

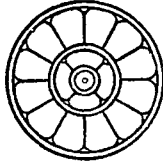
MOTHER INDIA

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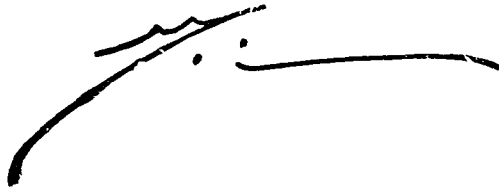


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XVIII

No. 4

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

(On May 1, 1966, from 2 a.m. to nearly 6 a.m. Pondicherry was hit by one of the severest cyclones it has ever known. The wind, rain, thunder and lightning were terrible and great damage was caused in the town.)

This cyclone was simply a
push from the Earth-Nature
to wake up some of her
somnolent human children
to the necessity of making a
progress based on

Sri Anubindo's saying
"Materially you are nothing,
spiritually you are
everything."

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

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

JANUARY 31, 1940

P : I asked Kapali if he knew anything about the year of the gods. He says he can't exactly make out and doubts if it was Indian at all and wonders whether the astrologer has not simply put India's name to it. He will look up Varahamihira.

SRI AUROBINDO : No, it can't be simply imaginary because the astrologer has given exact and precise details and says that things have come out true according to them.

P : Science has discovered many new planets now which didn't exist before and couldn't be used by astrologers.

SRI AUROBINDO : He speaks of Uranus as well as Neptune: there is one Kutsa which I haven't heard of. But he has placed all these new planets in the calculation. Uranus seems to be the planet of dictators. Stalin is one and Daladier also.

P : Daladier also ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, he is now coming out as a dictator and is practically so.

P : Kapali says that instead of asking him you could yourself say about the time of the year of the gods.

SRI AUROBINDO : Gods perhaps don't know anything about it.

S : They may have a different time-value.

SRI AUROBINDO : Based on astrological data perhaps, and so it is the astrologers who should know about it

N : Nishikanto had another letter from Tagore in reply to his. Nishikanto, advised by Dilip, wrote to Tagore informing him of the refusal of Vishwabharati to publish his book.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why ? Tagore didn't know about it ?

N : They say he may not as it is under the management of the committee with which Tagore has nothing to do.

SRI AUROBINDO : What does he write ?

N : Tagore says the same thing—that he has nothing to do with them. Any

publication depends on financial consideration. They don't want to incur any loss over any book and that is why they refused Nishikanto's book. The next point he writes about is that Nishikanto, being a Yogi, shouldn't mind if some people don't like his poems; different people have different tastes; it is foolishness to go out with a stick and fight with people who don't appreciate one's poetry.

By the way, I had a vision in which you were giving a hypothetical medical guidance. In meditation I was discussing with somebody else the diagnosis of a case. Suddenly I heard your voice saying, "Are you sure it is not typhoid?" There was no possibility of typhoid but because of your suggestion I had to think about it.

SRI AUROBINDO : Was it a vision or a dream ?

N : I don't know ; it may be either and I heard your voice distinctly.

SRI AUROBINDO : When was it ?

N : While you were walking. Does it indicate your possible future guidance or any cases coming ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't know; it may possibly be guidance.

P : C had a vision.

C : I saw N meditating under a canopy in a Buddha-like posture. Does it mean anything ?

SRI AUROBINDO : I can't say.

C : I also saw him doing pranam, and you patting him.

SRI AUROBINDO : Do you see many visions of him ?

P : I had three or four.

When Sri Aurobindo was lying in bed, N read out Tagore's letter. After the letter was over he said from a question in the letter, "It seems Nishikanto was vexed because his book was not published."

N : Nishikanto told me he didn't write about any vexation but he must have been vexed and a little of it must have found expression in the letter.

FEBRUARY 1, 1940

P : I asked Kapali and gave him the data yesterday from that book. He says the calculation of time according to the year of the gods must be different—365 days of the human year would be one day of theirs or something like that. Then Kapali says that these calculations have been based on newly discovered planets which didn't exist before. So how could any calculation have been made by the year of the gods when these planets didn't exist ?

SRI AUROBINDO : But the principle was there. They have introduced these planets now. We must also do the same. These calculations aren't based on astrology but on prophecy and the prophecies also are based on the old Book of Nostradamus. The Mother has seen this book in the original form and she says that anything could be made out of anything from it.

P : As from the Rigveda ?

N (to S.): So you see.

S : See what ?

N : You said the Supramental is still far off.

P : It may be tomorrow.

S : How ? What are you driving at ?

N : This man's prophecy about the new race isn't correct, as anything can be made out of anything and you said that, by his reading, the Supermind is far off. That is what I am driving at.

(*Sri Aurobindo was all this time laughing.*)

S : It may be so for one man but not for the race.

SRI AUROBINDO : For the race he puts a millennium.

S : But, according to this man, your continent will be submerged under water.

SRI AUROBINDO : Like Atlantis ? And your intuition of brinjal and typhoid won't have any chance. (*Laughter*)

N : Quite welcome.

P (*after some time*): Anilbaran wants to know if he should reply to Basanta Chatterji.

SRI AUROBINDO (*after a short pause*): Yes, he can write that Sri Aurobindo hasn't denied the existence of the gods; on the contrary he has affirmed it. He has said that they are not psychological images in the Vedas but realities. Chatterji has misinterpreted Sri Aurobindo. Anilbaran can also write that the Vedic hymns have both inner and outer interpretations. According to the inner esoteric interpretation, one may speak of the gods as well as of principles. If I speak of Agni as Tapa¹ it is as a psychological principle. It doesn't mean that by being a god of Tapa he is no more a god of the fire of sacrifice. Agni is taken as a psychological principle as well as a god.

(*After a while*) And he can quote also Chandi where it says the goddess inhabits all creatures in the form of benevolence. It doesn't mean that because she inhabits them in the form of benevolence she is not a goddess. As a psychological image she is described in the form of benevolence. Similarly, Agni can be in the form of Tapa.

He can also say that Sri Aurobindo hasn't criticised Sayana's polytheistic interpretation of the Vedas but his predominantly ritualistic interpretation. And he can point out that Sri Aurobindo has no western stamp in his interpretation. At the same time Sri Aurobindo speaks of one Supreme God from whom all other gods have emanated.

The subject changed after a while.

P (*after a long break in the talk*): In Gurukul they have an exercise or drill of

¹ Tapa : Concentrated energy.

laughter. When students are asked, laugh, they have to laugh.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not cry ? In Baroda the military department instituted a drill of urination. (*Laughter*) As soon as an order would be passed, everybody would urinate together.

EVENING

P : J has sent a letter saying that he was arrested by the government because of his anti-war pamphlet and that he was released on personal security.

SRI AUROBINDO : What a genius for getting into trouble !

FEBRUARY 2, 1940

P : Somebody from Oudh is trying to bring out the Vedas classifying the Suktas according to hymns and also according to the Rishis addressed.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is my idea too. I wanted to translate and arrange Suktas in that way.

EVENING

P : Abhay was telling me that an Arya Samaj leader had a talk with Gandhi in the presence of Abhay about the Hindu-Muslim problem. Gandhi and other Congress leaders seem to have realised that these Muslims are becoming more and more threatening and it would be well for the Hindus also to organise themselves. Gandhi seems to have said to this leader that instead of sitting idle and being beaten by the Muslims they should also organise and fight. "If you can't accept non-violence as your principle I have never asked you to accept defeat. Instead of sitting like cowards, violence is better."

SRI AUROBINDO : The leader should have said, "It will help our cause if you do some violence." (*Laughter*)

P : C. R. also gave him the same advice; only, he asked not to mention his name. (*Laughter*)

NIRODBARAN

SRI AUROBINDO ANSWERS QUESTIONS

Q. How to become free from mental constructions ?

A. By getting a quiet mind.

15-6-1933

Q. How to become one with the Divine ?

A. Open yourself to the Mother's Force and aspire—in time you will become one with the Divine.

Q. How is it that people say that the vital is not bad? Many bad desires and impulses come from there.

A. The vital is good when it is properly used—it is a necessary instrument for action. But ordinarily it is in its lower action an instrument of ego and desire—that is why it has not to be indulged, but rather put under strong discipline.

15-6-1933

Q. How to take a plunge into the Divine?

A. By strong aspiration and concentration.

Q. What should we do to be able to remember the Divine constantly?

A. Aspire and try always.

16-6-1933

Q. What is meant by "Nature forces" ?

A. The forces of Prakriti. Ex : thought-force in the mind, love in the heart, desire, anger, passion in the vital, health and illness in the physical.

Q. What is the central being and how to surrender it to the Divine ?

A. The central being surrenders itself to the Divine by its own motion. For the present you can regard the psychic as the central being in you.

Q. Opening—what does it mean? Is it : "not to keep anything secret from the Mother" ?

A. That is the first step towards opening.

17-6-1933

Q. Yesterday an impression came that I would have fever. And today I have got cold. Is it that the cold came by the impression or by something else ?

A. The impression opened the way for the cold to get in.

Q. How to get rid of ego?

A. You have to detect it wherever it comes in and throw it out.

17-6-1933

Q. How to open to the Divine Mother?

A. By faith and surrender in a quiet mind.

18-6-1933

Q. How to use the Divine Power in the same way as it comes?

A. By sincerity and surrender.

Q. Is it not true that every time we see the Mother she gives us the Divine Power?

A. Yes.

Q. What is harmony?

A. When all is in agreement with the one Truth or an expression of it, that is harmony.

Q. What is opening to the Divine Consciousness?

A. It is an opening when the consciousness is able to receive the Divine Consciousness or Force (or whatever else it opens to) and feel its effects.

19-6-1933

Q. How to reach to the Divine Consciousness?

A. By opening to the Mother's force.

21-6-1933

Q. What is the Mother's force and how to open to it?

A. It is the Divine Force that changes the nature. Make yourself quiet and turn only to the Mother.

Q. How to become sure of impressions, whether they are true or not?

A. There is no rule for that. You have to go on observing until you can distinguish automatically between true intuitions and mere impressions.

22-6-1933

Q. When somebody does some wrong movement I feel something. Is it good that I should feel so?

A. It shows that your consciousness is psychically sensitive in these matters. It is quite right to feel—provided there is no disturbance.

23-6-1933

Q. What is it that is called the Divine Mother?

A. The Divine Mother is the Consciousness and Force of the Divine—which is the Mother of all things.

Q. Many times questions come to the mind like: "What is the Divine?" Is it not better to write them to you?

A. Provided you do not expect me to answer always. People write to me not for getting mental information or answering questions but to lay before me their experiences and difficulties and get my help. When it is necessary, I answer questions, but I cannot be doing it all the time.

Q. I was looking at your photo in the reception hall. Then I shut my eyes. I saw a man marching in the darkness with light around his body. Is there any meaning ?

A. It is a symbol of the progress of the sadhak moving in the Ignorance around him, but with some light from above around his own being. 24-6-1933

Q. How to remember the Divine even in our sleep ?

A. It depends on the growth of the consciousness. But first you must be able to remember the Divine always in your waking hours. 27-6-1933

Q. How to remember the Divine even while reading ?

A. You can remember at the beginning and offer your reading to the Divine and at the end again. There is a state of consciousness in which only a part of it is reading or doing the work and behind there is the consciousness of the Divine always. 28-6-1933

Q. Does the mental Purusha control the mental being ?

A. The mental Purusha is itself the mental Being. It ought to control the mental nature, but it is more often controlled by it. 3-1-1934

Q. I like to help others in their yoga ; but now I have stopped doing it. Isn't it good to help each other whenever possible ?

A. The idea of helping others is a subtle form of the ego. It is only the Divine Force that can help. One can be its instrument, but you should first learn to be a fit and egoless instrument. 20-1-1934

Q. How should we love others ? Would it not be much better if our love was offered to the Divine Mother ?

A. There is a love in which the emotion is turned towards the Divine in an increasing receptivity and growing union. What it receives from the Divine it pours out on others, but freely without demanding a return—if you are capable of that, then that is the highest and most satisfying way to love. 23-1-1934

Q. In one letter you said to me that I live largely in the physical consciousness and that is why the attacks of the hostile forces come in the physical. In another letter you said that as long as the body exists one lives in the physical consciousness. I don't understand this.

A. It depends on the questions you put.

You cannot so long as you have a body live without the physical consciousness but you can live more centrally in the psychic and other parts and by them transform the physical. 6-3-1934

Q. May I be given some advice on how the vital and physical can be converted ?

A. For the vital it can come only by the rejection of personal egoism and desire—to be replaced by the will of the Divine Mother. For the physical—plasticity, not insisting on its own habitual ideas, feelings, needs, greeds, offering itself as an instrument to the Divine Mother.

10-3-1934

Q. How can one make the vital being understand that the Mother is never partial ?

A. One way is to have entire faith in the Mother—the other is to believe that she is wiser than yourself and must have reasons for everything she does which are better than your mind's judgements.

22-3-1934

Q. I am sure that for everything the Mother does there is a reason, and that what she does is according to the need of each one, but the vital does not believe it, and it is not yet well established in the mental. How can this be firmly established in the mental so that it does not yield to any temptation ?

A. It should be established—that is all. So long as the vital or mental think themselves wiser than the Mother and able to judge her how do you expect these stupidities to disappear ?

