement, and another agreement, saying much the same things, in 1962. The communist guerilla force became so solidly organized that it was able to function as a separate entity known as Viet Cong, and North Vietnam has been able to stand aside and pretend the Viet Cong is an independent army.

When the South became riddled with Viet Cong agents and forces, the country collapsed into civil war. That is about the only safe description of the kind of war that is going on there. The question arises whether any outside country has the

right to interfere in another country's civil war. It is a very naive question, since the weapons of war, and the tactical advice, not to say the strategic direction of the war, are supplied in the north by Communist China and, less so, by the Soviet Union, and in the South by the United States.

We can easily understand why the Chinese should be in there as highly interested parties, since Vietnam is on their border. But what is the United States doing there, 7,000 miles away from home? That too is a loaded question. What was Britain doing in Burma in the last war, or on the Indian Ocean, or in Hong Kong today? The United States decided, after it shored up eastern Europe against the Soviet attempt to dominate Europe in the late nineteen-forties, that it must try to back up non-communist countries on a continent which has been an American concern since sea-power made the Pacific Ocean a threat to the United States or its Western rampart. It seems to me that this fundamental policy has been lost sight of in the maze of complexities and heartbreaking contradictions that are now South Vietnam. We are supporting the right to free elections of a country whose leaders will not permit free elections; whose leaders betray each other every week. We are protecting stability where there is no stability to protect. We are sworn enemies of the Viet Cong, but the colonel who tried the coup in Saigon was an actual Viet Cong guerilla leader who decided, at some prudent moment in his career, to switch sides and teach guerilla warfare to the southerners.

We have 20,000 men there, technically under the command of leaders who want nothing from America but money and weapons. We are losing. To win, we could shatter the northern supply lines and probably invite the intervention of the 220,000 men of the North Vietnamese army that is still standing by. We would lose faster still. We are denied the ultimate weapon. The alternative is to invest millions of American men on unfamiliar terrain 7,000 miles from home, in baiting distance of the Chinese with their many millions of men.

There is now a great pressure from the American people to end the war but, as the hard saying goes, to end it honourably. It is doubtful that this can be done. The Chinese can sit back and relax. The Russians can shake their heads in secret delight. For we are in the position of a chess player offering a draw to an opponent who is going to mate in three moves.

So why not let Britain and Russia negotiate? The Russians say they do not regard themselves as Geneva co-chairmen any more. The United Kingdom is a treaty ally of the United States and has made it clear that it cannot back up its ally in one breath and with the next invite the Russians to come in by a side door and negotiate behind the Americans' backs. It ends, I think, as a problem of face. And face is what half the world, most of the coloured world, is waiting for us to lose.

To some of us any end, by peaceful means, is a good end. But do not suggest this point to the Australians or the Malays. If Vietnam goes, there is no question we shall suffer a Munich that will instantly turn Cambodia, Burma, Thailand and lord knows who else, towards the communist side. It will look as if

we jibbed, and betrayed every noncommunist nation in Asia. From Pakistan to Hawaii, we could see another lost continent, at the mercy, surely, of China. This, in my opinion, is the root of the problem. All piety and proclamations of virtue aside, any intelligent solutions that you may have in mind will be gratefully received by President Lyndon B. Johnson, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.D.¹

¹ Since this broadcast was made, the U.S.A. has accepted the need to bomb strategic spots in North Vietnam and has reserved the right of "the ultimate weapon" in extreme necessity. The North Vietnamese army is still standing by.—EDITOR.

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

THIRD SEMINAR

14 February 1965

(Speeches continued from the previous issue)

HOW TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD IN THE IMPULSES OF ACTION

IV

THE Mother once said, "We should be in no other service but in God's alone."¹ And that is the true, the only right action. To work for anyone else than God, to be under any servitude which is not Divine is false and wrong. To choose Truth constantly, to act according to the Divine's Will always, is the only fulfilment of life and nothing else matters.