22-3-1934

Q. May I know the reason why doubts have started to come to me now, whereas in the beginning I had none ?

A. Probably you have got contaminated with the doubts of others with whom you mix.

26-3-1934

Q. May I know who these people are ? I will then stop seeing them at once, as these doubts trouble me a lot.

A. You should be able to find that out yourself. There are plenty who keep doubts as a constant companion.

26-3-1934

Q. The whole morning I felt ill at ease. After taking some rest in the afternoon the feeling disappeared. Instead I felt happy. I don't understand this process.

A. It is not a process at all—it is simply the fluctuations in your condition that take place so long as there is not vital stability.

4-4-1934

From the Note-books of SHANTI DOSHI

LEAVES FROM MY ENGLISH DIARY

(Continued from the issue of April 24)

7TH NOVEMBER 1955 : VISIT TO HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN

STARTING from London at 9 in the morning I reached Coventry at 11 o'clock. Willie and John Lovegrove, brothers of my friend Mrs. Pinto (Mona) came to the station but we missed each other. I crossed the bridge and was on the point of engaging a taxi when I learnt that a train for Hampton-in-Arden would be soon coming. It was raining. As I crossed the bridge again, both Willie and John met me, and we went in a car to the house of Mr. James Wood, their brother-in-law. Coventry town was practically razed to the ground by German bombardment. It is now rebuilt on a new sight. Hampton-in-Arden is a very pretty place in the central part of England. With Willie I saw a drama in Birmingham theatre and we had a long chat with the Wood family round the 'hearth'. One could feel how true is the identification of the 'hearth' with 'home': it is before the heat-giving hearth that the family assembles in the cold of England.

8TH NOVEMBER 1955

We saw Warwick Castle. On our way we had a look at Kenilworth Castle in ruins. It is said that a fort in the Mysore state in India is built in imitation of this castle and it is still in good condition there. We visited Leechfield Cathedral on our way. This was one of the Cathedrals destroyed by Cromwell. But the Catholics have built it again on the old foundations. Very fine brass work is to be seen in it. It has tombs of many famous persons.

Exactly at 9-30 a.m., the notified time, the window of the office opened to issue tickets for admission to Warwick Castle. A guide accompanied the company. There was a large collection of old arms and armours worn by soldiers, presents from Kings, old utensils. There was a very big vessel for cooking for hundreds of men with a recipe. The presents given to the Earl of Warwick by Queen Anne were housed in a separate room. Small and big size paintings were also preserved.

There was also a haunted room ! Murders used to be committed in aristocratic and royal families in England as in India in the middle ages. Some prince of the Warwick family was murdered in the game of power. It is said that his spirit has haunted the room ever since. It may be true that the English do not believe in haunting spirits, and that they regard the belief as a superstition. But I saw a young woman hurriedly withdraw from the room followed by her husband. Such estates are costly to maintain; hence their use as museums for visitors.

12TH NOVEMBER 1955

I was in London. Doris and I decided to pay a visit to the Golders Green cemetery in memory of Peter (Crampton-Chalk). Doris told me that he had decided for cremation. The distance from Kensington to the cemetery is long and I utilised it to talk to Doris about the sadhak's attitude towards work. Doing action—Karma—is not doing Karma Yoga. The technique of Karma Yoga is clearly given in the Gita.

We bought some flowers at Golders Green. There the arrangement for the disposal of dead bodies is very neat—in a few minutes the powerful electric current reduces the body to a small quantity of ash. The ashes are then scattered on the green plot behind—the idea being to keep the memory of the departed 'green'. We offered some flowers in his name; our hearts were filled with his memory and his presence. I said to him in silence: "We are trying to carry out the work which was so dear to your heart; and we know that your subtle help is there. I know that your future is safe under the protection of the Mother. A great vision of Truth brought us together and we are all one in the attempt to bring it into life. May you feel happy in the work that is done in England and may your progress to the Truth be unhampered."

We returned full of emotion.

1ST AND 2ND DECEMBER 1955

VISIT TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, 68 DUKES AVENUE, MUSWELL HILL, LONDON

I and Alan went to the Mission in the afternoon, taking our lunch at a restaurant on Muswell Hill. We met Swami Ghanananda who had come from Madras. A clean-shaven young Englishman was his secretary. A disciple took me to the room where a large photograph of Sri Ramakrishna was kept. It had a very peaceful spiritual atmosphere. Swami Ghanananda proposed that I should speak to his group on the 2nd of December in King James' Hall. As the proposal came from him I accepted it, having no other engagement on the date as I was leaving England on the 3rd of December.

At the meeting while introducing me, Swamiji made glaring errors in his reference to Sri Aurobindo's life, for which I was sorry as I had to correct them before I began the subject proper: "The Gita in Sri Aurobindo's Light." I dwelt upon the difference between the Gita and other scriptures of India—its origin in a life-situation and its emphasis on "action" as a means of Yoga. The Gita is not other-worldly in its spiritual teaching, it shows the working of a Divine Will even behind the ordinary actions of individual and collective life.

(To be continued)

A. B. PURANI

“OVERHEAD POETRY”

SOME years back there appeared in *Mother India*, under the above title, three instalments of a series of poems written by a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's and critically commented on by the Master. They were meant to illustrate the most important element of what Sri Aurobindo has called “The Future Poetry”. This poetry would not be written from the usual sources of the world's literature—the levels of consciousness which, according to Sri Aurobindo, may be classified : subtle-physical mind (as in Homer and Chaucer), vital mind (as in Shakespeare and Kalidasa) and intellectual mind or creative intelligence (as in Dante and Milton). It would be written from those rarer levels whose voices have occasionally joined the expression from these sources to make the profoundest moments of past poetry. The rarest of those levels give birth to “overhead poetry” : they are “planes” whose afflatus comes as if from an infinitude of conscious being above our brain-clamped intellect. Sri Aurobindo broadly distinguishes them as Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, Overmind. In poetry, they can function separately or in combination—and the Overmind, which is the home of what the ancient seers named the *Mantra*, the Divine Word, the supreme revelatory speech of the Eternal, can lift up any of the grades below it and modify itself to form with the first and second as well as with the creative intelligence the “mental Overmind” or, with the intuitive plane added, the “Overmind Intuition”.

The Higher Mind displays a broad steady light of thought born of a spiritual and not intellectual consciousness. The Illumined Mind has a greater intensity of light and has direct vision rather than thought. The Intuition has clear flashes of an intimate sense of things : it deepens spiritual sight into spiritual insight. The Overmind not only brings the closest inner and outer grip but also moves massively with a luminous “globality”, as it were.

The initial instalment of the old series showed in their pure character the Higher Mind, the Illumined Mind and the Intuition at work in whole short poems. It further showed a play of mixed inspiration touching in various ways the mental Overmind or the Overmind Intuition. The next instalment and still more the last presented other blendings : the overhead poetry accompanied by or fusing with the creative intelligence, as well as something of the Inner Mind, that many-dimensioned realm of a deeper look than the normal vision of the subtle-physical, vital or intellectual mentality. The innermost source is, in Sri Aurobindo's terms, the psychic—the plane of the “soul” proper, with its poignancy of sweetness and light, whose indirect presence on the more outer planes may be considered the secret power which transmits inspiration. There is occult poetry too, communicating from the inner consciousness a pattern of delicate or powerful symbols with mysterious suggestions and occasionally giving rise to a chequer of baffling beautiful surrealism.

We are now running from the work of the same disciple a new series of three instalments in which, along with a mixture of the overhead planes among themselves, there will be a wider variety of interweavings and, for the sake of striking comparison, several examples of mystical and spiritual self-expression not only from the creative poetic intelligence but also from the inner-mental, occult and psychic ranges. Thus diverse shades of “The Future Poetry” will be illustrated, even while the main focus of attention will be on the overhead afflatus with its extraordinarily profound seeing and its tones at once of intensity and immensity rising towards the *Mantra*.

The prime purpose of all the series, old and new, is to help the poets of the spiritual life to feel more vividly the new power set working by Sri Aurobindo and catch fire with it. It is also intended that literary critics should understand the expansion of possibility in vision and word and rhythm, which it effects, and develop a detailed perception of both the “heart” and the “art” of a poetry vibrant—to quote a strikingly overhead verse from Sri Aurobindo himself—with

The lines that tear the veil from Deity’s face.

EDITOR

III

MOKSHA

A giant earth-oblivion numbs the brain,
 A stroke of trance making each limb fall loose
 And narrow-hearted hungers crumble down!...
 The soul has broken through the walls of time,
 The unlustred prison of the dreaming clay,
 To a palace of imperishable gold—
 No transient pauper day but shadowless dawn,
 Eternal Truth’s sun-gated infinite.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“It is mental throughout except the last line which has a touch of Higher Mind; but it is fine all the same. Quite up to the mark.”

LOVE’S TRIUMPH

O face of scorn, you winter not my will :
 This heart grew brighter when your breath’s proud chill
 Flung my diffuse life-blood more richly in !
 Now mystic reveries halo mortal din :

No longer now the outward-burning stress,
 The eternal Spirit's self-forgetfulness—
 But through a superhuman quietude
 The timeless secret of each rhythm is heard.
 Love turns a living ether's infinite mood;
 Your beauty's call, a brief and flickering word
 Of clay, becomes in that divine expanse
 Truth-whitenesses clasped by a hush of trance.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“The mental is no doubt prominent, but inspiration is present throughout and in the lines marked [4, 6-9, 12] rises above the mental, for the overhead note is there. It is the mental lines that give the tone to the poem, these lines rise out of the mental like islands out of the sea. Moreover, except in the lines marked with a cross [4, 9] where the illumined Mind gets strongly in, the ‘note’ is not quite pure,—there is the higher Mind tone, even a little of the illumined Mind, but not enough to make it absolutely that. It is a fine poem with very fine lines in it.”

APOTHEOSIS

Spurning the narrow cities of your mind,
 Climb to the turquoise dome of distances
 Where Nature's spirit wears a measureless crown—
 The unwall'd glory of some Tartar day,
 The inscrutable puissance of a negro night.
 There every straining mood brims infinite,
 An all-submerging primal mystery,
 A waveless ocean of omnipotent ease—
 Or like all heaven's truth-core flames the will !

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“The Tartar day and Negro night have vividness and power; the other lines are very fine poetry. As a whole, the Higher Mind with a touch of Illumination.”

INCARNATION

Would you conceive her Self ? A sheer abyss
 Of reverie existing by its own
 Grandeur of inexhaustible silences
 That know all secrets through a light unknown.

Nor her divinity the clay ensheathes :
 Those pure immitigable joys unblind
 Each human pore and her whole body breathes
 The large and lustrous odour of her mind.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“It is very good. Such inversions as in the fifth line should not be too often used, as in modern English they are apt to be puzzling. It is from the Illumined mind that the poem as a whole seems to have come. Most of your poems now are from there.”

NIGHT OF TRANCE

Closing your eyes, outstretch vague hands of prayer
 Beyond the prison-house of mortal air...
 Then, soul-awakened, watch the universe thrill
 With secrets drawn from the Invisible—
 A force of gloom that makes each flicker-stress
 Bare the full body of its goldenness
 And yield in that embrace of mystery
 A flaming focus of infinity,
 A fire-tongue nourished by God’s whole expanse
 Through darknesses of superhuman trance.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“Lines five to eight (marked double) are from the Illumined Mind touched with the Intuition—the rest seem to be mainly from the Higher Mind, except that the last two have a force of Illumination also (marked double). Perhaps the sustained intensity is less than that of your very best poems : that does not mean that it is a semi-success—it is a difference of shade rather than of category.”

APE ON FIRE

Fuelled with forests I come, an ape on fire,
 A brown beast burning towards the unbarred Blue,
 Fierce brain that feels suddenly the skull blown off,
 Blind belly crying to be an abysm of stars !

Helpless with flame that snatches them from earth,
 My terrible arms strain reddening in mid-air—
 Love that has lost the ecstasy it can grasp,
 To embrace the bourneless body of the Beyond.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

The lines you have sent me no doubt have a remarkable force, especially three or four of them, but I do not know that I can say positively from what level or source they come. Perhaps the Illumined Mind, but not purely from that. I would have to wait for more light from that illumined quarter before I could pronounce with a complete certainty.

 IN TERRAM

Why this indignity that from the brave
 Height of soul-lustre into a broken grave
 Man's yearning flesh should drop and all his drouth
 Of planet-passion kiss the worm's cold mouth ?
 What treasure yet unknown draws down his mood,
 Whose heart is fashioned for infinitude ?
 Surely some God-abyss calls out to him !...
 We die and all our wingèd senses dim
 Because we have not dreamed the goal of birth,
 The arcane eternity coring dull earth.
 O omnipresent Light, break from below
 As in the constellate seasons of our mind :
 Rise up and flower in these cells of woe,
 Flush the wan nerves, breathe your immense gold breath,
 And make our limbs no longer grope to find
 A heaven of quiet through world-weary death !

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"It is very fine. The thought is clear enough. Illumined Mind + intuitive inspiration."

A METAPHYSICAL POET TO HIS MISTRESS

Not for the light of limbs
 But for the peace
 Folding, when rapture dims,
 Heart-poignancies—

The lull of ardour spent,
 Which like a wind
 Of some cool firmament
 Blows out the mind,

Leaving our gaze a night
 Timelessly deep
 As if all heaven's height
 Sank asleep—

O love, for that abyss'
 Unnamable sky
 The soul from kiss to kiss
 Wings on, a cry

Of passion to be freed
 From its own fire
 And hurl away the seed
 Of earth-desire !...

Though far the eternal day
 Pure vigils view,
 Its secret in my clay
 I plumb with you.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“No, it is not weak or merely clever. It is a fine poem, the thought perfectly expressed—the thought itself may be ‘queer’, but it expresses something which people sometimes vaguely feel, a seeking in earthly desire for something beyond that desire. The lines marked [6-12] are very striking and have a strong turn of intuitive revelation. The rest though it has not that originality is very felicitously phrased and rhythmical and has a certain finality or definitiveness in it which is always an achievement in poetry.”

ABOVE ROSE-RED

Giant roses,
 Gods of light,
 Glory and laugh and mingle
 On a dreamy height.

But, ever and ever
 Above rose-red
 Flame and forgetfulness,
 Vigils unwed

A white, immense,
 Miraculous-blown
 Lily beyond time's dearth
 Yet very alone.

Omnipotence,
 Infinitude,
 Eternity of splendour—
 All are subdued

To a virgin breath
 Calling the far
 Earth-glooms of pain to marry
 Its soul of star.

And therefore life
 Yearns and years—
 Feeling some limitless rapture
 Unmated burns.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“Very fine. All such poems come from the Intuition plane.”

 EXILE

With you unseen, what shall my song adore ?
 Though waves foam-garland all the saffron shore

My music cannot mingle with their tone,
Because a purer worship I have known.

How shall I join the birds' delight of space,
Whose eyes have winged the heaven of your face ?

Or with the rain urge blossoms to be sweet,
When I have lost the altar of your feet ?

A lone tranquillity whose eyelids fall
Is now my only voice, for thus I call

Your godhead back : the gates of outwardness
I shut and my lost rapture repossess—

Your spirit in my spirit, deep in the deep,
Walled by a wizardry of shining sleep.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“I find it very good. It is not sentimental at all, for feeling and sentiment are not the same thing. It comes from the intuitive mind and has a note of fine adequacy which is often the best form for that inspiration to take. The last two lines are more intense and come straight from the Intuition itself—an expression not of mind, but of truth-sight pure and sheer.”

PHARPHAR

(“...Abana and Pharphar, lucid streams”—Milton)

Where is the glassy gold of Pharphar
Or its echoing silver-grey
When the magic ethers of evening
Wash one the various day ?

I have travelled the whole earth over
Yet never found
The beautiful body of Pharphar
Or its soul of secret sound.

But all my dreams are an answer
 To Pharphar's blind career;
 And the songs that I sing are an image
 Of quiet I long to hear.

For, only this unreached beauty
 No time shall mar—
 This river of infinite distance,
 Pharphar.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

"Very beautiful indeed, subtle and gleaming and delicate. The sound-suggestions are perfect. I suppose it comes from some plane of intuitive inspiration."

A COMPARISON BETWEEN "PHARPHAR" AND WALTER DE LA MARE'S "ARABIA"¹

"It is indeed charming—De la Mare seems to have an unfailing beauty of language and rhythm and an inspired loveliness of fancy that is captivating. But

¹ ARABIA

Far are the shades of Arabia,
 Where the Princes ride at noon,
 'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
 Under the ghost of a moon;
 And so dark is that vaulted purple
 Flowers in the forest rise
 And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
 Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
 In my heart when out of dreams
 I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
 Descry her gliding streams,
 Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
 Ring loud with the grief and delight
 Of the dim-silked, dark-haired musicians
 In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forest;
 No beauty on earth I see
 But shadowed with that dream recalls
 Her loveliness to me:
 Still eyes look coldly upon me,
 Cold voices whisper and say—
 "He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
 They have stolen his wits away."

still it is fancy, the mind playing with its delicate imaginations. A hint of something deeper tries to get through sometimes, but it does not go beyond a hint. That is the difference between his poem and the one it inspired from you. There is some kinship though no sameness in the rhythm and the tone of delicate remoteness it brings with it. But in your poem that something deeper is not hinted, it is caught—throughout—in all the expressions, but especially in such lines as

When the magic ethers of evening
Wash one the various day

or

The beautiful body of Pharphar
Or its soul of secret sound

or

This river of infinite distance,
Pharphar.

These expressions give a sort of body to the occult without taking from it its strangeness and do not leave it in mist or in shadowy image or luminous silhouette. That is what a fully successful spiritual or occult poetry has to do, to make the occult and the spiritual real to the vision of the consciousness, the feeling. The occult is most often materialised as by Scott and Shakespeare or else pictured in mists, the spiritual mentalised, as in many attempts at spiritual poetry—a reflection in the mind is not enough. For success in the former Arjava's [J. A. Chadwick's] 'Totalitarian' with the stark occult reality of its vision is a good example; for the latter there are lines both in his poems and yours that I could instance, but I cannot recall them accurately just now—but have you not somewhere a line

The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind ?

That would be an instance of the concrete convincing reality of which I am speaking—a spiritual state not hinted at or abstractly put as the metaphysical poets most often do it but presented with a tangible accuracy which one who has lived in the silent wideness of his spiritualised mind can at once recognise as the embodiment in word of his experience.

“I do not mean for a moment to deny the value of the exquisite texture of dream in De la Mare's representation, but still this completer embodiment achieves more.”

SPHERE-MUSIC

Bring not your stars the very same
Magic as mine ? I give that name
Unto a touch of cool far flame
Upon my heart

When evening yearns beyond the brief
 Monotonies of joy and grief
 For some strange rhythmical relief
 Shining apart—

And dim migrations, mindward sent
 From reveries omnipotent
 Through shadows of a firmament
 Crowned by deep lull,

Scatter their white and wingèd powers
 Of song across the barren hours
 Till darkness lit to flying flowers
 Breathes beautiful.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“It is a very good lyric, the rhythm and the thought very subtle and satisfying.”

(I have the same impression about it as about the poem which, according to you, had come from the Intuition plane. Am I right ?)

“I believe it is the same source.”

SAHAJ

I see your limbs aglow
 With passionate will,
 But touching their white flesh I know
 Your love's intangible—

As if each fiery line
 Of yearning clay
 Brought only a mirror-shine
 Of beacons far away !

Your flames unquenchable dart
 Yet burn not by their kiss :
 They flash around my heart
 A dream of distances—

A rich wave-aureole
That lures beyond its tune
Of time the lustre-haunted soul
To a paradisal moon.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“It is a very fine lyrical poem, expressing with perfection what it had to say—it has the same quality as other lyrics of the kind formerly written by you—an entire precision and ease of language and rhythm, a precision that is intuitive and suggestive.”

DRAGON

A cry of gold piercing the spine's dark sleep,
A dragon fire consuming mortal thought,
An aureoled hunger that makes time fall dead,
My passion curves from bliss to heavenward bliss.

Kindling the rhythm of a myriad smile,
This white wave lifted by some virgin deep
Breaks through the embodied moments of the mind
To a starry universe of infinite trance.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

“All the lines are very fine, especially those marked [1-3, 5-8]. The three first of each stanza have a great intensity of vision—Higher Mind plus Overmind Intuition touch. The last—Higher Mind plus Illumined Mind—is not equal in vision but still not too far below.”

To help me distinguish the planes of inspiration, could you just indicate where the following phrases from various poems of mine have their sources?

1. What visionary urge
 Has stolen from horizons watched alone
 Into thy being with ethereal guile ?

2. A huge sky-passion sprouting from the earth
 In branchèd vastnesses of leafy rapture.

3. The mute unshadowed spaces of her mind.
4. A sea unheard where spume nor spray is blown.
5. Irradiant wing-waft through eternal space,
Pride of lone rapture and invincible sun-gaze.
6. And to the earth-self suddenly
Came, through remote entranced marvelling
Of adoration ever-widening,
A spacious sense of immortality.
7. Here life's lost heart of splendour beats immense.
8. The haunting rapture of the vast dream-wind
That blows, star-fragrant, from eternity.
9. An ocean-hearted ecstasy am I
Where time flows inward to eternal shores.

COMMENTS FROM SRI AUROBINDO

1. "Second line Intuitive with Overmind touch. Third line imaginative Poetic Intelligence.
2. "Imaginative Poetic Intelligence with something of the Higher Mind.
3. "Intuitive with Overmind touch.
4. "Intuitive.
5. "Higher Mind with mental Overmind touch.
6. "Mixture of Higher and Illumined Mind—in the last line the mental Overmind touch.
7. "Illumined Mind with mental Overmind touch.
8. "Ditto.
9. "Intuitive, Illumined, Overmind touch all mixed together.

"I have analysed very imperfectly—because these influences are so mixed together that the descriptions are not exhaustive.

"Also remember that I speak of a *touch*, of the *mental* Overmind touch and that when there is the touch it is not always complete—it may be more apparent from something either in the language or substance or rhythm than in all three together.

"Even so, perhaps some of my descriptions are overhasty and denote the impression of the moment. Also the poetical value of the poetry exists independent of its source."

THE DESTINY OF THE BODY

THE SEER-VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

(Continued from the issue of March)

PART THREE : THE CONQUEST OF FOOD-NEED

VI. SUPERMIND THE MASTER-KEY

The principle of the process of evolution is a foundation, from that foundation an ascent, in that ascent a reversal of consciousness and, from that greater height and wideness gained, an action of change and new integration of the whole Nature.

(Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine, p. 645)

Ascent is the first necessity, but an integration is an accompanying intention of the spirit in Nature.

(Ibid., p. 637)

We want an integral transformation, the transformation of the body and all its activities.

Formerly when one spoke of transformation, one meant solely the transformation of the inner consciousness. One endeavoured to discover in oneself the deeper consciousness and rejected the body and its activities as a burden and a useless thing, so that one might be engaged solely in the inner development. Sri Aurobindo declared that that is not sufficient; the Truth demanded that the material world too should take part in this transformation and become an expression of the deeper Truth. But when this was told to people, many thought that it was possible to transform the body and its activities without troubling oneself at all with what was happening within—which is of course not quite true. Before you take up the work of physical transformation, which is of all things the most difficult, you must have your inner consciousness firmly, solidly established in the Truth...

(The Mother, Bulletin, Vol. XV, No. 4, p. 51)

THE goal of our sadhana is not merely the liberation of some isolated individuals from the shackles of phenomenal Ignorance but the establishment of a divine life upon earth, *ihaiwa*. But since Matter is the foundation of all evolutionary efflorescence of Life here on the terrestrial plane, our body assumes a supreme importance in the total

scheme of our achievement. For “the body is not only the necessary outer instrument of the physical part of the action, but for the purposes of this life a base or pedestal also for all inner action.”¹ So a full play of divine life demands as its essential prerequisite a fully transformed material body which as a supple and flawless and parent instrument will respond fully to every call of the self-manifesting Spirit. “At present the notation of the body and the physical consciousness has a very large determining power on the music made by this human harp of God; the notes we get from the spirit, from the psychic soul, from the greater life behind our physical life cannot come in freely, cannot develop their high powerful and proper strain. This condition must be reversed; the body and the physical consciousness must develop the habit of admitting and shaping themselves to these higher strains and not they, but the nobler parts of the nature must determine the music of our life and being.”²

Thus a divine transformation of our physical sheath, *annamaya koṣa*, is an indispensable concomitant of a truly divine living in the world. But in the present status of consciousness of man the mental being, this transformation cannot be achieved or even initiated on the plane of the body. It will then be like putting the cart before the horse. For, where is the lever of transformation or the potent agent to effectuate the change? In reality—whatever may be the appearances—it is consciousness that is always the prime determinant. So, before we can expect any transformation of our physical existence, we must first acquire a divine consciousness within and effectuate a total liberation of our Purusha part. Then and then alone the question of the liberation of our Prakriti part and of the divine transfiguration of our bodily instrument may acquire some practical importance, *not before*. In the forthright words of the Mother: “*You must begin from within*. I have said a hundred times, you must begin *from above*. You must purify the higher region and then purify the lower.”³ Sri Aurobindo too has warned us: “The transformation to which we aspire is too vast and complex to come at one stroke; it must be allowed to come by stages. *The physical change is the last of these stages* and is itself a progressive process. The inner transformation cannot be brought about by physical means either of a positive or a negative nature. On the contrary, the physical change itself can only be brought about by a descent of the greater supramental consciousness into the cells of the body.”⁴ (Italics ours)

Yes, it is the ‘supramental consciousness’—understood not in the sense of any and every spiritual consciousness above the plane of Mind but in the specific sense in which Sri Aurobindo uses it—that alone possesses the Knowledge and Power to effectuate the transformation of our physical being. It is the descent of Supermind from above and the emergence of involved Supermind from behind the veil into the arena of our manifested becoming that can progressively divinise our inner existence and finally proceed to the divinisation of our body itself as a crowning achieve-

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 834.

² *Ibid*, p. 836.

³ *Vide* Noliniakanta Gupta, *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo* (Part Eight), p. 102.

⁴ *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 567.

ment of the evolutionary elaboration of life. No other spiritual consciousness or power short of this Supermind—the divine Gnosis and the Truth-Consciousness (*rita-cit*) of Sachchidananda—possesses this power of integral transformation. And that is why a subjective spiritual liberation of our inner being and an inner change of consciousness alone, although the essential precondition for any attempt at physical transformation to be at all made feasible, is not as a general rule sufficient by itself.

But why is it so ? Why have the states of spiritual consciousness attained so far in different climes and times failed to mould the physical existence in the image of divinity ? What are the basic difficulties that render this task of physical transformation almost impossible of realisation ?