This choice has to be made constantly at every moment. At every moment the sadhak stands before a crossing of dualities where he has to distinguish Truth from falsehood, the Divine from the undivine. Sometimes he has time to think and to ask the Mother, but most of the time he has to decide immediately, has to understand the real path. But how is it done, what is the way ? That is the problem before us, "How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action."

The first essential condition is to have always a quiet undisturbed mind. Even in ordinary life a quiet mind is an absolute necessity in order to perform a work properly; in a sadhak's life it is more so. To remain quiet within, refusing to be carried away by the turmoil of ordinary thoughts or mental movements is the first step to be taken. To do otherwise is to encourage the confusion of consciousness, which does not allow the clarity of vision, which is necessary to distinguish between the true and the false and which is also the condition essential for the union with the Divine, the best and the only guide. So whatever may be the surface condition the inner poise must not be ruffled.

With this, equality is also an absolute necessity. As Sri Aurobindo says, "There can be no firm foundation in sadhana without equality, *samata*."² The sadhak must

¹ *Words of the Mother*, 1944, p. 214.

² & ³ *On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 642.

face and endure every unpleasant situation "with a perfect calm and without any disturbing reaction."¹ He must not be restless or troubled or depressed and must go on with a steady faith in the Divine Will.

The next step towards a greater understanding is to be conscious of one's whole being. All the different parts of the sadhak's nature, all his movements, his feelings, thoughts and actions must be under his constant scrutiny. He must know and understand the motives and impulses behind his actions, all the forces hidden and apparent that move him. And above all he must be conscious of the Divine part within him, the psychic which is present in everyone.

But he needs to be extremely alert and careful in finding and perceiving the Divine impulsion from within, because his own concealed desires will try to cheat him constantly in the disguise of the Divine Will. So a constant checking and rechecking should be done which will not let pass a single doubtful thought or action.

When he arrives at such a state of consciousness it is not very difficult to distinguish between Truth and falsehood. The Mother says : "The Divine will is not difficult to recognise. It is unmistakable. You can know it without being very far on the path. Only you must listen to its voice, the small voice that is here in the heart. Once you are accustomed to listen, if you do anything that is contrary to the Divine will, you feel an uneasiness."² She also says : "You can easily know when a thing comes from the Divine. You feel free, you are at ease, you are in peace. But when something presents itself to you and you jump at it and cry out, 'Oh, at last I have it,' then you can know for certain that it does not come from the Divine."³ So anything that shatters our inner peace and disturbs the equanimity of the inner mind is falsehood. The action that brings peace and calmness is truth.

But it is not sufficient to be conscious and to understand what is Truth. The sadhak must follow it too,—sincerely and steadily in order to keep in communion with the Divine. If the sadhak does not follow Truth the uneasiness in him continues for some time, then disappears and he loses his contact with God. No amount of rationalization can deceive the Divine within. So once Truth and falsehood are discriminated the sadhak has to be firm in his will and follow Truth. All the vital and mental inertia or obscurity, which are not yet changed or not sufficiently changed, rise up to oppose it, for the Divine does not work to satisfy ego. So once the right is known from the wrong the sadhak has to work strictly up to his knowledge; he has to "resolutely reject one and accept the other."⁴

The practice of rejection prevails in the end but with the intervention of the Divine Force it becomes a much easier effort. The Mother's Force helps anyone who wants to change, wants to follow the right direction sincerely. So I feel the best way is to call in more and more the Divine Power and be governed and guided by it always.

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Conversations*, p. 16.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

A sincere prayer and an ardent aspiration always bring down the Mother's help.

When I started to write this paper I did not have a very clear idea of what is a true discrimination between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action. I could not finish it, I was even thinking of leaving it off altogether.

But then the events of the last three days¹ have shown us clearly what it truly means. The way the Ashram boys have acted during the hours of strain shows clearly that they have been guided by the Divine alone. A handful of unarmed boys of the Ashram would not have had the courage to face a howling and aggressive mob had it not been for their constant communion with the Divine within. From this I learnt that if one loves God sincerely and wants to serve Him always, under any circumstance, the guidance is always present. In this hour of strain and anxiety this Seminar of the New Age Association has brought into us an atmosphere of spiritual confidence and encouragement. We go on.

MITA

V

The Mother in her "Commentaires sur le Dhammapada" has spoken of a four-fold discipline essential for our mental development, consisting of observing, watching, controlling and acquiring mastery over our thoughts.² Perhaps discrimination—the faculty to select or distinguish—is a stage intermediary between the second and the third, that is to say, between watching and controlling, rejection being a part of the latter.

Since the subject for the present Seminar is, "How to discriminate between Truth and falsehood in the impulses of action," we must first make sure what Truth and falsehood mean. The Mother defines both, quite clearly, as she says, "A falsehood is that which is not true, in the sense that it is not the expression of your truth—not at all—and yet, it is that of which you are most externally conscious. Very very few are there who have the inner perception of what they want to become, what they want to do, what the truth of their being is."³

The ordinary man acts usually under the impulses of his various physical, vital and mental needs, dominated more or less by nether truths that very often serve as masks for falsehood. But we here, who "grow in the house of Truth"—to borrow a Rig Vedic sentence—we at least must be "conscious of the much falsehood in the world", we who claim to be "the strong and invincible sons of Infinity".

"To be entirely sincere means," according to Sri Aurobindo, "to desire the divine Truth only". And our sole possible approach to that Truth is by the help of the Yoga-force of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo about which Sri Aurobindo once wrote,

¹ February 11, 12, 13.

² La Mère, *Commentaires sur la Dhammapada*, p. 2.

³ From a Talk by the Mother as reported by Nolini Kanta Gupta in *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo*, Part Nine, p. 114.

“The yoga-force is always tangible and concrete in the way I have described and has tangible results. But it is invisible—not like a blow given or the rush of a motor car knocking somebody down which the physical senses can at once perceive. How is the mere physical mind to know that it is there and working ? . . . One of two things it must be. Either it must allow the consciousness to go inside, to become aware of inner things, to believe in the experience of the invisible and the supraphysical and then by experience, by the opening of new capacities, it becomes conscious of these forces and can see, follow and use their workings, just as the Scientist uses the unseen forces of Nature.”¹

Sri Aurobindo gives us the way as well to attain that consciousness : “If you want the consciousness for true actions very much and aspire for it, it may come in one of several ways :

1. You may get the habit or faculty of watching your movements in such a way that you see the impulse to action coming and can see too its nature.
2. A consciousness may come which feels uneasy whenever a wrong thought or impulse to action or feeling is there.
3. Something within you may warn and stop you when you are going to do the wrong action.”²

Our best method of action, therefore, should be to invoke the calm and discriminating Yoga-force instead of acting under an impulse, for the Mother has warned us, “Do not act under an impulse. An impulsive person who cannot control himself has a disordered life.”³ And Sri Aurobindo has said, “To work in the calm ever-widening consciousness is at once a sadhana and a siddhi.”⁴

PRITHWINDRA

VI

The problem set before us by the Mother is not a problem of a remote philosophical nature, but an intimate riddle of practical Yoga, with direct import to the question of life and its transmutation. We have no need of complex dialectic reasoning with no relation to life or the issue of the moment—the change of our nature to become the fit instrument of the Eternal Spirit. The question demands an exact self-scrutiny, a vigilant self-awareness, not only in the calmness of concentration but in the flux of action where all nature is swept by energy and driven by the momentum of work. While driven by the tides of forces, we are apt to lose our concentration and thus become unaware of our discriminating self that is a witness of all that arises. But because such an awareness needs great internal effort and opening, we need not leave

¹ *On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 238-39.

² *Ibid.*, p. 672.

³ *Words of the Mother*, 1949, p. 223.