To have a proper grasp of the problem we must first take note of a few cardinal points concerning the process of transformation in general :

(1) In order that a particular part of our total existence may be transformed, it is essential that the part itself seek for this desired transformation. It has to grow self-aware of the need for the change and acquire the necessary capacity to bear the transfiguration when it comes.

(2) A higher consciousness acting from above or imposing its influence on the lower part of the being, without the latter's self-conscious and willing collaboration, may indeed modify to some extent the prevailing nature or working of this lower part, but can never transform it altogether. "If the work were done from above, from some spiritual height, there might be a sublimation or uplifting or the creation of a new structure compelled by the sheer force of the influence from above : but this change might not be accepted as native to itself by the lower being; it would not be a total growth, an integral evolution, but a partial and imposed formation...; a creation from outside the normal nature, by imposing upon it, it could be durable in its entirety only as long as there was a maintenance of the creating influence."¹

(3) The higher Power and Consciousness has thus to descend into the lower part and dynamically act therein, seeking to awaken in the process the consenting participation of the latter. But this confrontation of the higher and the lower has a reciprocal two-way consequence. While the higher seeks to transfigure the lower with its own power and its own law of nature, it is at the same time modified, its light obscured and its effectivity curtailed by the counteraction of the lower. To quote Sri Aurobindo again :

"A descent of consciousness into the lower levels is...necessary, but in this way also it is difficult to work out the full power of the higher principle; there is a modification, dilution, diminution which keeps up an imperfection and limitation in the results: the light of a greater knowledge comes down but gets blurred and modified, its significance misinterpreted or its truth mixed with...error, or the force, the power to fulfil itself is not commensurate with its light...A mutilated power, a partial effect or ham-

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 814.

pered movement is the consequence."¹

(4) Now the capacity of the higher principle to modify or change the lower without at the same time undergoing itself any dilution or mixture depends upon its own *essential* potency. "It is not likely that it will be able to bring about an entire transformation if it is not itself the original Principle of Existence, if it is only derivative, an instrumental power and not the first puissance."²

Now, when we view the problem of physical transformation in the light of the above points, we can very well understand why this problem has defied any solution so far. First of all, our body itself possesses a subconscious consciousness of its own which clings with an obstinate fidelity to its past habits and modes of functioning and automatically and invariably offers a dogged opposition to all that seeks to change its nature. And this is because the process of evolution here upon earth has started from an inconscient base and all that has emerged and developed afterwards had to appear as a superstructure upon the unchanged foundation of Inconscience.

Thus even in men, developed mental beings, "the substance of our normal being is moulded out of the Inconscience. Our ignorance is a growth of knowledge in a substance of being which is nescient; the consciousness it develops, the knowledge it establishes are always dogged, penetrated, enveloped by this nescience...The nescience invades or encompasses or even swallows up and absorbs into its oblivious darkness all that enters into it; it compels the descending light to compromise with the lesser light it enters : there is a mixture, a diminution and dilution of itself, a diminution, a modification, an incomplete authenticity of its truth and power."³

Thus, unless this 'blind Ananke of the Inconscience' can somehow be illumined and transfigured, there can be no prospect for any physical transformation. For, this 'dragon base' remaining as it is, the dead weight of the inconscient substratum of our physical being, the inexorable downward pull towards the original Inertia and Nescience will infructify the action of any intervening Force that seeks to effectuate a radical transformation. Even when the higher spiritual-mental powers and their intensities enter into the substance of the inconscient foundation, they too undergo this inescapable disability and cannot annul the disparity between the consciousness that comes in and the force of dynamic effectuation. Thus whatever the degree or status of the subjective spiritual illumination of the sadhaka, his body and physical nature continue to circumscribe and diminish "the sovereignty and freedom and dynamism of the spirit with [their] own force of adjustment by limitation, demarcation by incapacity, foundation of energy on the repose of an original Inertia",⁴ and as a consequence remain subject to the established and inexorable Laws of Darkness and Incapacity and Death.

Faced with this almost insuperable difficulty of physical transformation, most

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 814.

² *Ibid.*, p. 628.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 853.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 854.

spiritual seekers have tended to turn away from the physical being of man with aversion or even denial, and reconciled themselves to its unalterable fate of ever remaining unregenerate and untransformed. But, evidently, this cannot be the right attitude for the sadhaka of the Integral Yoga. Since a divine transformation of all the parts of our existence including its most material foundation is the goal envisaged by the Yoga of Integral Transformation, we must seek for the clue that will resolve the age-old deadlock and open the portals to the transfiguration of our body.

Now, we have seen before that a 'static seizure' of the domains of the spirit in our inner consciousness is not sufficient for the physical transformation; for that to be possible there must occur a dynamic descent of the higher consciousness into our physical nature and a luminous awakening evoked therein in the very body-consciousness itself.

Now, it is only the supramental Force, the 'original and final self-determining Truth-Force of the self-existent Infinite' that has got the potency entirely to overcome the iron hold of the fundamental Nescience. For only the supermind can descend into the subterranean reaches of our existence without losing in any way its full dynamic power of action; for "its action is always intrinsic and automatic, its will and knowledge identical and the result commensurate : its nature is a *self-achieving Truth-consciousness*."¹ To the dark negating Necessity of the Inconscience, supermind opposes a supremely imperative luminous spiritual Necessity that is irresistible in its power of effectuation.

It is thus evident that if there is to be an entire transformation even of our material existence, Supermind or divine Gnosis must directly intervene in our earth-nature and overtly act therein. From the point of view of evolution, this supramental intervention will take the form of a twofold process. When the evolutionary Nature is found ready and receptive, there will be "a supramental inflow from above, the descent of a gnostic being into the nature, and an emergence of the concealed supramental force from below; the influx and the unveiling between them will remove... the nature of the Ignorance. The rule of the Inconscient will disappear : for the Inconscience will be changed by the outburst of the greater secret consciousness within it, the hidden Light, into what it always was in reality, a sea of secret Superconscience."²

As a result of this transmutation of the inconscient foundation of our embodied existence, spirit will become the truly sovereign occupant of form, our bodily existence will transcend the present law of death, division and mutual devouring, the material substance will be transfigured and spiritualised and our body will become the body divine that will "reflect or reproduce here in a divine life on the earth something of [the] highest greatness and glory of the self-manifesting spirit."³

We have been so far speaking in the future tense, but that should not carry the

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 815.

² *Ibid*, p. 860.

³ *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, p. 74.

impression that the supramental manifestation is something that is still lying in the womb of the distant future and its possible glorious achievements that we have delineated above are but the golden ineffectual dreams of incorrigible optimists. No, the supramental manifestation upon earth is no longer just a speculative conjecture; it has already entered the phase of active realisation. For the divine supermind entered into earth-nature almost a decade ago (in the year 1956, to be precise) and is now dynamically operative to liberate the supramental principle involved within it.

As a consequence of this supramental manifestation and its subsequent action, something of capital importance has happened in a particular individual body, that unmistakably heralds the emergence of a divinely transformed physical existence in the foreseeable future. On this point let us listen to the words of the Mother, for is it not She the Mother Divine about whom Sri Aurobindo declared a long time ago : "The Mother comes in order to bring down the Supramental and it is the descent which makes her full manifestation here possible."¹ Also, "Her embodiment is a chance for the earth-consciousness to receive the Supramental into it and undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible."² She Herself announced to the world in the month of March, 1956 after the manifestation of the Supermind :

"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."

Now, as regards some of the most significant results already attained of this manifestation, the Mother says :

"There are many kinds of freedom, mental freedom, vital freedom, spiritual freedom, which are the fruits of successive mastery. But there is quite a *new freedom* that has become possible with the supramental manifestation, *the freedom of the body*.

"One of the very first results of the supramental manifestation has been to give *to the body a freedom and an autonomy which it had never known*. And when I speak of freedom, it is not a matter of a psychological perception or a state of inner consciousness, it is another thing and it is much better—it is *a new phenomenon in the body*, in the cells of the body. The cells themselves have felt for the first time that they are free, that they have a power of decision...

"Normally as it is, the body lives always with the impression that it is not master in its house...Now, with the supramental manifestation, something new has happened in the body : it feels it is master of the house, autonomous, both the feet planted upon earth, if I may say so. The impression it gives physically is that the whole being is erect, it has lifted its head—one is master....Yes, things have changed. *It is the body that has a direct power without any external intervention*. I consider this to be a very important result."³ Then The Mother adds significantly : "This new

¹ *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, p. 433.

² *Ibid*, p. 434.

³ *Bulletin*, Vol. X No. 1, pp. 81-85.

vibration in the body has made me understand *the mechanism of the transformation*. It is not a thing that comes with a Higher Will, a higher consciousness imposed upon the body, it is the body itself that wakes up in the cells, it is *a freedom of the cells themselves, altogether a new vibration*, and the disorders are mended, disorders even antecedent to the supramental manifestation."¹ (Italics ours)

Now, what will be the impact of this supramental manifestation upon the specific problem that constitutes the central theme of our essay? How is it going to liberate the body from its inexorable and absolute dependence upon material aliments gathered from outside for its sheer self-maintenance?

We have discussed in our previous chapters the problem of Hunger in its metaphysical aspect and suggested the conditions that have to be met in order that the solution may be forthcoming in the subjective domains of the being. But, we stress again, this subjective liberation from the universal law of Hunger is but the necessary pre-requisite; but it does not automatically deliver our physical being from the iron grip of the same law. The problem has to be faced and tackled on the plane of the body itself: the lion has to be tamed in its own den.

We proceed then to the consideration of the physical necessity for material aliments and try to see how this problem of bodily hunger may possibly be solved in the New Body that is going to appear in the course of supramental evolution.

(*To be continued*)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJEE

¹ *Bulletin*, Vol. X No. 1, pp. 81-85.

WHOM GOD PROTECTS

THE LIFE-STORY OF A SPIRITUAL ADEPT

(Continued from the issue of March)

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RETURNING after four years of absence Arka inundated all with love and joy. In the interval Parvati, holding fast to the name of her Guru as the only support, had established a vast field of spiritual practice. The practice she laid most stress on was the control of one's mind and not just singing the name of the Lord and the chanting of hymns: the mental control that would raise the race or society to superior levels by evoking the great Shakti—a work in the field of the world of action for the good of all and not only for the individual. Parvati had built up in her own house a remarkable refuge for the old and the young, for man and woman, without any distinction whatsoever, where all could assimilate the true atmosphere. Arka was surprised to note with what deep reverence and simple love people looked upon her. She was called the Devi and was looked upon as the presiding deity of the region, as the central power, conquering the hearts of all in the name of her Guru. In this way she had overpassed the narrow bounds of personal activity and had infused into the lives of her neighbours, afflicted as they were with the trials of the world, the inspiration of simple reason and truthful deportment; evoking in them the glory of labour, she had changed their idle and useless ways to open up a life of happiness and comfort. The acquisition of *samnyama* was visible in all their acts, rendering their lives truly joyful. With remarkable skill she had placed *Dharma* as the highest good before their eyes, in all their efforts for benevolent actions, in the place of their previous idle life. Arka was happy and greatly surprised to note all this. Finding her alone one day he availed himself of the opportunity to ask her, "Parvati, how did you, an uneducated woman born in an ignorant and sorrowful milieu, acquire this amazing wisdom of harmonising *Dharma* with action?"

Parvati answered with a ready promptness, "Why do you ask? Was it not there in all that you taught me?"

Arka said, "Yes it was surely there, the entire universe was in it, but I am extremely surprised to see a very glorious and special flowering of a particular action. None but the presiding deity of the seed that is sown knows how it germinates best in a chosen field. Perhaps, even my Guru was unaware, except as a glimpse of a hazy possibility, how the seed that he put in me would sprout and be fruitful. He was delighted even to see a very tiny action of it in me. But you know nothing of him. The amazing discoveries of his Yoga that I know, if they could be revealed at the pro-

per moment, in the proper spheres, would usher in a new era for the world. Be that as it may, I am no less surprised to notice this remarkable development in you, more in fact than was his surprise when he saw the possibility in me.”

Parvati spoke, as a charmed devotee does to the Guru, “All that you told me on that last day, of the upsurge of desire and the wonderful power of control, has been instrumental in creating, at that very moment, in me a truth whose action is a *Dharma* active on all levels of men in the world, and, even if poured eternally into all those who are capable, it would still remain inexhaustible. This *Dharma* would be able to liberate all those who are idle and lazy and would raise them from all inertia.”

Arka said, “My Guru has analysed and shown by yoga how Ananda and knowledge descend into the mind and life and even into the body in all actions and at every level, shown very simply and lucidly what before him no one had even dreamed as possible. When those expositions are widely dispersed, the entire world of yogis in India will be amazed and, believe me, they will accept them too. All that you have gained was his very own. I am no more than an intermediary, a channel.”

Parvati all the time was merged in the joy that was flowing through her; now she said, “Truly am I full of your grace. I wonder how it has been possible in me. Instead of being destined to live by gathering fuel, selling milk and ploughing my tiny plot of land for vegetables, I have now an established ashram. Becoming a Devi, I instruct people—strange! But you I have held up as the Guru and you are my sustainer. We have no right to Guruhood; the Supreme—”

“The real Guru is the One, the Supreme Nature, the divine Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. The seed of Her name in you has produced this wonderful fruit. Now, you too know that we are no longer the Guru and the disciple—we have attained to that level where there is nothing high or low, nothing ahead or behind, in the field of Superconscience—”

Interrupting, Parvati said, “Hush ! please stop. Save me from your explanations, as there is no one here now to instruct.”