⁴ *On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 715.

the question as insoluble; or, because this has not been done in the past, we must not desist from the effort towards its solution, specially now when we have the unparalleled advantage of the unfailing Divine aid.

Truth and falsehood, in this particular case, have a special implication. The Mother does not want us to discriminate between moral truths and ethical falsities. We are asked here to deal with the issue from a spiritual standpoint, in a spiritual light, standing on the plinth of the spiritual consciousness. From here the issues assume a totally altered character.

Truth is that which aids our psychological development, our spiritual advance and opens the way to our greatest consummation. Truth also exacts its acceptance by us in its way of working, its way of becoming and in the path of inner and external growth and in actions of all types and in the emotions of all natures. All that is true for one individual may not, at the moment, be true for another. Truth has many facets and it is almost impossible to realise it in all its complexity, human and limited that we are. In life and action one of its aspects manifests, becoming thereby the one supremely true aspect of our life. In the course of sadhana we may advance and all that was valid in the past may not apply now or may even be contrary to our progress. Therefore there is no such thing as a single trenchant truth, as it manifests here. If it did, we would have dogmas, codes, canons, and strict regulations where the core of truth is dead by its limitation and external impositions. The truth in its widest connotation surpasses all these exclusive modes of life and mind and action, of human principles. Further, truth evolves in the world; rather it manifests more and more according to the world's capacity of growth and receptivity.

Falsehood on the other hand is that which opposes the truth of evolution, of life, of the soul and of the greater manifestation of the Spirit. It too has its degrees of working. In action it produces the wrong turn, the defective canker, the altering twist that changes, suppresses the true working, the true manifestation and becoming.

Lastly we ask : what is this impulse of action ? It rises from the emotional centre of our being, from the side of creativity, whose ultimate function is to manifest the secret divine energy as an act of Ananda. It is rooted in the seat of our life-centre and if we must discriminate between the false and the true, we must enter into our deepest life-being. The process, first of all, is an awareness of this centre of dynamism and a call on it to open to the Truth, to give it the right orientation, the right impulsion, the right drive. If we merely made a mental resolve, without allowing the Truth of the Spirit descending into us to work on all the planes of our being, then all discriminations would be dictated by false impulsions, false ideas, false preconceived concepts that have no bearing on Truth. This may be a motivated action, urged by blind forces of nature, or of ego, cravings, or ambitions. But, as we have remarked earlier, there can be no uniform working of the power of Truth. Itself unconditioned, it works according to nature, status, possibility of the individual, according to his need, his capacity and aspiration and sincerity. It manifests according to our development, our growth and the extent of awakening of our soul. It can mani-

fest in many ways. But the signs of its workings are unmistakable. It always produces the right result, the true aspiration, the true endeavour and gives us the needed force on our path. If we choose wrongly, there is a disharmony in our being, a break in the rhythm of plenitude. A depression may be the result; a veiling of the soul, and a shutting away of the guiding light may be its consequence. Therefore it is always wise not to jump to any action. We must halt momentarily and consult the soul within us to give us the right direction. Or else we may open ourselves to the higher inspiration and ask it to guide us. If we are open to it, the answer will come, almost spontaneously, revealing to us the path to be followed, the course to be taken. This guidance will give us and our actions greater effectivity, greater sureness, and greater power. To state in philosophical terms, there must be a reference of the dynamic aspects of our nature to our deeper soul of poise to receive the needed inspiration and discrimination. This means a spontaneous contact between the inner and the phenomenal aspects of our nature, a constant living on the heights of our being. In other words, to be utterly sincere. For without sincerity no true or valid discrimination can come. Last of all there must be a complete reliance on the Divine Will in order to become the dedicated instruments of the Divine Spirit. This would mean also the true effective action. At first there may be a groping. But with practice and greater inner opening, the voice of the soul or of higher inspiration would be heard like all other natural elements till, at the end, these would become one with our deeper or higher being, and all our actions would be its actions and there would be needed no effort at discrimination between Truth and falsehood.