As they talked, the ambrosial light of heaven seemed to illumine their faces. If anyone had been there to witness it, he would have been thoroughly enchanted.

They remained merged in this state for quite a long time, as they had lost all sense of Time. Coming back to the normal state, Arka softly said, “Parvati ! If I asked you now to come with me to a solitary refuge, would you agree to come ?”

A wonderful light lit up Parvati’s face. She said, “Why do you speak with so much circumspection ? Even now our minds are attuned to a superior range of Superconscience, the cadences of other realms are yet unheard; therefore, your proposal sounds rather futile here. Besides, no sooner than we came down you

would immediately be raised to the status of my Guru, and that would enable me to act faultlessly. May I ask you a question now ? Please tell me, this field of action that is being formed and growing day by day, I am afraid that—”

Arka said, “I know the cause of your fear, I know too that this field of action in which Loknath is engaged will also become much more extensive. To work in a very large field one would have to abide by the unavoidable rules of action, prepared to accept with equanimity all the results, helpful or detrimental, that accrue from them. This must be ever present in the mind from the very beginning.”

Parvati said, “Strange ! How is it that when one acts with a good and sincere intention some evil eats into it ?”

“You see, Parvati,” said Arka, “when Swami Vivekananda began the work of his Mission, he did so only after a thorough comprehension of all the environing aspects. I am mentioning his work here to tell you that since the disappearance of Buddhist influence from India none has been able to build up such a vast field of action—undoubtedly he is the guide of this epoch. Sri Ramakrishna fashioned him but the material he fashioned was no less wonderful; moreover, the rapid growth and expansion have been possible because of the power of resolution of that realised Purusha, and there has been no lack of harmony there. Even in such a great enterprise there may enter some evil or something undesirable, but, just as in this enormous universe, nothing evil or undesirable that has entered can hamper the flow of action. The reason is, as long as there is a vibrant life-energy at the centre, all works are certain to expand. The presence of that life-energy is the sanction of Nature, evidently the sanction of the nation. Action is meaningless without the society of men. So long as any action is able to do good to the country it will never die out. This in substance is the inner meaning of a successful enterprise.”

Parvati asked, “You said something about Loknath’s field of action ?”

Arka said, “The very first time when I came to you after my travels, at that time there was here a retired government servant called Loknath Chakraverti, an exceptionally intelligent man, who from the very first day became very intimate with me. He is a being of a high order, a true devotee. He was keen to do something useful for the misfortunes of his countrymen, something that would bring him an inner satisfaction for the rest of his life. Although he was fairly advanced in age, I could detect in him dormant an extraordinary capacity and power for action, seeking an outlet. He wanted to build up something with my help. His would be the work, his the force and all else; only, he was looking for someone who could inspire him. I too was inspired to be his advisor when I saw his pure heart and firm resolution. All this is his undertaking. Already he has got together some working capital, he hopes to get more. The pity of it is that a dear friend of his, who has contributed a considerable sum of money, has advised him to build up his organisation in Bengal. He was here, a little while ago, for my advice on this question.”

“What did you tell him ?” asked Parvati very anxiously.

“I told him,” said Arka, “that if he made such distinctions as Bengal or Bihar,

between one's own province and that of another, then he should not come to me. As I have no country that I can call my own, to advise him would amount to something quite hypocritical. I begged him to spare me. These words of mine brought him at once to a higher state of consciousness. Admitting his mistake he begged me to pardon him."

Parvati's face became bright, but immediately grew clouded, and she said, "I seem to foresee that as soon as the work will begin, you too will again depart."

Arka said, "True, I am, when all is understood, an absconding criminal. I will tell you now of the extraordinary mystery that surrounds my birth and life; so far I have spoken to none of it. None knows who were my parents, how I was brought up in the family of a Vaishya, and that since I left that family I have become someone unknown and unrecognised by the world. I am untraceable to any society or race of men—only with you I have some relation. After you Loknath—he, too, has bound me to him with ties of love that I have not succeeded in severing, nor do I wish to sever them. These ties, you may call them spiritual or whatever else you like, but they are the only ones. What else remains now—"

"One day you promised to show me something on the bank of the Ganges," said Parvati.

Arka replied, "Yes, if you have the time to spare, let us go now. I shall show you the place where something happened when I came here, aged seven, and Panchoo was my name then. I shall tell you of my birth and life—I'll tell you all about myself, that no one yet knows. I feel the time is ripe now to acquaint you with it."

"Please go to the riverside," said Parvati, "I'll join you there as soon as I have finished a small work that I must do now."

She left him at once and Arka too went slowly to the river and stood waiting for her.

Just then there appeared before him two or three Bihari gentlemen who bowed to him.

Arka asked, "Where are you coming from and whom do you want?"

They scrutinised for a while Arka's handsome face. Then one of them spoke in a respectful and gentle tone, "In all probability we are not mistaken, we are looking for you. We are coming from a distant village named Kahalgaon, our home. We have heard a great deal about you and we are convinced you could do us a great good. But we feel a slight hesitation to tell you that we should like you to come with us at once. It is absolutely essential that you accompany us—"

This unforeseen turn made Arka somewhat thoughtful. He was endeavouring to discover if this were the concealed signs of a new cycle of action.

The gentleman continued to speak, "It is nearly twenty years now that a Bengali Tantrik named Karali Bhairav came to our village to stay. We helped him with some land, on the bank of the Ganges, to build his ashram. He has now many disciples. He is man of grave disposition, of few words, and never allows anyone to enter his own room in the ashram; outside it he has built a hut where he used to remain all

through the daylight hours. It was there only that he gave instructions to his disciples and advised visitors who came to him. He had a Bhairavi, a nice person, whom he sent away about a couple of months back. Now for the last three weeks he has been ill and bed-ridden. The physicians of the village are unable to understand anything at all. He is slowly wasting away. His condition is such that we are very worried. A devotee of Mother Parvati used to come to his ashram from time to time. He came the day before yesterday and told him that the Guru of Mother Parvati had arrived; since then he is continually heard to say that he would not live long now, and insists that we fetch the Guru before he dies. From yesterday he has begun to say, 'If you do not bring him to me, my passage to the next world will be very difficult. Please go and tell him about me, he is a great spiritual being, he will never ignore my appeal. Please go, I shall live with the hope of seeing him.' Now please tell us your decision. We have a boat ready."

Arka listened very attentively, was absorbed in his thoughts for a few minutes, then asking them to wait he came to Parvati and told her the news. He added, "Parvati, I yet do not know what the Divine's intention is but I have received a clear direction from the World Mother. I think I must go."

Parvati said, "Not till you return will my anxieties disappear."

When Arka stepped on to the boat, the upper muscles of his right arm throbbed, an auspicious omen.

(To be continued)

PROMODE KUMAR CHATTERJEE

(Translated by Kalyan K. Chaudhuri from the Bengali)

THE TRAGEDIES OF AESCHYLUS

(Continued from the issue of April 24)

THE characters of the Aeschylean tragedies, we have said, were mostly drawn from the history and the legends of ancient Greece. And the poet has introduced them all in his plays with such a depth of devotion and such an all-round sincerity that they clearly betray his deliberate attempt at inspiring the common mass of his time with an ardent god-fearing religious creed and a burning and lofty patriotism. And, therefore, most of his characters are endowed with a superhuman strength, courage and determination, and a godlike sublimity welling from an unknown inner fount. Such characters, though life-like, are not life-size. They seem to step out of their gigantic canvas set up by some epic poet of Homeric genius. This reminds us of Aristotle who in his *Poetics* told his pupils that the quality of the "imitation" (*mimesis*) depends upon the character of the imitator : if he is grave and lofty in spirit, he imitates actions and adventures of elevated characters. Also Aristotle added that the more the imitation is exact, the greater the joy we derive out of it, especially if the object of imitation is something which we could not see in reality without pain. And, since Aristotle did not want the ideal fable (or plot) to relate such things as have actually happened, but such as might have happened, we see that the Aeschylean characters even conform to that ideal, are "possible according to probable or necessary consequence". Moreover, these characters fulfil all the Aristotelean prerequisites of the ideal manners or character, be it in the quality of disposition, be it in propriety, in resemblance, or in uniformity.

Danaus in *The Suppliant Women* has hardly any role to play other than guiding the steps of his fifty daughters in search for security under the protection of the Argive King. But the very few words he speaks reveal the opulence of wisdom and experience treasured in his mind and heart though his body now yields to the pitiable conditions of old age. When he advises his daughters, "Go near, and wield / In your left hands the olive-branch with wool / White-wreathed", since "An altar is a flawless shield / More true than any wall", and, further,

And let your words be gentle, close to tears
And full of need, as fitteth sojourners
In a strange land, revealing earnestly
How guiltless from your fatherland you flee.

The aged father reminds us of Kanva Muni counselling Shakuntala about to leave for her husband's palace. Also when Danaus further advises his daughters,

Your voice be free from boldness, your calm eyes,
 In chastened front, far from all vanities.
 Your converse not too forward, not too hot
 To entice men's eyes. Such graces like me not.
 Remember to give way. Ye have here nor gold
 Nor home nor kin. Let not the weak be bold—

his tone reaches a pitch of such a realisation that we feel like hearing in it an echo from the teachings of the Buddha, or even from passages of the Rig Veda, like :

One and common be your aspiration, united your hearts, common to you be your mind,—so that close companionship may be yours.

And the obedient virgins respectfully replying to their father fill us with respect too as we hear,

Father, thy thought well answereth to the thought
 Within me. I will keep thy charges, fraught
 With wisdom. May but Zeus our grandsire see.

Pelasgus, King of Argos, also aged yet a capable ruler, is painted with that same shade of nobility as Danaus. He seems to typify the ideals of a monarch, as he defends the virgins' cause and chides the Egyptian Herald,

What boots my name to thee ? In time enough
 Thou and thy galley-mates shall hear thereof.
 By their own will, in kindness of heart,
 With fair words, win these maidens to depart,
 And none shall check you....But one oath all through
 My people hath prevailed, and standeth true,
Never these suppliant maidens to betray;
And fast with nails of iron that oath shall stay.

What a steely determination conveyed through these last two lines !

In *The Seven Against Thebes*, King Eteoclês, son of Oedipus, 'fits curiously well into Aristotle's famous description of the tragic hero, the noble character with the fatal flaw' of extreme intolerance and hatred toward his own brother Polynîces who, 'with a great army of allies, has come against the City. Eteoclês is apparently in the wrong;...he is certainly under the sway of his father's curse'—he and his brother must die. "Meantime he has to defend the city and keep up the general morale. He does it wonderfully well," says Murray. Only once, for one moment, do we catch a glimpse of his real state of mind. It is when he is left quite alone, after the Scout has gone and before the chorus has arrived :

O Zeus, O Mother Earth, O gods that keep
 Our wall !...O spirit of Evil, vast and deep,
 Sprung from my father's curse...I pray *you*, not
 My City !..."

He prepares his citizens with such a noble enthusiasm and such a sure and dignified military intelligence that we feel like placing him nowhere below the rank of our Alexanders and Caesars and Napoleons, when he orders,

There rests one duty : help our City's Pale,
 Help our gods' altars lest their worship fail,
 Help your young children, help this Earth, your own,
 Your nurse, your mother, your beloved one !
 She, when you crawled upon her kindly soil,
 Accepted you and fed you, bore the toil
 To train you hers, harnessed with shield and spear,
 True men, to meet such need as now is here.

Or when he assigns the City women to

Pray rather that our wall unshaken stand.
 That helps the gods as well—for while the wall
 Holds, the gods hold, and when it falls they fall.

And the cheerful retort of the King to all the blazons is unforgettable. This ready wit is a further favourable point for the respect he commands.

But his fatal flaw very soon shines out. "At every point we have found him cool and at his ease, ready-witted and never failing to take thought for his people." But the moment he hears that the seventh gate is being guarded by his own brother, in a flash Eteoclès is changed. His coolness and self-control are gone. He is a desperate man, overmastered by the Curse :

O race god-maddened, god-abhorrèd, sown
 In endless tears, my father's and my own...

And he himself chooses to meet Polynices, 'King against King, brother against brother, enemy against enemy.' And very soon he becomes the tragic hero—the entire city mourning for him. We see how true his premonitions were as he had uttered,

Evil must come : and evil without shame
 Is best. The dead keeps nothing but his name.

or,

Hath not the Curse of Oedipus that flame
First lighted ? Know I not the shapes that came
Too true in midnight visions to presage
How we shall share our father's heritage ?

or,

Who can escape the sin ordained by God ?

The Scout represents but the psychology of an ordinary Theban citizen : loyal to the King, a patriot through and through and buoyant with the enthusiasm of the oncoming battle, he requests Eteoclês :

The Argive army comes ! There comes amain
The tramp, the dust, the gleam along the plain
Of scattering foam from many an armèd steed.
Be swift, O King ! O pilot true at need,
Trim well thy ship. Fence every port before
The war-storm burst. Even now its billows roar,
Seize thou each swift occasion...

And Princess Antigônê, Eteoclês' sister, though a minor character in the play, stands for the highly spirited blue blood. She is fully confident of herself, and does not hesitate to stand against the majority of the citizens who decide that

No offerings shall go with him to the tomb,
No sound of lamentation do him grace,
No comrades bear him to his resting-place.
The Regents of Cadmeia have willed it so.

At once, like an angry lioness, Antigônê approaches her dead brother Polynices and, standing beside his blood-stained body, she declares in sure accents,

Then let the Regents of Cadmeia know,
If none dare lay him in his grave save me,
I will alone. So much for their decree !
This man is mine own brother, in whose cause
Unshamed will I defy my City's laws.
We are one flesh—is that as nothing ?—born
Of one doomed mother and one sire forlorn...

When the Herald tries to make her conscious about the consequences, by telling,

I warn thee, strive not 'gainst the State's decree !

she retorts still more powerfully :

I warn thee, waste no warnings upon me.

And she rests so adamant in her resolution that there arises a split among the citizens—many of whom go forward to join Antigônê to mourn for Polynîces and to bury him with due respect.

Zeus, in *Prometheus Bound*, is portrayed as an enemy of man whereas Prometheus who brought man fire for the first time, is man's Champion, Saviour. But, for this crime the wrath of Zeus nails Prometheus against a towering great rock 'at the furthest verge of earth'. Prometheus, son of Ouranos (Sky) and Gaia (Earth), is naturally brother to Kronos whose son is Zeus. Therefore Prometheus, elder to Zeus, knows much more than the latter. Especially he knows that since Kronos, mightier than his father Ouranos, had come up to rule, since Zeus mightier than Kronos has driven out his father too and rules, likewise Zeus too, if married to the sea-goddess Thetis, will be driven out by his son. But Prometheus will not divulge this secret and warn Zeus unless the latter sets him free. For, it is with the help of that secret that Zeus will be able to transcend his own Moira.

Naturally men's sympathy and gratitude know no bounds toward Prometheus for his stealing of fire for humanity's sake. But a deeper probe into the problem shows that it is Prometheus' excessive pride that prompts him to this act of generosity.

Even in chains and fetters and spikes Prometheus is a god, even fallen he is divine. But, in spite of his sky-scraping qualities and ocean-like heart, he too has one fatal vice, one imperfection: his titanic self finds it too difficult to surrender to Zeus and, consequently, in a gesture of revolt against the established order he stole fire for men. And he is punished by Zeus. Unfortunately the subsequent part of this play is lost, where, most probably, Zeus pardons Prometheus.

But what then is this fire that mattered so much to the Supreme God ? Apparently, man's first use of fire marks indeed a great step forward in the story of evolution. But behind this symbol there stands its deeper significance too : fire, with its heat and its light, had been till then an attribute of the gods themselves, their very godliness was characterised by fire—the flaming virile power in them. It is this fire that was worshipped in the gods in the days of the Rig Veda. Therefore the Supreme God took Prometheus to task for having abolished the essential difference between gods and men, between heaven and earth, just by imparting fire to men. And Prometheus' *Dike* (punishment) is justified by the law of *Hubris* (violation). We are not given here, however, the *Soteria* (deliverance) section of the story which would have been really extremely interesting.

(To be continued)

PRITHWINDRA MUKHERJEE

THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON LANGUAGE

IX

END OF THE CONTROVERSY

IN spite of the eloquent pleadings on behalf of the Vernaculars, Bombay too had its advocates of English among official ranks. Sir Erskine Perry, a Judge of the High Court, occupied the position of President at the Bombay Board of Education, and he gave his persistent support to the cause of English. His arguments may be stated as follows: the Indians were themselves eager to study English, the work of translating books of European knowledge and science into the Indian languages would be costly and difficult, and it was politically expedient to introduce the English medium. The last point deserves a fuller notice.

“There can be no doubt,” he writes, “that the more intimate the communication is between the governors and governed, the better for both parties... It is the clear perception of this that causes Government to lay so much, and such just, stress on their European employees making themselves masters of the native languages. But the same good results are produced, and in a much more effective manner, when the natives on their part acquire the English language. The English are notoriously bad linguists, the Scotch are worse. But the natives have a wonderful aptitude for language—everyone above the rank of a cultivator knows at least two; and with respect to English, those who undertake the study of it commence at the most favourable period of life for the acquisition of a foreign tongue... Without in the least degree desiring to diminish the onus on the European services of acquiring the native languages, I do submit that all sound policy dictates a like encouragement to natives, for the purpose of drawing the relations closer between them and the Government.”

Macaulay had earlier, in his Minute of 1835, championed the cause of English on the intrinsic merits of the language itself, in the following words:

“The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands preeminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us,—with models of every species of eloquence,—with historical compositions which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, considered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction, have never been equalled,—with just and lively representations of human life and human nature,—with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, trade,—with full and correct information respecting every experimental science, which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the

wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together.... The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own..."

We may pardon Macaulay the hyperbole to which he was naturally prone. It has to be readily conceded that he pleads his cause well and with all the eloquence he could command. It was no wonder that the Governor General, Lord Bentinck, accepted his point of view.

He embodied his decision in the form of a Resolution of Government, dated 7th March 1835. This Resolution marks a momentous step and is here quoted verbatim, omitting the less important points.

"His Lordship is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India; and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone..."

"It has come to the knowledge of the Governor-General-in-Council that a large sum has been expended by the Committee [of Public Instruction] on the printing of Oriental works. His Lordship-in-Council directs that no portion of the funds shall hereafter be so employed.

"His Lordship-in-Council directs that all the funds which these reforms will leave at the disposal of the Committee be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language; and His Lordship-in-Council requests the Committee to submit to Government, with all expedition, a plan for the accomplishment of this purpose."

Lord Auckland, who succeeded Bentinck as Governor General, gave the quietus to this issue in a Minute of the 24th November 1839. The following decisions were embodied in his Minute :

1) Only partial and imperfect results could be expected from the attempts to teach European science through the medium of Sanskrit or Arabic.

2) The principal aim of educational policy should be to communicate through the English language a complete education in European Literature, Philosophy, and Science.

In Bombay, however, the Education Society continued to encourage the Vernaculars and the primary and secondary schools conducted by that Society used the Vernacular medium. But here also there was a little difficulty. Under the system then prevailing, the sanction of the Government of Bengal was needed for any extra item of expenditure in the other Presidencies. Bengal, as we have seen, had already committed itself to the English medium. So, whenever there was a proposal for start-

ing new vernacular medium schools in the Bombay area, the necessary funds would not be forthcoming.

A change of policy, however, seemed to be in the offing in the early fifties, when the general question of Indian education was taken up once again by the authorities in London. To that we should now turn our attention.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

In Life's Temple by *Vinayak Krishna Gokak*, Blackie & Sons, Bombay, Rs. 2.50.

Padmashree Gokak is a known name among the readers of literature on the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. Recently *Mother India* serialised a speech of his, "What is a Change of Consciousness?" which he had delivered at the World Conference of Sri Aurobindo Society at Pondicherry. He is, at present, Director of the Central Institute of English, Hyderabad.

In this book of 51 poems we can see Gokak in various aspects of his life: a nationalist, an educationist, a sadhak and a man of the world full of vigour and ethical drive. The book has been divided into five sections. The last section gives the title to it. The poems in that section are translations from a much fuller book of lyric sequence written by him in Kannada. The fourth part too is entitled "Translations". Though it is difficult to keep everywhere the freshness of the "Originals", still the translations have been skilfully done and one can feel the vibrations of "the first free careless rapture". Here are some instances :

Adventure ! Win
And turn rock into golden ore.

We wondered too that simple things like flowers
Should move you so, to such an ecstasy.

Surely this is the aim of life, this kindling.

The poems originally in English are well-written. One of them, "English Words", is a little masterpiece. But others too have their heights of fine inspiration and true imaginative insight. Nor do the poems lack variety of ideas, rhythm, modulation and colour. One can notice many happy turns and wherever Gokak has missed a breath of height, he has achieved a quiet but significant simplicity as in Robert Frost.

One likes to read and reread some of the pieces. One cannot always say why one likes them. This is perhaps their secret. But for some other pieces one has the feeling that Gokak could have done better. Now and again a creative beginning trails off to a constructed end. A sustained quality is what we expect of his future work.

In the first section there are nine poems under the caption "Man and Nature". For Gokak, nature is part of himself. Several expressions linger in the mind :

But the river will flow into my soul
Whichever way I wander.

You must climb higher, higher
If your heart must be full.

A camphor-cube on the altar burning, burning
Itself to incense, needling away the darkness.

You bathed our hearts amid tempestuous seas
Of purer, dearer, delight.

The second section is on India and full of the national spirit. He is with his country, its leaders and its masters. In his poem on Sri Aurobindo he writes :

You were the temple, the deity in the temple,
The gleam within the deity...

A bodiless rapture, a voiceless ecstasy,
A wide calm and peace.

The third section is on meditation, a finer and serener aspect of life. He links himself with the higher self in him. Here too there are memorable bits :

Human love is a wickered light,
But Divine Love
Is the naked majesty of midnight stars.

I go
Not because I do not sense the Light
But that I know
It still can reach me through the polar night.

One could select many passages. They are as apt as they are good but still to get the full flavour one must read the book from end to end.

GOVIND

Twenty-two Fateful Days by *D. R. Mankekar*, published by Manaktalas, Bombay-1.
Price Rs. 12.00.

Certain events become far more significant than the rest of their kind. Such an event in our time was the war, undeclared though, between India and Pakistan. The significance of the same would duly be realised only by posterity. In the meanwhile, the best that could be done has been done by Mr. Mankekar; he has prepared a

chronological review of the fateful twenty-two days of the conflict, with adequate background of a longer period, from how it began in Kutch to what it came to in Punjab, from April to September, 1965.

An experienced journalist and a good writer, Mr. Mankekar has made a thrilling exposition of the episode while adhering to the maxims of chronology. Further, the book will serve as a source to students of history with ten appendices of documents and speeches of foremost relevance. Further still, the book is a warning to the peoples of Asia, with an account of the Chinese-modelled Pakistani infiltration, and to the peoples of the world, about the consequences of the United Nations, still a great hope, a noble assurance for humanity, choosing at times to play blind in the teeth of daylight robbery.

“Who won the war ? Neither country. It was, inevitably, an inconclusive war.” The statistical factors leading the author to come to this conclusion apart, there is a factor of *truth* behind the inevitability of the inconclusiveness of the war. If Jawaharlal Nehru said that Pakistan was born in *fraud* and *hatred*, and if Jinnah confessed having got only a *moth-eaten* Pakistan, they were giving vent to a much deeper feeling of a bitter experience of disharmony, and beneath the strifes today there is the positive urge to undo a historic blunder committed not long ago. In this context, a victory could never be attributed even to a landslide military success of one of the warring parties, unless indeed the fundamental disharmony, the blunder, were undone.

MANOJ DAS

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- 1) **The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle** : pp. 442; Price Rs. 25.0.0
 - 2) **Is the So-called Younger Avesta Really Younger ?** pp. 104.
 - 3) **Are the Gathas Pre-Vedic? and the Age of Zarathustra:** pp. 125.
- All by H.S. Spencer, 18, Mount Mary Road, Bandra, Bombay - 50.

The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle gives us a glimpse into ancient Indo-Iranian religious history from 25,628 B.C. to 292 A.D. It is a product of research extending over a period of 20 years on quite original and novel lines by H.S. Spencer. Tilak and others have already concluded from Rig Vedic myths and legends that the ancient habitat of the Aryan race was the North Polar regions. According to this school, the Polar regions were the seed country (Aryan-vej)—which the last glacial period (dated to about 10,000 B.C.) froze up, necessitating the migration of the Aryan race towards the south and other directions and thus breaking up the original united family. The most important phenomenon to these ancient inhabitants of the Polar regions would naturally be the six months of sunlight which commenced for them with the Vernal Equinox. The whole thesis is based upon the Law of Periodicity or Cycles—well indicated by the Precession of the Equinoxes—which hold good in the cases of Spiritual Cycles. By the application of this Law of Periodicity to different astronomical epochs with the results of researches arrived at for the Ice-Ages

by geologists as well as the myths and legends in ancient scriptures about Manus and Rulers, the author could trace out chronology right from 26,000 B.C. In the ancient scriptures, there is mention of various rulerships and what progress was made by the Aryan race spiritually, socially and economically and these facts are related to definite periods of astronomical cycles. For, according to the present rate of the Equinoctial Precession of 50" per annum, it takes about 25,920 years for a complete revolution round the Ecliptic of 360 deg. which is divided into 27 Nakshatra divisions of 13 deg. 20" each.

'With the last Ice Age we come to a very important line of demarcation in the history of mankind. For the Aryans it closes a definite stage of their history with the close of their Peshdadin history which has to be placed in the Inter-Glacial times before 10,000 B.C. This Peshdadin age commenced with Gayahe Merethan between 21,548 and 21,309 B.C. and ended with the commencement of the Ice Age between 10,028 and 9789 B.C. (p. 27) 'In fact, there is positive evidence in the Iranian Vendidad, that Aryans were ripe enough to receive a monotheistic Revelation in the time of Yima Vivanghao (Skt. Yama Vivaswat, *i.e.* about 10,000 B.C. '(p. 16). 'We have placed the advent of Holy Zarathustra in this period—when the Vernal Equinox was moving through Pushya—with his life-time being from 7129 to 7052 B.C.' (p.31).

The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle is thus a Bird's Eye-View of ancient Aryan and, more particularly, Indo-Iranian religious history from 26,628 B.C. to 292 A.D. It is obviously the product of an enormous amount of research into diverse works in several religions. It is rare that a thorough examination of all ancient works is made: the result is that parallel evidence is missing in such studies. Spencer is to be congratulated for the comprehensive study undertaken by him. It is to be seen how far the orthodox historians take the placement of Yama Vivaswat round about 10,000 B.C. We look forward to see further works of Spencer and how he meets the challenges from various schools of ancient chronology. The get-up and printing are excellent.

P RAGHAVA RAJU

FAITH FIGHTS IT OUT

A YOUTHFUL spirit of just forty-four, in the iron-grip of blood cancer, was struggling hard, in hospital, now with high fever ranging from 103° to 106° F, now gasping for breath, now unable to swallow even a cup of fruit juice or glucose water. Respite he did have at times but it was short-lived. And he had come to know that blood cancer, his main ailment, was medically incurable.

Happily, all this could neither unnerve nor dispirit him. He remained unconcerned. Simply because his inner concentration, born of his soul's faith, was always on the Divine Mother and Her Grace.

Once he had the inner experience of hostile powers besieging him to wrest him away from the benign sphere of the Mother. They demanded that he should leave his body and follow them. "I am under Mother's protection. You all can do me no harm." Saying this, he called upon the Mother. Here a divine force came down and the evil beings vanished.

Jyotish had seen a neighbouring patient take oxygen and a few hours later die. Now one day when for the first time his doctor ordered oxygen for him and the nurse who took affectionate care of him brought the oxygen cylinder, with tears in her eyes, and the sister also spoke in a choked voice, he felt that his end was near. And shortly after the tube was inserted into his nostril, he felt sleepy. But sleep he would not allow himself. He opened his eyes and called for the Mother's blessings-packet to be put in his hands, which done, he placed it upon his chest, covered it with his palm and went on silently invoking the Mother. From that moment, every time at the slightest approach of drowsiness, he repelled it, kept awake and maintained his inner touch with the Mother from 3.30 a.m. to 6.30 a.m., determinedly refusing the relief and refreshment that sleep could give him. His one dominating concern was that no part of his short time on earth should be wasted in sleep, for that would lose him his last opportunity of remembering the Mother.

He was in hospital for ten weeks, from 28th December last to 9.20 a.m. of March 10, 1966. The doctors were already said to have wondered how he could survive so long the shocks of such a deadly disease. The obvious secret was : his will to live and his hope of cure, by the power of Grace, both backed up by his faith.

The will and the hope he maintained all through excepting the last two days or so when he said to us : "I have taken blood transfusion four times. The first three times the body could fairly well assimilate it, this time it is flagging." That was the starting-point of his hastening end—the flagging both of his will to live and of his hope of cure. But his faith in the Mother ? It remained unaffected—aflame, invincible, without a flicker.

He had forebodings, off and on, of the other world, beckonings too. Those who attended on him or saw him during visiting hours heard him talk, sometimes to

himself, sometimes to an unseen somebody things like : "This is not all. Deadlier tests are ahead. This world and the other world..." (the rest of the words were too low for my bad ears). In fact, fiery tests did come and go, subjecting him to excruciating torture and sapping the depleted reserve of his strength. The last evening of his hospital days he said to himself : "The last ordeal is passed through." At midnight he spoke out, obviously to an occult call : "I depend upon my Divine Mother. My Divine Mother will decide." Next morning, a few moments before the last, he sat up, unhelped, in bed, as in meditation, with the oxygen tube fixed in the nose, and uttered, with folded hands and in a clear-cut voice, "Ma, Ma, Ma", then lay down in eternal silence. And whether one would believe it or not, the Ashramite who, like a mother, had nursed him all along night and day, in total disregard of her own ill-health, had the unexpected good fortune of seeing, in broad daylight, three distinct emanations together of the Mother, Sri Aurobindo and a goddess. They appeared before the departed and took his soul with them. By the way, the lady had the rewarding blessedness of not only having their darshan but also of giving them her pranams.

The overwhelming attack on Jyotish's physical frame ultimately crushed it, but never could cast even a shade of doubt upon his faith in the Mother. It was Her Grace, Her watchful concern and interest (taking daily reports, written and verbal) and Her sending blessings every day that kept up his will to live and live bravely, enduring torture and fighting death on the one hand and, on the other, sustaining and augmenting the force of his soul and its progress. "I feel the action of Grace from moment to moment," said the patient a day before his last. With intense eagerness he would await the Mother's blessings-packet every day; with loving reverence he would receive it and pass it over his head and chest with a smiling vivacity and joy !

In fact, the spiritual progress he must have made in ten weeks could hardly have been ordinarily made in ten decades. One, who knew him well before his illness and much more intimately during it, says that the last ten weeks of his life were intensively richer in spiritual gain than the whole of his pre-hospital life. Could there conceivably be a greater compensation for his physical sufferings ? In his physical death one can well read the victory of his soul's faith.

And was it death ? What we call death is a term of our ignorance. For, as an early poem of Sri Aurobindo puts it,

Life only is, or death is life disguised,
Life a short death until by life we are surprised.

TINKARI MITRA

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

SIXTH SEMINAR

21 NOVEMBER 1965

(Continued from the issue of April 24)

WHAT IS TRUE FREEDOM AND HOW TO ATTAIN IT ?

III

FREEDOM as a moral, political, social, economic, psychological and spiritual condition is the aim of all mankind. Without freedom no proper growth is possible for any human being on earth in whatever stage of development. Without freedom there can be no greatness of spirit, no culture of mind or body. But none of these freedoms, except the psychological and the spiritual freedom, have any permanent value because they are either relative or else dependent upon external circumstances. If we traced the line of growth and the trend of these freedoms to their source, we would discover that spiritual freedom stands at the base of all of them not only as the fountain-head but also as the power of their existence and the truth of their being. All freedom in its quintessence can be seen emerging from the spirit as its manifold existence, in society, thought, life, religion, ethics and aesthetics. The curse of mankind as a collective unit and of man as an individual component lies in the ignorance of this central fact. Neither economic nor social freedom can lead man to everlasting happiness; for man is greater than society or the economic system. But at the same time, we cannot ignore these, for they represent important aspects of a nation's organic being.

Freedom is not an exclusive term and its attainment cannot be realised all at once and once for all. We march from social freedom to political freedom and from that to freedom of thought and action, till we attain the highest possible freedom as envisaged by Sri Aurobindo—the spiritual and the supramental freedom. Here there is no division between the Being and the Becoming, the dynamism of Nature and the poise of the free Spirit. That is, we ascend from the more elemental and the crude to the subtlest and the most puissant of all freedoms—that of the soul and the spirit.

If we regard this issue from the point of view of pure rationality, we would find that none is free in the exact and the all-embracing sense of the term. Man is

subject to divers elements without and within him, in a greater or lesser degree. He is a slave either to the altruistic ideal or to the Rajasic ego or he is enchained to habits, formations, limitations, deformations, and all these subjugate him to the power of ignorance. Thus the biblical doctrine of man's free will, or the modern cult of freedom, as the basic factor of his existence, is partially a myth. On the reverse side of the coin, we find that man has the freedom to choose his way of life, thought and growth only in the most superficial sense. And the more one advances and the consciousness becomes refined, there appears always a double or multiple aspect of issues and we are at cross-roads, compelled to make a choice almost at every step, till we have ourselves gone beyond all dualities. This is the enigma freedom bestows upon us. And the riddle of the fateful choice is the result of the freedom given to us as independent beings. But from behind, within or below, other factors are at work, and our immediate task appears to be to discover these influences, and take a wide view of things and be guided by our soul, whose choice alone is right. Otherwise we shall be like a rudderless boat or a horse without reins, unable either to choose rightly, or to foretell the result of our choice together with its chain-reactions.

Our true freedom lies not in the assertion of our egoistic rights, our egoistic principles of so-called self-determination, which is the cover for all types of desires, hungers and covetousness feeding on pride and false self-esteem. It lies rather in the soul which is beyond these lower and deformative elements; it lies in the surrender of our ego and the smaller surface formations to a deeper or higher principle. We must know and recognise this to be the true initiator and guide of all our acts, thoughts and growth. Otherwise, in spite of our mentally calling ourselves free, we shall be led by the Karmic power which acts with a mathematical accuracy and which is born from our own blind or ignorant actions. Or else we may be led by lower impulses which surge up and betray our freedom by their blinding flares. Once delivered into the hands of the higher power, we shall gradually feel all pressures of lower impulses removed and we shall be on the path of true freedom. Then our every choice shall be right and our every step shall be a step towards unceasing progress.

As we have remarked earlier, there is a progression in our attainment of freedom. That is, we pass through a hierarchy of unity, liberty and harmony, each step or rung in this great cosmic chain revealing something greater, more puissant and intense of these spiritual principles. For freedom in its ultimate and absolute sense is too difficult to be realised all at once. It needs a great and incredible preparedness on the part of our being, to such a pitch of perfection that it would be impossible to attain it unless we had two opposing elements in our being : on the one hand, the surrender of all we are to the secret guide in us and on the other a ruthless and exacting self-analysis. Because it is extremely difficult to get rid of the dominance of ego with all its besetting power of ignorance that stands in the way of perfection, this process of purification is essential. We must become, in other words, worthy of true freedom and bear its full spiritual light.

The ego, in its essential character, is a formation which came into existence for the building up of a form, a definite shape out of the chaotic substance of matter and lower existence. So long as man was in the early stage of evolution this formation, together with its assertion, was inevitable for the purpose of life to be and for the mind to give to itself a clear and well-defined coherence. But when he progressed further, this ego, which was a protection against the powers of disintegration, became a definite hindrance, because man's goal was greater than this ego-centricity. His goal was the realisation of his spiritual existence. The West and all nations under the sway of materialism mistook this assertion of the ego as freedom. To do as the instincts dictate to us, to act as an accomplice of dubious powers, or else wallow in the mud of sensuality, these were freedom in the eye of the materialist. But greater than that is the feeling that man is a divine nucleus, a spiritual personality, an iridescent centre come down from the great transcendent Godhead. From this realisation his journey to real freedom has its initiation.

Once we have known what true freedom is, we shall not be waylaid by cruder doctrines, dogmas and opinions which infest the world today. These are only assertions of man's intermediate condition which is a negation of the true principles of freedom. Our freedom shall be based on the freedom of the Spirit and the Eternal. Our liberty shall be not of the form or its derivatives, but of the substance and the essence that constitute man. That is, we shall go from the crude domination of life and thought to the freedom of soul and spirit, which is infinite in its constitution. To know our central being therefore becomes our first necessity. To live in its light and grow in its flame is the next step. Not to be influenced by lesser elements is one of the requisite conditions. To enlarge all consciousness in the light of the central being and refer all actions, decisions and volitions to this unchanging source are also necessary. Not to be influenced by circumstances or their pressure, the weight of the environment which builds our personality as the western psychologist opines, but to be rooted in this central being and act from there and see and judge all things from this viewpoint of soul, forms the still higher step.

But all these are only steps towards the ultimate freedom we envisage here. The yogi of other paths would feel immensely satisfied if he reached this stage. But to us these are only the primary steps. Further and greater freedom comes with our reaching the gnostic consciousness where all dualism ceases and where alone we are totally free from the divisions that confront us in our egoistic ignorance—divisions between God and the world, between our unique personality created around our divine nucleus and our other selves which too are the projections from the Absolute. The division between action and dynamism on one hand and status and poise on the other too shall disappear. Here the actor, the action and the act shall become one great unity. We then shall have no need to become a conscious instrument of the highest power for, with all veils removed, we shall have become ourselves that highest Reality, Consciousness and Felicity without any division. This is freedom in its loftiest and truest sense. This is not the Mukti of the Vedantin or the Goloka of

the Vaishnava or the Nirvana of the Buddhist. This is the realisation of highest self and it is in this self that we can know our selves, not as an abstract idea or a remote thing that is realised only in a state of trance, but as a concrete fact realised in everyday life. If this did not become a realised fact of our existence, an integral part of our consciousness in all its aspects and modes, then our freedom would have no decisive meaning. This is the great and unique ideal we have placed before us. This does not mean that we are not conscious of the tremendous difficulties in its realisation. But if we have faith and put ourselves in the hands of the Divine, there is no reason why it cannot be realised.

ROMEN

IV

In our present state of confusion, when we suffer from so many problems and difficulties, it is really difficult to answer the question : "What is true freedom and how to attain it ?" The world at present seems to be submerged in problems and humanity seems to be at a loss to come out of them and be free. Everywhere there is an urgent need to be free. Humanity is confounded. We must have freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of action and so on. We must have freedom from hunger, from racial subordination, from the fear of nuclear war. Then a deeper part of us longs for spiritual freedom, that of Buddha's Nirvana or Shankara's Moksha or an escape to some higher heavenly world leaving everything of this physical, vital and mental world behind.

Can any of these be the true freedom ? Is it possible that all the sufferings of humanity are only due to the lack of food or other necessary commodities ? Or is a free democratic secular and neutral state the answer ? If so then today America would not have to face her huge problem of racial segregation nor could India have to suffer from hunger and poverty. History repeats time and again the lesson that no social or political efforts can solve these problems. Man suffers because of his own tyranny. All these problems are due to man's greed for power and money, his selfish narrow egoistic mind, his imperfect idea of physical needs. So the source of the problem is not without but within. Only a total change of our consciousness can bring harmony and happiness on earth.

Is then Nirvana or Moksha the coveted freedom ? But neither Nirvana nor Moksha solves these problems. Because, for both the Shankarites and the Buddhists, all this mess created by our vital desires and mental conceptions is beyond any solution. In fact, according to them this world and this life are of no real value, nor of any utility, they are just loads to be carried and should be forsaken as early as possible. The religions too, in their present state, point to us only this path and nothing else. They all say that we can have no freedom from the burdens of this life on earth. It cannot be improved in any way, it has to be endured. The only freedom that we can hope for is in heaven or Swarga, never here on this earth.

Is there then no answer to these problems ? Is there no true freedom here on earth? Is the curse of God on Adam eternal ? Is life really a mere burden, a confusion of low desires and a limited imperfect tenure ?

But that cannot possibly be. If life on earth was just a burden, why was it created? God cannot be a whimsical creator who entertains himself by the struggles and sufferings of man. And indeed He is not so. Earth and life are not a burden but something potentially divine. For, the Mother says, "Life on earth, we consider, is not a passage or a means merely; it must become, through transformation, a goal, a realisation."¹

According to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the aim of life is not to leave this world for the higher truth but to rise and bring the truth down to this world. We shall have to rise out of this ordinary consciousness into the divine consciousness in order to bring down the supramental power which alone can change the ignorance of mind, life and body and transform them. We are here to realise and manifest the divine on earth and to create a divine life in union with the Mother.

This is the divine Will. Man is created to carry out this Will, to fulfil this aim. All the difficulties arise because man is not free to act accordingly. His soul, which knows and is in the position of commanding his movement, is restricted and covered by his external thinking, energising and executing being, the mental, vital and physical parts with their ego and *gunas*. Each of these parts considers itself to be the central being and follows its own ego. This discord is the main hindrance. Once the real authority is gained and the psychic being comes forward and rules the life of man, all the problems of life will be solved. For man will no more be selfish, ignorant and greedy, because he will know what he really needs and how he should act. Sri Aurobindo says of God's power : "...this is illimitable in potency because it is God's capacity. It is only limited by His will which knows what is best for the world and for each of us in the world and apart from it."²

Nothing can restrict man's movements any longer. Man becomes free. And that is the true freedom.

Thus true freedom is to be free from all those ignorant parts which oppose the divine Will. We are to be free to fulfil our innermost central will, the will to serve the Divine.

All make tranquil, all make free.

Let my heart-beats measure the footsteps of God
As He comes from His timeless infinity
To build in their rapture His burning abode.³

To attain this freedom a complete self-mastery and self-control over a strong body with a sensitive heart and a quiet balanced mind are absolute necessities. The

¹ *The Four Austerities and the Four Liberations*, p. 1.

² *The Yoga and Its objects* (1943), p. 12.

³ Sri Aurobindo, *Poems—Past and Present*, p. 2.

psychic being can carry out the divine Will only through the mind, heart and body, for they are its energy-giving executing powers. Freedom can be obtained when all these parts are strong and obedient; the conquest will remain incomplete if a single part remains disobedient or disabled. It will not be the true freedom.

So none should be neglected. Each has to be developed from all sides, and has to be taught to understand its real aim. By proper regular habits and exercises the body can be made effective; by developing the senses and by educating the emotions the heart can be refined; by quietening and silencing the ordinary mental activities, a balanced quiet understanding can be obtained.

Thus the different parts will become ready to know that their real aim in life is a divine life on earth. Generally these parts are ignorant of their own functions, so each considers itself the central being and tries to control the development of the whole being by its imperfect knowledge. This is ego. There are different egos in different parts, and they again differ by their respective *guṇas*. We have the tamasic, the rajasic and the sattwic egos. The tamasic wants inaction, the rajasic argues for the value of action and hankers for its fruits, whereas the sattwic boasts of its own opinion and opposes the divine Will by its own personal ideas of altruism, justice and virtue. We have to teach these different parts of nature to obey the psychic being, the soul.

By continually rejecting the ideas of action or inaction suggested by our ego, by severing all the attachments for the fruits of our karma, by casting off all the conceptions of dualities and by listening only to one innermost voice we can make ourselves free from our bondage. We have to become *niṣṭṛha*, *nirdvanda*, *nirahaṅkāra* to become truly free.

But it is a very difficult task. It is not possible for man to achieve this free consciousness unaided and unguided. Only the divine grace and help can bring man to his journey's end. In fact the realisation of integral freedom is so difficult that no one could envisage it before. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the first to have this truth-vision and truth-ideal. They have prepared the way and they are our guides and leaders in this adventure. The path they have made is radically new, for no ancient yoga or path can serve the purpose. Neither Raja Yoga nor Hatha Yoga is sufficient, even *trimārga* does not serve the purpose. They are ways for personal spiritual mukti; a higher and more complete way is needed. The yoga of Sri Aurobindo is the Purna Yoga or Integral Yoga, as He has named it. It is the way to full freedom or true freedom. It is not limited by one way or by one purpose; it includes all, it is a synthesis of all.

The principle of this yoga is, in knowledge, the realisation of one divine Brahman in every being and object, everywhere; and in action and in attitude, an absolute self-surrender.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(Gita, Ch. XVIII, Verse 66.)

“Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, do not grieve.”¹

To be free, what we need to do is to ask Him to make us free. If our aspiration is sincere, if we have an unflinching faith, He will surely grant us the freedom.

एता नो अग्ने सौभगा दिदीह्यपि क्रतु सुचेतसं वतेम ।
विश्वा स्तोतृभ्यो गृणते च सन्तु यूय पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा न ॥

(Rig Veda, VII, 4-10)

“O Fire, light up for us these happinesses; let us wake to an understanding of thy perfectly conscious will; let all be there for those who laud thee, for him who utters thee; may you protect us always with all kinds of weal.”²

MITA

**

After all the speeches were over, Kishor Gandhi read out the following extracts from the writings of Sri Aurobindo, pertaining to the subjects of the Seminar, about which, as he had mentioned in his introductory speech, the Mother had said : “These quotations are simply *perfect* and after that nothing more can be said.”

I. What is the Best Way of Making Humanity Progress ?

(I)

“To concentrate most on one’s own spiritual growth and experience is the first necessity of the sadhak—to be eager to help others draws away from the inner work. To grow in the spirit is the greatest help one can give to others, for then something flows out naturally to those around that helps them.”

(On Yoga II, Tome One, p. 162.)

SRI AUROBINDO

¹ Sri Aurobindo’s translation. See *Essays on the Gita* (American Edition) p. 495.

² Sri Aurobindo’s translation. See *Hymns, to the Mystic Fire*, p. 399.

(2)

“...after all, the best way to make Humanity progress is to move on oneself,—that may sound individualistic or egoistic, but it isn’t; it is only common sense.”

(*On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 161.)

SRI AUROBINDO

(3)

“The idea of usefulness to humanity is the old confusion due to second-hand ideas imported from the West...”

“Yoga is directed towards God, not towards man. If a divine supramental consciousness and power can be brought down and established in the material world, that obviously would mean an immense change for the earth including humanity and its life. But the effect on humanity would only be one result of the change; it cannot be the object of the sadhana. The object of the sadhana can only be to live in the divine consciousness and to manifest it in life.”

(*On Yoga II*, Tome One, pp. 159-60.)

SRI AUROBINDO

II. What Is True Freedom and How to Attain It ?

(1)

“With us the freedom consists in freedom from the darkness, limitation, error, suffering, transience of the ignorant lower Nature, but also in a total surrender to the Divine. Free action is the action of the Divine in us and through us; no other action can be free.”

(*On Yoga II*, Tome One, p. 139.)

SRI AUROBINDO

(2)

“When the human ego realises that its will is a tool, its wisdom ignorance and childishness, its power an infant’s groping, its virtue a pretentious impurity, and learns to trust itself to that which transcends it, that is its salvation. The apparent freedom and self-assertion of our personal being to which we are so profoundly attached, conceal a most pitiable subjection to a thousand suggestions, impulses, forces which we have made extraneous to our little person. Our ego, boasting of freedom, is at every moment the slave, toy and puppet of countless beings, powers, forces, influences in universal Nature. The self-abnegation of the ego in the Divine

is its self-fulfilment; its surrender to that which transcends it is its liberation from bonds and limits and its perfect freedom.”

(*On Yoga I, The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp. 66-67.)

SRI AUROBINDO

At the end of the Seminar Kishor Gandhi, on behalf of the New Age Association, thanked all those who had come to attend the Seminar and also those who had participated in it.

Compiled by KISHOR GANDHI

**SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND RESEARCH**

NEWSLETTER

No 5.

May 1966

1. *The Value of Dramatics in Education*

There is, especially perhaps in Indian schools, uncertain speculation as to the value of dramatics in education. The uncertainty is many-sided. There is the teacher's side which wonders whether such a time-consuming effort is justified. There is the student's side—never quite sure what he is getting out of it if he is not going into the theatre or films as a profession. There is the parents' side which is that it has never been fully explained what part 'drama' plays in education.

One could very well say that drama is as important, if not more important to Indian students than to students of the West; more important if only to give them the experience of entering into another social life than their own family routine. The social life of the town and suburban people of India is very poor compared to that of students of western countries and there is much to be said for and against such an environment but the life of students studying in colleges and universities is certainly enriched by the benefits derived from a Dramatic Society, but this should be extended to secondary and high schools where the experience would be of inestimable educational value to students who have very little social opportunities.

The educational value of drama is very real indeed. It includes both subjective as well as objective values. In a stage experience in dramatics a child has often an opportunity to express himself for the first time under circumstances that hold encouragement. He gains confidence by working with others in a team. He learns a new kind of discipline, a new kind of co-ordination of physical, emotional (vital) and mental awareness. From a subjective point of view the value is incalculable. Inhibitions which have been hidden deep in the subconscious have a chance to be released under the most favourable conditions. A child's love of play-acting or pretending is given a legitimate place and time and therefore does not enter into the sometimes dangerous realm of delinquency or pretence. The pent-up emotions, so difficult in the stage of adolescence, which an artificial society and its norms would frown upon are given an opportunity to express themselves in an art form that can be both beautiful and creative, communicating a katharsis to the audience and giving a satisfying free expression of creativity to the player. There is, of course, much more to drama than this, where history, literature, poetry, music, dance—to say nothing of the technological experience involved back-stage, all go to make up living sets of experience which the student rarely ever forgets because he has learnt them

with all the parts of his being. Once plunged into a veritable sea of vivid experiences he never forgets how to swim.

2. *The Value of Lectures*

The real test of the value of any lecture must surely be what it does and what it gives to the students or auditors. A lecture should not merely act as a substitute for textbooks. An informative lecture may certainly summarize the content of a book that need not be fully read by the students, but it should not, however, become a substitute that removes all demand and responsibility for critical reading.

The most effective lectures are those that provoke controversy among the students, such lectures are of value if students respond by contributing their own thoughts to the subject, they fail if the lecturer's highly personal presentation is received as an orthodoxy whose words are enshrined in the many notebooks of the class.

The ideal is when the lecture can be followed up by imaginative tutorials, especially if the tutorial is planned to encourage students to express their own thoughts through discussion and the reading of their own written work. Tutorials have a wide range of possibilities which must always rest with the individual imaginativeness of the tutor; how to extend their value to large numbers of students is a problem which closed circuit television may solve in the near future.

3. *Special English Orientation Course*

The Union Government is thinking of starting a special orientation course in English for students going to the U.S.A. Mr. Chagla, Minister of Education, told the Lok Sabha last month (April 6th) that some Indian students going to the U.S.A. found it difficult to follow the courses because of inadequate knowledge of English. The difficulty was felt particularly by students from Gujarat where English is being taught from a late stage

4. *International Scholarships Organisation*

The Bombay Office of the American Field Service International Scholarships Organisation announced last month the resumption of their programme for India under which 50 scholars—boys and girls between the ages of 16 and 18—will go next August to the U S A. for one year's experience and study in American high schools.

5. *Immigrants and the British Idiom*

Several Indians and Pakistanis, all qualified in their own countries, are now learning to teach in the British idiom, at the Margaret McMillan College of Education, Bradford, in England. Some were seconded from schools where they were already teaching but others were employed as machine operators, bus conductors, in weaving mills and on railways throughout Britain. Each day they spend some time in the language laboratory picking up the standard version of the British dialect. In their classroom they try to lose their superfluous r's and to learn English patterns of intonation, for instance what a rising "well" or a falling "yes" conveys.

Later social studies and education will play a more prominent part in the course. Some of the immigrants will work in primary schools, where the teaching methods are particularly different from those in their home countries.

The teachers foresee that when they are qualified they will be of great use to other teachers, interpreting immigrant problems and helping with language difficulties.

6. *Purpose in the Classroom*

After reading through a whole heap of reports of teachers, educationalists, professors, and research experts, they all seem to boil down to the single question: should one teach people or a subject or both? The answer, on the rare occasions that it can be found, resolves all arguments about discipline and self-expression, degree courses and college training for teachers, cruises or curricula, subject-rooms or classrooms, even examinations or assessments.

7. *Thought of the Month*

The value of art in the training of the intellectual faculty is also an important part of its utility.

...Art assists in this training by raising images in the mind which it has to understand not by analysis, but by self-identification with other minds; it is a powerful stimulator of sympathetic insight. Art is subtle and delicate, and it makes the mind also in its movements subtle and delicate.

(Sri Aurobindo—*The National Value of Art*, p. 38)

NORMAN C. DOWSETT