(To be concluded)

ROMEN

AN ACCIDENT

(A storyette)

I WAS caught in an unbreakable grip by those two strong hands. I could not move, nor speak, nor even think. I felt the helplessness of errant feet compelled by the intolerant sweetness of an irresistible flute-call. And it was altogether a different world. Even the stones and trees echoed in sympathy with the tiniest of my heart-beats. The eloquent eyes of the boy, whose helpless captive I was, seemed to say, "Why are you so tightly closed ? Don't you feel the torment ?". My heart thrilled to the music of the light that played in his eyes. It pierced my being and I felt my body as light as a dry leaf of grass. The unbearable burden was taken off from my aching back.

I stood now erect, and saw with gathered attention the boy whose body was the beautiful form of a bounteous light. To my utter surprise I perceived some secret affinity, a subtle gossamer thread of light connecting us both. The boy nodded with a smile and my joy knew no bounds. Stupid fool that I was, I searched for my passport with many calculation in my mind, the boy divined at once my sorry plight and his face of burning-gold beamed with a smile that opened a million-splendoured Heaven.

"Your soul is your passport with the seal of the Lord"—sang the brilliant birds on tree tops. The warm and almost divine touch of earth below my feet communicated to me its sob of delight. Here to live, even to breathe, was a sweet note of some celestial song. I clasped both the hands of the boy and looked at his face. Those two eyes opened before me a limitless sea of love and compassion. The sheer ecstasy, that was almost a pang, tore my heart into tears and I fell at the feet of that resplendant youth—pure and simple nothingness.

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When I awoke I was all alone in a forlorn place....I had been travelling by plane. Suddenly somewhere some fault began, and the engine caught fire. I do not remember what happened next. I wish I had been licked up by the fire, the fire that had given me a glimpse of the light that was His eyes, and the joyous wine of that ecstatic nothingness. The heavenly perfume still lingers within my nostrils, my eyes still see with the light of that Presence.

I am not desolate any more.

VENKATARANGA

TOGO

(On the night of 11 February a huge infuriated mob under the pretext of anti-Hindi demonstration besieged Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The attack continued for hours together. At the very onset—consequently the most critical time during the whole disturbance—no help was available. Togo sustained almost a fatal injury on the head while defending an Ashram house, thus heroically following in the footsteps of his illustrious freedom-fighter grandfather Bagha Jatin.)

BAGHA Jatin is but a legend to me.
For I have not witnessed his undaunted valour.
But to-night I am surprised to watch that boundless courage being displayed—
A firm stand against a hundred infuriated assailants.

He has proved well that the same blood runs in his veins !
The day was done and the night was unrolling the mantle of peace everywhere.
Slowly the pole-star shone out shedding lustre.
The Ashramites were all seated in deep meditation.

Opportunity golden indeed for the Devils to attack !
To force equality by death and devastation—what an ideal of perversity !
The enraged mob rushed close—hostile-instruments all athirst for blood !
The glasses clanged and the doors and hinges banged and fell broken !

The houses stood in fire and in a moment the dark sky turned red !
Deep in the heart man has blindly fostered the Devil to this day.
The messenger of heaven was burnt alive—the son of God crucified !
Ignorant minds cannot bear the pressure of the descending Light.

They mock and sneer seeking even to assail
As did the disturbing Rakshasas in the forests of the ancient Rishis.
Conscience seemed to be devoured by the Demon-head and Truth totally eclipsed !
Their motto : Better rule in hell than serve in heaven.

The powers of the earth, self-proud, fear the reign of gods.
The night saw not a sentry on duty, not a guard on his round.
They were all fast asleep with the magic spell cast by the Demons.
How the phantoms of hell delight in destruction and laugh!

Ferocity incarnate, danger housed in human frames,
Freely they plundered, rained stones, none to stay their march.
“I will give them their due if God has given me the chance.”
An icon of youth and courage he shot out to oppose them and made them retreat.

A few reeled, a few fell flat on the ground.
Most ran helter-skelter for life.
Yet quite a band surrounded him and he fought his hardest.
Through the enemy array on the eastern front an Abhimanyu forged ahead.

But alas someone from behind armed with an iron-bar hit him right on the head.
He tumbled, tottered, vision failing.
A fatal stroke indeed, but Providence chose otherwise
At the healing touch of the Divine Mother he opens his eyes and smiles again.

To me Bagha Jatin is a legend.
But to-night I have watched, to my surprise, action that is bright with bravery.

ROBI GUPTA

(Translated by the author from the original Bengali)

**SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

NEWSLETTER

No. 5.

May 1965

1. *War on Ignorance*

All thinking men agree that ignorance is the basic cause of all wars, but they have yet to agree that war on ignorance is a nation's First Consideration if it is to transcend the chaos of growing complexity that challenges the mind of man in an expanding universe.

Mankind looks hopefully towards a future when the vast sums expended on national defense will be diverted to his education and the pursuit of a higher life, but in the meantime it is more than a duty, it is an urgent demand that every country set aside as much as possible for EDUCATION if it is to survive as a nation at all.

The seriousness with which the role of education in a new expanding nation is measured can be gauged from the precedent set by Uganda, which lies on the equator in the heart of Africa. Uganda, independent since October 1962, spends about 25 per cent of its annual budget on education. Uganda's progress in education has been the envy of other African nations. However, recent statistics show that out of nearly 500 graduate teachers in Uganda only 36 are African. Less than three years ago the number of Africans stood at 54.

One lone voice in Africa, the now famous Kenyan author, James Ngugi, says : "Treat the teachers better and attract the best brains into this innately noble but disgracefully neglected profession." It is a voice that cries out to all sleeping governments throughout the world.

2. *U.S.A.*

President Johnson's daring educational programme has already cleared the sub-committee stages without much trouble. \$ 1.2 billion is to be allocated to primary and secondary education. \$ 1 billion to aid educationally deprived children in families with annual incomes of less than \$ 2,000.

\$ 100 million to supply library resources, textbooks and materials. \$ 100 million for supplementary educational centres and services for the use of all persons—children and adults.

\$ 45 million for educational research and training.

\$ 25 million to assist states in strengthening their departments of education.

3. *ZAMBIA*

A £ 35 million transitional development plan for Zambia was announced at the

beginning of the year. Britain had already promised a £ 1 million grant for Zambia's university.

4. POLAND

Apparatus for speech therapy invented by Dr. Bogdan Adamczyk, of Lubin, has now been adopted by the ministry of Health and Social Welfare. People with speech defects can put through a call to a device called *Echo* which has been installed in the Lubin telephone exchange. The patient's speech is reproduced with a retardation of a fraction of a second. Speaking while thus hearing one's own voice helps to eliminate stammering and similar speech defects.

5. NEW ZEALAND

The long awaited three-year training for primary teachers is to begin in New Zealand with the opening of the 1966 school year. Two colleges, Hamilton and Dunedin, will make the start, and each year subsequently two more colleges will join in.

6. INDIA

The National Cadet Corps College at Gwalior has already started courses for women officers last March.

7. New Books

Lancelot Hogben's book 'The Mother Tongue' \$ 7.50, has been reviewed in the April 2nd. edition of TIME, as a Passport to Languages. Hogben's book is full of clues to understanding alien but associated tongues. He urges the amateur linguist to forget the vowels and concentrate on the consonants, those 'fossils' in the evolution of any language. The German word *Zunge*, for instance, might mystify the uninitiated unless he follows Hogben's advice to substitute T for the German Z. Similarly with the Spanish *halcon*, which becomes quite easily intelligible with Hogben's advice to change *h* for *f*. Learning even the rudiments of a foreign language is not that easy, nevertheless Hogben's book is an uncompromising lesson in philology which captures the interest and attention of the reader.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT