

MOTHER INDIA

JULY 1966

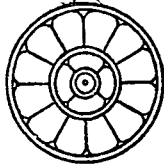
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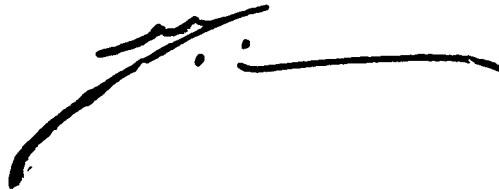


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

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. 6

“Great is Truth and it shall prevail”

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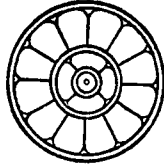
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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Q : *Qu'est ce que c'est la Conscience ?*

Quand le Seigneur
prend conscience de
lui-même, ça crée le
monde.

La conscience est
le souffle qui fait
vivre tout.

Q : *What is Consciousness ?*

When the Lord is conscious of Himself, it creates the world.
Consciousness is the breath that makes everything live.

THE MOTHER REPLIES TO A YOUNG SADHAKA

Q : Je dormais. J'avais une classe à une heure, et je me suis réveillé juste à l'heure pour y aller. Est-ce que ce n'est pas le Divin qui m'a réveillé?

R : Pas nécessairement. Il y a toujours une partie du subconscient qui veille et il suffit d'avoir la volonté de se réveiller à une certaine heure pour que cette partie vous éveille. 3-3-1933

Q : I fell asleep. I had a class at one o' clock, and I awoke just at the time for going. Is it not the Divine who woke me up?

A : Not necessarily. There is always a part of the subconscient which is awake and it is enough to have the will to awake at a certain hour for that part to wake you up. 3-3-1933

Q : Comment conquérir le vital obscur ? Ou comment changer le vital obscur en vital lumineux ?

R : Par la soumission du vital, son ouverture à la lumière et la croissance de la conscience. 4-3-1933

Q : How to conquer the obscure vital and change it into the luminous vital?

A : By the surrender of the vital, its opening to the light and the growth of the consciousness. 4-3-1933

Q : Ce soir j'ai reçu mon cahier dans lequel vous aviez écrit de ne parler à personne sur la jetée. Mais je voudrais vous demander : pourquoi ne pas garder le silence toute la journée?

R : C'est un peu trop. Le contrôle de ce que l'on dit est plus important qu'un silence complet. Le mieux est d'apprendre à ne dire que ce qui est utile de la façon la plus exacte, la plus vraie possible. 5-3-1933

Q : This evening I received my note-book in which you have written to me not to talk with anyone on the pier. But I wish to ask : why not keep silent all the day?

A : That is a bit too much. The control of what one says is more important than a complete silence. The best is to know how to speak only what is useful in the most exact, the most truthful manner possible. 5-3-1933

Q : Quelque fois je deviens absolument calme, je ne parle à personne. Je me promène tout seul en pensant au Divin. Si quelqu'un me parle je ne lui réponds pas toujours, quand il parle sans nécessité. Est-il bien de garder cet état constamment ?

R : C'est un état excellent que l'on peut garder sans inconvénient, mais il doit être sincère; c'est à dire il doit être non une apparence de calme mais un calme véritable et profond qui spontanément vous garde silencieux. 9-3-1933

Q : Sometimes I become absolutely calm, I don't speak to anyone. I take my walk all alone, thinking of the Divine. If somebody speaks to me, I don't always reply to him, when he speaks without need. Is it good to keep this state constantly ?

A : It is an excellent state which one can keep without inconvenience, but it has to be sincere; that is, it has not to be an appearance of calm but a true and deep calm which spontaneously keeps you silent. 9-3-1933

Q : Est-ce que la signification de l'histoire de Prahlad est comme ceci : "Le Divin peut changer les choses difficiles en faciles, même la mort en vie. Quand l'enfant allait mourir il pensait seulement au Divin; il plongea alors dans la Lumière Divine qui pour sa conscience remplaçait le feu qui brûle. La mort fut changée en vie, en joie et par cela il gagna la Lumière Divine" ?

R : Oui, c'est moralement vrai et un jour ce sera aussi physiquement vrai.

26-3-1933

Q : Is this the meaning of the story of Prahlad: "The Divine can change difficult things into easy ones, even death into life. When the child was about to die he thought only of the Divine, he plunged then into the Divine Light which for his consciousness replaced the fire which burns. Death was changed to life, to joy and by that he gained the Divine Light" ?

A : Yes, this is morally true and one day it will be also physically true.

26-3-1933

La joie vient de la soumission à l'ordre divin.

6-5-1933

Joy comes from submission to the divine order.

6 5-1933

Q : Est-il nécessaire de prendre un repos dans la journée ?

R : Oui, cela vaut mieux de se reposer quelque temps dans la journée. A votre âge vous êtes encore en pleine croissance et vous avez besoin de beaucoup de repos alterné avec une activité énergétique.

27-5-1933

Q: Is it necessary to take rest during the day?

A : Yes, it would be better to rest some time during the day. At your age you are still in full growth and you need a lot of rest alternating with an energetic activity.

27-5-1933

Q : N'y a-t-il aucune différence entre vos réponses: "Vous pouvez le faire" et "Si vous voulez" ?

R : "Si vous voulez" implique évidemment qu'il y a risque que les conséquences de ce que vous voulez faire ne soient pas très bonnes pour votre Sadhana, mais aussi que vous n'êtes peut-être pas prêt pour faire le progrès nécessaire qui permettrait que vous ne fassiez pas ce que vous désirez faire.

29-5-1933

Q : Is there not some difference between your replies: "You can do it" and "If you like" ?

A : "If you like" implies evidently that there is a risk that the consequences of what you want to do may not be very good for your Sadhana, but also that you are perhaps not ready to make the necessary progress which would permit you not to do what you desire to do.

29-5-1933

R : La moquerie n'est pas du tout le signe d'une supériorité intellectuelle, mais d'une arrogance mentale ignorante. *Le psychique ne moque jamais.*

2-12-1933

A : Mockery is not at all the sign of an intellectual superiority, but of an ignorant mental arrogance. *The psychic never mocks.*

2-12-1933

R : Il est certainement très mauvais de parler des défauts des autres, chacun a ses défauts et d'insister sur eux en pensée n'aide certainement pas à les guérir.

A : It is certainly very bad to speak of the defects of others, each has his defects and to insist on them in thought certainly does not help to cure them.

4-12-1933

From the Note-book of Shanti Doshi

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. Mamilal, 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.)

FEBRUARY 5, 1940

N : Anilbaran asks if he could send your blessings to the invalid asthmatic patient

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, he can but it doesn't mean that the patient is going to recover.

N : He may get some palliation. But why shouldn't he recover ?

SRI AUROBINDO : His asthma has been of very long standing and he has also a fear.

S : Yes, he speaks of fear of death.

SRI AUROBINDO : In chronic cases the body forms fixed habits which don't want to go and they throw up strong resistance.

N : But some chronic cases have been cured : for example, Sahana's sister.

SRI AUROBINDO : That was not so bad a case, and moreover it depends on the receptivity.

S : Diseases are due to attacks of forces.

N : If it is a question of forces it should be easy to deal with them.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why ? Everything is due to the action of forces but it is not easy to deal with them.

N : Of course if some permanent structural change takes place it may be difficult.

SRI AUROBINDO : The body also acquires structural and organic resistance—habits of nerves and organs.

N : We speak of forces and beings. What is the difference between them ? Are the forces also some kind of beings ?

SRI AUROBINDO : How do you mean ?

N : I mean : have the forces separate entities like the beings ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The forces act through a being when they can seize on him or when the being is open to them but they do belong to the being.

N : The forces have no separate entities ?

SRI AUROBINDO : They are a part of the universal, like forces of nature.

N : Are they self-directed ? Have they some idea or consciousness behind ?

SRI AUROBINDO : They are directed by the universal or Supreme Being and the consciousness is of the universal which is ultimately directed from the Supreme.

P : Are they individualised ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What do you mean by that ? They are universal forces. For instance, the universal force of love seizes upon a man and he becomes a lover. When the force leaves him, he ceases to be a lover.

N : But the force that is manifested through a being is his own force.

SRI AUROBINDO : The force is the universal force that is manifested through the being and the being too is part of the universal being. Both derive their support from the universal or the Supreme.

S : We want to know if the attacks of diseases on people are of forces or of beings.

SRI AUROBINDO : Forces of universal vital nature or beings.

N : The force of electricity or the force of Nature which causes an earthquake or a cyclone—is it a universal force or the force of a being ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What kind of being ?

N : Universal being.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, it may be the action of a universal Being or Force. We see the force as a movement.

N : Sometimes people on their death-bed shout out at some invisible forces, "Go away ! I am not coming with you. Oh, they have come to fetch me away," etc., etc. Are there some forces they see ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Forces or beings of the other world which they may see at such a time. Usually some parts of their being are already in the other world.

N (*after a while*) : Subash Bose seems to have hinted at a separate Congress if the Rightists come to a compromise. He says that he hoped to capture the Congress in a year but the Rightists have disregarded the rules of the game and he has no such hope now. The masses are also with them.

SRI AUROBINDO : Masses with them ? Is that why he doesn't want an election in Bengal now ?

N : It is a queer argument they have given against the election.

P : And did he always play according to the rules of the game ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Doing what he says is the game. He seems to cherish many illusions, one of them being to capture the Congress in a year.

N : He seems still to have a big following. In Calcutta he addressed a large gathering.

SRI AUROBINDO : Who says 'large' ?

N : The *Amrita Bazar* reports.

SRI AUROBINDO : In places like Calcutta and Bombay the Leftists seem to be

large in numbers but around Bombay they were badly defeated in the elections.

If the Congress can get Dominion Status without any fighting or struggle, I don't see why it shouldn't accept it. It can build up our defence after that and when that is ready, it can easily cut off the British connection.

N : Dominion Status Subash calls a compromise. He wants independence.

SRI AUROBINDO : It is a compromise on the surface but it is practically independence. You get all you want without any unnecessary struggle. When you can secede at your will from the British connection, it is practically independence. Independence is all right if you are prepared for a revolution. But is the country ready for it ?

N : According to Subash it is; he says Gandhi and company are not in touch with progressive elements of the country. So they don't know the kisans, the socialists, etc.

SRI AUROBINDO : Can he lead ? What will the kisans do ? They are strong only in the U.P. When repression will start, kisans will at once sink under military pressure.

EVENING

P read a letter from Armando Menezies, written to Udar.

N : Another poet will be added to the Ashram if Menezies comes. Somebody complained to me that there are many poets and artists in the Ashram but very few musicians. He says that music is not encouraged and developed here.

SRI AUROBINDO : It may not have developed but it is encouraged.

N : He says Sri Aurobindo being a poet can guide one even in technical details in poetry. He says Sri Aurobindo encourages painting too.

SRI AUROBINDO : I am not a painter.

N : But you have a thorough knowledge of painting and as you don't know much about music, it does not get much impetus.

SRI AUROBINDO : As a matter of fact it is the Mother who directs painting and music.

N : But, he says, the Mother doesn't know much Indian music nor the technique of it.

SRI AUROBINDO : He seems to be an ass. Venkataraman says that the Mother used to produce many Carnatic notes in her music while Nandini complained that the Mother brought Indian mixtures in her music.

N : But she can't guide in the technique of Indian music just as you guide in poetry.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why not ? When Sahana used to sing, the Mother could detect wrong notes at once. Music is a question of the ear. The Mother doesn't know Indian painting. She paints in oils. How does she direct the artists here ?

She is not an architect but she finds out mistakes in the plan of the building or in its execution, which Chandulal hasn't seen, and the mistakes prove to be there after-

wards. When we bought the new paint silexore, nobody knew how to apply it nor did the Mother, but she took the brush and when she applied it, it stuck to the wall quite all right.

N : Our complainant says that music hasn't got the Divine's sanction and has no place in the Future Creation, Sri Aurobindo himself not being a musician.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is perfectly idiotic.

P : I think the fault lies with the musician himself.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes. Romen, for instance, would have been a very great musician; but he didn't apply himself to it.

P : The trouble is : when the musicians take up music they don't try to perfect it but take it up just as a means for the Divine realisation.

SRI AUROBINDO : Who are these musicians ?

N : Yes, who are they ? You can't say that Dilip doesn't try to perfect his music.

SRI AUROBINDO : Dilip and Sahana are people who have real music in them. And the difficulty in music is the tendency for admiration growing up.

N : But so is it in poetry.

P : After all there aren't many artists—

N : Quite a lot. Krishnalal, Anilkumar, Nishikanto, Jayantilal.

P : Nishikanto is defunct.

N : Nonetheless he is an artist and there are others—Champaklal, Sanjiban, etc., etc.

P : There are many musicians too—Dilip, Sahana, Anilbaran.

N : Anilbaran ? If he is a musician, so are you.

P : Anilbaran sings all right; I have a taste for music and art.

N (*not hearing properly*) : Who has a taste ? Anilbaran ?

SRI AUROBINDO : No, he is speaking about himself.

NIRODBARAN

SHANKARA'S PHILOSOPHY AND ANCIENT VEDANTA*

SRI AUROBINDO

Q : Was it a new system of thought which Shankara created or only the restatement perhaps in a more developed form of a very ancient school of Vedantic interpretation?

Certainly, it cannot be supposed that Shankara invented a new philosophy out of his own brain; he believed himself to be establishing against attack the real sense of the Vedantic philosophy founded on the original texts of its canon and supported by the best tradition. Nor does any great thinker really invent a system new-born from his own intellect; what he does is to take up the material available to him in the past history of thought, to choose, select, reject, to present new lights on old ideas, to develop latent suggestions, to bring into prominence what was before less prominent or not so trenchant and definite, to give a fresh, striking and illuminating sense to old terms, to combine what was before not at all or else ill combined; in doing so he creates; his philosophy, though not new in its materials, is new in the whole effect it produces and the more powerful light that in certain directions it conveys to the thinking mind. The question is whether Shankara's system was not new in this sense and, though the previous material still subsisting is insufficient to decide the question, it must, I think, be answered provisionally in the affirmative. Adwaitavada undoubtedly existed before, but it was the form Shankara gave it which made it a clear, well-thought-out and powerfully trenchant philosophy and put his name at the head of Indian metaphysicians.

Q : Is Shankara's Adwaitavada, with its theory of Maya (World-Illusion), the whole sense of ancient Vedanta?

It is impossible to establish an exclusive Adwaitavada, much less the Mayavada, from the Veda, Upanishads, Brahmasutras or the Gita. It is impossible not because the great thinkers who gave us these writings thought confusedly or without a clear grasp of principles, but because theirs was an entirely different method. India began with a synthetic and intuitive manner of thinking based not upon logical distinctions and verbal oppositions, but upon the facts of spiritual experience and vision. In such synthetic and intuitive philosophies truths are arranged according to the place of each in the actual facts of things, as different laws and generalisations are arranged

* Culled from an article, *Sanskrit Research*, in *Arya* and arranged in the form of Question and Answer.

in Science, each positive in its own field and each having its proper relation to the others. The perfection of this method is to be found in the Upanishads and the Gita; and that is the reason why all attempts to interpret these great works by the methods of logical debate and the rigorous exclusions dear to the analytic metaphysician always fail even in the strongest hands; they raise questions about the sense of these works which cannot be conclusively solved, but must necessarily lead to eternal debate, because the method is wrong and the original work itself never intended to cause or countenance such discussions. Only a synthetic method of interpretation can explain a synthetic and intuitive philosophy.

The analytical tendency began with the gradual divisions which ended in the establishment of the six philosophical schools. Each of them claims to be justified by the Veda and from its own point of view each is quite in the right, for the primary data of each are there in the sacred writings. It is where they press to exclusive conclusions and deny and refute each other that they can no longer truly claim Vedic authority. Even the Buddhists could, if they had chosen, have based themselves on the Veda, for there are passages which, if taken by themselves, seem to deny the Atman and attribute all to Karma or to assert the Non-Existent as the source of things. The perfect resort to the analytical method came later; it was employed with great effect though often rather naively by the Buddhists, but it was Shankara who applied rigorously the analytical method of the intellectual reason in all its trenchant clearness and force to metaphysics. Hence the greatness of his position in the history of Indian thought. From his time forward Indian metaphysics was bound to the wheels of the analytical and intellectual mind. Still, it is to be noted that while the philosophers thus split the catholicity of the ancient Truth into warring schools, the general Indian mind was always overpoweringly attracted by the synthetical tendency. The Gita seems to be in part the expression of such a synthetic reaction, the Puranas show constantly the same tendency and even into the philosophical schools it made its entry.

GRATITUDE

In an early parable the Mother speaks of a rare virtue.

Once upon a time, up amidst the high clouds there stood a stately palace. It was the palace of Truth. One day a feast is given there. The invitees are gods and goddesses worshipped on earth under the name of 'Virtues'.

The Virtues are arriving separately in the hall of Intelligence, but soon forming into groups according to their sympathies, 'all happy to find themselves together once in a way at least, they who are usually so dispersed throughout the worlds, so isolated amidst crowds of alien beings'.

President Sincerity, 'dressed in a transparent robe', holding in her hand 'a cube of the purest crystal through which things could be seen as they were', is there accompanied by her two faithful guards Humility, 'respectful and proud at once', and Courage, 'his head held high, his eyes bright'. Close to courage stands a woman wholly veiled, 'only her piercing eyes were visible shining through the veils'. It is Prudence.

Lady Charity with her twin sister Justice has arrived. Kindness, Patience, Gentleness, Deference and many others have arrived. All are assembled, it is thought. But now there appears a stranger on the threshold. The guards have let her in with difficulty. She is 'very young and frail, dressed in a white robe, very simple, almost poor'.

Prudence is asked to inquire about her. She asks the newcomer politely. The sigh-ridden answer comes :

'Alas ! I am not astonished that I seem a foreigner in this palace. I am so seldom invited anywhere. My name is Gratitude.'

Gratitude is conspicuous by its absence amongst human beings as they are to-day. Rather ingratitude is on the offensive. Why so ? For, gratitude is a virtue of the psychic being, the soul, and in the ordinary life the psychic being remains veiled. In the ordinary life man is tossed about by his unregenerate vital where gratitude can hardly peep in. There is an interesting letter of Sri Aurobindo about it :

'Your surprise at X's behaviour shows that you do not yet know what kind of thing is the average human nature. Did you never hear of the answer of Vidyasagar when he was told that a certain man was abusing him,—"Why does he abuse me ? I never did him a good turn (*upakāra*)."' The unregenerate vital is not grateful for a benefit, it resents being under an obligation. So long as the benefit continues, it is effusive and says sweet things, as soon as it expects nothing more it turns round and bites the hand that fed it. Sometimes it does that even before, when it thinks it can do it without the benefactor knowing the origin of the slander, fault-finding or abuse. In all these dealings of yours there is nothing unusual, nothing, as you think,

peculiar to you. Most have this kind of experience, few escape it altogether. Of course, people with a developed psychic element are by nature grateful and do not behave in this way.' (*On Yoga*, Tome II, Part II, p. 485)

In Yoga the sadhak has to learn to be ever grateful to the Lord, whatever the circumstances. As the Mother puts it in one of her *Prayers* :

'Grant that we may never forget to own towards Thee a deep, an intense gratitude.'

Yes, and 'there is no better way to show one's gratefulness to the Divine than to be quietly happy'.

And, 'truly for your heart to remain happy, keep it always filled with gratefulness. Gratefulness is the surest way to the Divine.'

S. S. JHUNJHUNWALA

O THE FREEDOM OF GOD'S LOVE!

Heart-bursting, fire-awareness,
A flame leaping, an explosion radiant,
God-Love is born.

A certitude unshakable,
The root of being touched,
The release of all attachments,
The freedom of self-giving,
God-Love is born.

The path of life opened,
The realisation ineluctable,
One day will bring all-love,
God-Love is born.

Till the time of that awakening in the heart, man lives both a tyrant and a slave
— a contriving blind man moving in closed circuits.

SRIMAYI

W. B. YEATS—POET OF TWO PHASES

(This paper was read at the Symposium held by Annamalai University to celebrate the birth-centenary of Yeats which fell on June 13, 1965.)

THROUGHOUT his life W. B. Yeats followed a star high above contemporary standards of poetic brilliance. But he was a writer of two phases and in the one which came later his waggon often pulled the star to which it had been hitched into the roadways of day-to-day speech, and showed how a high purpose could illumine tones and methods which in other hands prove an aesthetic failure. In the initial phase, however, he was at his richest from the viewpoint of poetry proper, for there the inspiration seems to be the most continual.

SECRET WORLDS AND HUMAN HEART-TONES

This inspiration is a distinct type of Symbolism : it is surcharged with an unusual second sight opening on vistas of Celtic mythology, and it moves on a sound-stream which is exquisite incantation. The atmosphere it creates is due in part to a sensuous monotony, but there are subtle senses as well as the gross, and Yeats's concrete experience is of a world that shimmers behind the physical consciousness, a world of "odorous twilight" where "dream-dimmed eyes" under "cloud-pale eyelids" watch "flame on flame" guarding some "incorruptible Rose". Such and other key-words he interblends with a changing vividness of phrase to embody the master-passion of his life—love.

Yeats has remained at every stage of his career a poet of love, but here it is a mood aglow with occult images. It is a poignancy which the spirits behind the veil portion out to man as his greatest blessing; it is a net of fire cast about mortal limbs making them prisoner to an immortal beauty; through its spells and its tyrannies the clay-born hours partake of an Everlivingness hidden in the deeps of the heart. Though the occult perception thrills through Yeats's poems even apart from the cry of love, their finest moments are often when the hues from secret worlds have mated the heart-tones of this. The pure expression of the former is never so haunting as in those eight lines :

O sweet everlasting Voices, be still;
Go to the guards of the heavenly fold
And bid them wander obeying your will,
Flame under flame, till Time be no more;

Have you not heard that our hearts are old,
 That you call in birds, in wind on the hill,
 In shaken boughs, in tide on the shore ?
 O sweet everlasting Voices, be still.

From the love-poems it is difficult to choose, presenting as they do unbroken flawlessness everywhere, but in two or three places delicacy and grandeur go hand in hand. Such seems to me the close of that series of couplets in which the memory of a loveliness the poet feels he has known in previous births mingles with his living passion—lights and shadows from a more enchanted past which ultimately carry his mind beyond themselves to yet profounder intuitions :

For that pale breast and lingering hand
 Come from a more dream-heavy land,
 A more dream-heavy hour than this;
 And when you sigh from kiss to kiss
 I hear white Beauty sighing, too,
 For hours when all must fade like dew,
 But flame on flame, and deep on deep,
 Throne over throne where in half sleep,
 Their swords upon their iron knees,
 Brood her high lonely mysteries.

THE ART OF INDEFINITE SUGGESTION

In both these quotations what is common is an indefinite suggestiveness which is the very soul of Yeats's art during his early phase. That phase culminates in *Shadowy Waters* where the story of Forgael and Dectora is told in a language mirroring, as it were, strange symbolic silences, for words are packed with image-colour only to suggest the mysterious and the ineffable. But Yeats's most marked triumph is precisely this pervading vagueness—a triumph since it arises not from the sense being diluted or because he errs in verbal craft. His phrases are none save the right necessary ones, to change them would be to spoil his work, and the general impression he makes through them is of something actually visioned and accurately described. So perfect is the stimulus of his poetry that we get the sight and sound and even the subtle touch of some real world : only, it is a domain of mist, an unknown country which lies in a glimmering haze. The vagueness is not a shortcoming, as there is no mental inanity, no lack of sincere emotion, no mere decadent virtuosity, but an appropriate technique interpreting a very genuinely perceived "inscape" and making vagueness itself a positive quality of vision.

Only one contemporary poet can challenge comparison with Yeats in the art of indefinite suggestion by word and rhythm : Walter de la Mare. Their techniques

overlap in several respects, mainly in a use of spondees to produce mournful and remote reverberations; but Yeats is a greater musician and his management of broad vowels and harmonious consonants adds a crystalline richness to the slow chant made by his spondees :

Surely thine hour has come, thy great wind blows,
Far-off, most secret, and inviolate Rose ?

Or take his blank verse :

For life moves out of a red flare of dreams
Into a common light of common hours
Until old age bring the red flare again.

A glide-anapaest is frequent in his blank verse as an aid to his most artistic effects :

A sweet, miraculous, terrifying sound,

or,

No, not angelical but of the old gods,
Who wander about the world to waken the heart.

Walter de la Mare is not only noted for spondaic rhythms and for assonances, like

Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose;

but he practises too a queer magic by syncopation, dropping a syllable and lengthening out its companion in a foot :

Speak not—whisper not—
Here bloweth thyme and bergamot...

or,

Beauty vanishes, beauty passes,
However rare—rare it be...

or again,

See the house, how dark it is,
Beneath its vast-boughed trees.

Here also is a haunted language, but mostly de la Mare is the singer of a romantic strangeness and of the superstitious instinct. It is a domain different from Yeats's : even in the faery element their treatments are unlike, for de la Mare is a poet of the imaginative child, while Yeats goes beyond to a supernatural innocence, a childhood wise with unknown voices. The former evokes a ghost-atmosphere in which the colour is subdued and a delicate solemnity reigns over all : the latter spreads out vistas like melting jewels, his shadows too bear each a quivering aureole, and it is not ghosts that hover round him but Elemental Powers and Masters of Destiny, the old gods—

Caoilte tossing his burning hair,
And Niamh calling *Away, come away.*

Joy and sorrow in Yeats's poetry are alike a keen ecstasy, in fact they are almost one and the same, and whatever delicacy he puts into his art is not solemn but intense : all his flush of triumph is yet passionately wistful and he drinks anguish like a nectar. De la Mare stands on the threshold between the waking life and the subconscious : Yeats belongs to some complete inner realm and a full light from there comes through. Unlike the other who sees a spot of light and concentrates on it, trying to discover how it touches and changes the outer vision, he is a secure seer with an eye that ranges over the entire "inscape" of mystery until his outer consciousness is altogether drenched in that translucence.

CHANGE IN STYLE AND PSYCHOLOGY

That a poet should discard so thorough a power to voice occult insight seems a grave tragedy. But life does not follow expected curves of development and the pure critic has no right to complain provided the new curves trace artistic forms as flawless as those that have vanished, different though they be in gesture and expression. Yeats of the second phase is very little of an occultist at the beginning, because the old joy in the fire-mists of an unearthly realm yields to a desire for the clear contours of direct human experience. When he does turn to occult issues, it is mostly with an intellectual semi-Kabalistic penchant : he deals with them in a discursive temper and an abstruse language which to a large measure rob them of poetic vitality. His direct human experience, too, finds as he grows older an accent which, while often powerful or majestic, verges oftener on prose in quality as well as in turn of phrase. In more simple moods he is capable of a lyrical poignancy or a *sévère douceur*, but not seldom the utmost he displays is a colloquial vivacity and at the worst there is a lapse into the dull and the insipid. These defects do not condemn his second phase; for it has superlative moments, especially at the outset when to a considerable extent it co-exists with the first, though the gradual drift from the latter is characterised beyond mistake by a certain change in style and psychology.

The change was prepared by Yeats's contribution to the Irish theatre. He began

“colloquialising” poetry in order to fit blank verse to an idiom and rhythm which would approximate to naturalness in the mouths of men and women. Not that he wanted a language commonplace or abstract : he wished for a spoken vividness, a stir of the wide-awake mind in the tone to mingle increasingly with chanted dream-splendour. It is, however, doubtful whether in his plays he frequently succeeds when he attempts the new style; the best portions are those where the blank verse is filled with mystic intonations, for, at other times, he is prone to keep away magic and wingedness from the lines without quite making them stride with simple strength. Still, there are instances when he does strike out a movement which anticipates the change to come : the early plays on the whole belong to the first phase since the occult imagination is at work in them and by means of Celtic symbols, but lines like

Do you not know
How great a wrong it is to let one's thought
Wander a moment when one is in love ?

or,

And while we bore her hither cloudy gusts
Blackened the world, and shook us on our feet;
Draw the great bolt, for no man has beheld
So black, bitter, blinding and sudden a storm,—

lines like these connect up with the second phase in its finer aspects. The other qualities of that later development grew more from Yeats's dramatic theory than his dramatic practice—a theory which led to a modification in his outlook on the function of all poetry, for he now appeared to believe that a word-music not in consonance with the vehement whimsical gusto and variety of actual outer life could not claim the highest class. Indeed, it must not image the cramped superficial gesticulation of men and women enslaved by fear and habit and routine; it must be a less muddled force, expressing passion, personality, action—a force never forgetting that it has behind it an imperishable spirit in touch with unseen magnitudes and powers, not disdaining to let its imagination be kindled with heroic or romantic colours—but the test is life, more abundant life, and never should the emotions cease responding to flesh as human and the mind fail to move among tangibilities. Yeats could never escape idealism : only, he would not look from beyond the walls of the world, but rather beat against them with a proud courage and use idealism and its light to subserve the actual instead of allowing the actual to dissolve in ideal visions.

THE ART OF CLEAR INTENSITY

The first complete freedom from the old atmosphere is in poems like *Adam's Curse*. A faint intellectual accent also makes itself heard and, though not the intense

emotion of the direct kind which is another feature of the second Yeats, a graceful feeling-tone is not absent :

We sat together at one summer's end,
 The beautiful mild woman, your close friend,
 And you and I, and talked of poetry.
 I said, 'A line will take us hours maybe;
 Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
 Our stitching and unstitching has been naught'....
 That beautiful mild woman for whose sake
 There's many a one shall find out all heartache
 On finding that her voice is sweet and low
 Replied, 'To be born woman is to know—
 Although they do not talk of it at school—
 That we must labour to be beautiful'....

For the full perfection of the new style and psychology, two pieces provide excellent examples : they fuse the growing intellectual tone with a direct throb of passion to achieve a clear intensity as contrasted with the indefinite suggestive power of the old lyricism. *The Folly of Being Comforted* leaves an unforgettable vibration in the memory because of its original idea-turn which sharpens the impact on our feeling to a sort of delightful stab in the dark :

One that is ever kind said yesterday :
 'Your well-belovèd's hair has threads of grey,
 And little shadows come about her eyes;
 Time can but make it easier to be wise
 Though now it seem impossible, and so
 Patience is all that you have need of.'
No,
 I have not a crumb of comfort, not a grain.
 Time can but make her beauty over again :
 Because of that great nobleness of hers
 The fire that stirs within her, when she stirs,
 Burns but more clearly. O she had not these ways
 When all the wild summer was in her gaze.
 O heart ! O heart ! if she'd but turn her head,
 You'd know the folly of being comforted.

I do not see in what way Yeats is here less a poet and an artist than during his pure Celtic period. The whole music is dissimilar, and the artistry performs its secret

office by a method other than the slow sorcery in a poem like *Aedh Wishes for the Clothes of Heaven*—

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths, ~
 Enwrought with golden and silver light,
 The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
 Of night and light and the half-light,
 I would spread the cloths under your feet :
 But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
 I have spread my dreams under your feet :
 Tread softly because you tread on my dreams—

yet it is a method equally authentic and supports an inspiration as inevitable. For, though there is no spell of a perceptible nature in *The Folly of Being Comforted*, the creative skill by which the effect as of "a moment's thought" is carried to perfection by an alert "stitching and unstitching" is proved by the careful phraseology, the pregnant transitions of syntax, the rhythm modulating itself with most delicate decisive strokes, the repetitive device in the seventh as well as the penultimate line to enforce the emotion. Every detail counts : mark, for instance, that terminal "No", breaking up as it does for the sake of significance the line of which it is metrically a part and giving thereby the argument of that line and its immediate predecessors a kind of check and rebuttal which seems final; nor would it be so definite a stimulus to the reader's zest for the latter half of the poem, if it did not stand thus solitary and suspended.¹ The words "wild summer" have also an inspired *raison d'être* : "summer" is a foot with an inverted stress in the line, and the ordinary justification would be emphasis for the sake of contrast with the peculiar fascination exerted by the well-beloved when the poet is speaking about her; what confers a supreme appositeness on the changed accent is the epithet "wild", for immediately we perceive the impulse behind the summer-charm as one which would most naturally tend to run against rules—here the rule of the iambic metre !

The poem entitled *No Second Troy* differs from *The Folly* in that its emotional element is more implicit than the latter's and the intellectual rises to the front. The emotion is not lost, it constantly supplies fuel to the intellectual glow in the language, or, to take another metaphor, provides the living edge to the tempered swordlike strength and dignity of each line :

¹ I have followed the original version of the poem. Yeats subsequently revised the line:
 All that you need is patience.

Heart cries, 'No,
 and he made the heart's speech end with the last word of line 12. The new version is more smooth and poised, but the deliberateness in its dramatic quality makes it somewhat artificial. Yeats's rewriting is not always happy.

Why should I blame her that she filled my days
 With misery, or that she would of late
 Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways,
 Or hurled the little streets upon the great,
 Had they but courage equal to desire ?
 What could have made her peaceful with a mind
 That nobleness made simple as a fire,
 With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
 That is not natural in an age like this,
 Being high and solitary and most stern ?
 Why, what could she have done, being what she is ?
 Was there another Troy for her to burn ?

This, too, can stand on aesthetic grounds a safe comparison with anything in the old *genre*, even the deepest music possible there :

Who dreamed that Beauty passes like a dream ?
 For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
 Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
 Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
 And Usna's children died.

We and the labouring world are passing by :
 Amid men's souls, that waver and give place
 Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
 Under the passing stars, foam of the sky,
 Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode :
 Before you were, or any heart to beat,
 Weary and kind, one lingered by His seat;
 He made the world to be a grassy road
 Before her wandering feet.

Both poems show the master-hand, both are as gifts from the gods; but the gods send their gifts through various channels in man's being, and it is only in face of this fact that criticism can permit itself a regret on viewing Yeats's total achievement. For Yeats of the Celtic phase was a *rara avis*, while the gradual change he underwent produced poems which, though original in detail, were of a type not absolutely novel; much fine work has been done in the latter kind by others, but the rich mysticism and intonation brought by his early verse, the enchanted "mouthful of sweet air" laden with symbolism of "Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days" were such as no one before had breathed on the world's ear.

WAS THE EARLY YEATS DECADENT ?

It is most superficial to see, as Yeats himself did in his old age and some apostles of modernism do, an anaemic decadence in that verse. No doubt the languid aestheticism of the 'Nineties creeps into it here and there; a weakening and blurring influence is at times caught from writers who divorced art from life and set it within a moated grange or worshipped it in an archaic temple for the mere melodic and bejewelled charm words were capable of. But the art of Yeats in its charmed moments was not barren word-culture; and if there was any remoteness about it, the remoteness was of a new reality demanding a special approach through unusual states of consciousness and not a phantom languishing in some vacuum between matter-of-fact and magic. The work of the Decadents was generally in that vacuum—it had not the clear contour of earth nor the subtle shape of the occult, it was just ambiguous and world-weary, drained of healthy Nature without being filled with Supernature's sight and sound and touch. Hanging midway in an uncertain fever, it was an imitation of the true wizardry which withdraws from the light of common life into a strangeness that is as living but with forms and forces washed in an unknown air. All poetry in fact is such a withdrawal—but there is a difference between the imaginative profound and the imaginative occult. Most great poetry is of the profound order, the wakeful mind of thought super-sensitising itself and catching hidden worlds in its mirror; occult poetry keeps only a nominal hold on the wakeful mind and receives its inspiration of the hidden worlds by a faculty which is itself half-hidden. This poetry can be of two sorts : it can either bring forth extraordinary symbols with a dynamic full-figured concreteness or set flowing an iridescent wave with unearthly limbs emerging from it. Yeats practises both sorts, the second much more frequently and with larger success. The decadent aesthetes thought they could reach and reveal Art's secret places by getting as isolated as possible from normal things and wrapping in rich cloths the thin bodies of far-fetched desires. They had considerable skill but not creative clairvoyant power : their inspiration was at its best a decorative inventor. Yeats wrote several poems in early youth which are indistinct and sentimental rather than artistically vague with occult emblems and the emotion of the Unknown. These deserve to be weeded out, but just because a poem lacks what he later called "manful energy" and "athletic joy" moulding "clear outlines", it does not become a painted miasma which settles nowhere and misleads the wakeful will and intellect. Perhaps his stern judgment upon his early creation was due to an incomplete *liaison* between his waking mind and the occult : he could not live like a practising mystic, an all-time seer. That, however, was the shortcoming of the man and did not vitiate the poetry, whose particular species of seerhood was absolutely authentic. Yeats's Celtic verse was both true and new.

THE MARVELLOUS MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN

Blake had walked with spirits, Coleridge had known an eerie darkness, Shelley

had been touched by "nurselings of immortality", but none had opened the door of which Yeats discovered the key; they had won no access to the heart whose pulse followed the footfall of wizard presences. A hitherto unexplored dimension of conscious activity lay before him; he was granted an instinctive knowledge of all its delicate labyrinths and each dusk-lit reverie through which he glided could be echoed by him in a word-rhythm unique for spell-binding overtones of imagination. If he could have continued his delight in that strange paradise we might have had with the growth of his mind some comprehensive disclosure of it, not magic glimpses as at present but a glimmering cosmology. Even if a result so opulent had been denied us since Yeats has not shown anywhere the architectural sweep of the greatest creators, there would have been a sufficient mass of work in an entirely original field to render his voice and his vision an assured extension of the human consciousness. By one-pointed and organic consistency of aim Wordsworth stamped, on his own time and the generations after, a new perception of Nature; Shelley's amazing productiveness blended inextricably by the same means a new idealistic glow with the emotions to which the human race had been accustomed. Yeats, however, bifurcated his never too prolific inspiration, dropped the wonder that had fallen into his hands and took up moods and methods no less valuable from the aesthetic standpoint yet not surprisingly individual enough in what may be termed "revelation" to keep enthralled the eye of aspiring ages. Individual these moods and methods are in the sense of thrusting forward a penetrating original mind of virile aristocracy, an imagination zestful, profoundly moved, admirably eclectic in its range. Their defect, in the revelatory sense, is that they do not draw out in a pure form a plane of reality beyond the mental. They have depth of thought and suggestion, at times a fierce flaming depth as in *Sailing to Byzantium*; but how far is this from the swinging wide of secret gates into a land where myth and faery and deific dream have a poignant super-life !

Not that Yeats in old age stopped being occult and mystical. He aimed at an expression of the whole man—realist and romantic, flesh and spirit, intellect and intuition. His splendid aim got splendidly accomplished—but what was lost was the accent of some inner world. Now each esoteric plunge was taken in a grand or energetic manner self-consciously moulded; in his youth his voice had been like a wind blowing from an unearthly kingdom, and whatever energy or grandeur was in it came atmosphered with a consciousness other than the proud intellect. The difference between the sources of the two styles can be felt immediately. Take these lines about the "Holy Tree" in the heart :

The surety of its hidden root
Has planted quiet in the sky.

A similar substance is charged by the later Yeats with a more philosophical and less spiritual passion, though the poetic upshot is no whit inferior :

Whatever flares upon the night
 Man's own resinous heart has fed.

The artistry of the aged Yeats made the thinking mind grip and undrape mysteries; that of the young Yeats cunningly surrendered to mysteries and made them grip it and undrape themselves with its aid. The larger reality behind the veil used the human self; the smaller came in course of time to lay hands on the larger and fit it to the various sides of the personality. If the early inspiration could have absorbed the whole man instead of a few parts as it was wont to do, there would have resulted an all-roundness not like a compromise as at present under the dominating influence of the athletic will co-ordinating the personality's diverse motions. It would have been a large harmony keyed to a centre of awareness more inward. Yeats did not achieve that rarer wholeness. So what possessed a most surprising individuality of "revelation" came to lack the cumulative power a consistent life-work can bestow, to enlarge beyond doubt the racial soul. As a poet of genius, the finest in the England of our day, he will last; criticism can enjoy and praise the deviation which occurred in his art, but that deviation is bound to weaken his influence, for it lost him the full blazing torch of a poetic *vita nuova* which he might have lifted for the future.

K. D. SETHNA

DAWN IS ETERNAL

REACH up your hand...
 A Greater Hand looms down
 Across the pale newness of the stars.

It is possible now
 To climb out from the viscosity of Night.

Reach up your hand...
 A Power leans down to earth :
 Gold-rose-red with Compassion
 To answer a burning heart—

Dawn is eternal,
 The stars are forever new.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT

SITA'S MARRIAGE

A SHORT STORY

(Renowned in Oriya literature, the author Manoj Das, who has joined the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and is on the teaching staff of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, is making his mark in English also. We have already published him as a skilful book-reviewer ; but he has distinguished himself in various periodicals as a short-story writer. With Sita's Marriage he makes his début in this role in our pages. We find the story a piece of great beauty, at once delicate and deep in its probe into a child's mind. But the child concerned is an unusual one—and, dealing with her, the author brings a background touch of insight into a certain aspect of Indian mysticism—the perception that souls too developed for ordinary surroundings find often an unexpected short-cut out of the disharmony between their inner "dharma" and the outer life whether of common misery or of conventional happiness.)

It was at the hour of midnight that Basanti's marriage was performed. It was, needless to say, a very pompous affair, as Basanti's marriage with the budding engineer groom meant her rich father's ultimate victory over half a dozen rivals, all with daughters of nearly Basanti's age.

Of course, our story has little to do with this marriage. Rather, it should commence from the dawn that ended the glamorous night, when in the neighbouring house the little Sita (the little one so dear to all of us who were her father's friends), the only child of the college lecturer Dev, surveyed the scattered remnants of crackers and unfamiliar faces around her house and began investigating into them. Her mother informed her of Basanti's marriage, but that only made her confused still more. She had heard of marriage—a thing of remote mystery—but never dreamt that such a thing could occur in the life of so familiar a person as Basanti. She peeped into the neighbour's house and saw Basanti in her bridal glory and modesty. With eyefuls of amazement she scanned the brave young man who came to take Basanti away, and the gentry accompanying him busy devouring large sweetmeats. Then she very categorically accused her parents of utter irresponsibility as they did not wake her up when the marriage actually took place.

Sita's grievance, in a few days, evolved into an irresistible demand. She insisted that arrangements had to be made to ensure her seeing the actual performance of a marriage, and declared her preparedness to pass a whole night sleepless if it was necessary.

While Dev worried about the problem of complying with her demand, Sita, seated in his lap, suddenly appeared bright. She brushed her father's head with her

tiny fingers and said affectionately, "Papa, I will say something good. Will you do accordingly?"

Dev agreed. Sita, with all the strength of having come to a decisive solution of the problem, said, "Better you get married, papa, and let me enjoy the occasion."

As Dev could not but burst into laughter, Sita became grave. Hence Dev had to control himself. After all, none could laugh away a suggestion from Sita. Dev said almost guiltily, "But I am already married!" Sita first dismissed the answer as nonsense. But as Dev appeared sincere, she questioned, her tiny eyeballs bulging out, "Indeed! Whom did you marry?" Dev said, "Your mamma." Little did he imagine then what a storm his simple statement of fact was destined to raise. Sita immediately got down from his lap and, casting a stern look at him, turned her back and slowly moved away. Dev could not comprehend the factor behind this abrupt change in the child's mood. He resorted to his wife's help. At the end of a concentrated entreaty they knew what Sita had to say: "It was pardonable if they did not disturb her sleep during Basanti's marriage. But what on earth could justify their conduct when they did not wake her up while they married themselves? How could they be so very selfish? And how does this father, in spite of such treachery, profess intimacy by collaborating with her in catching the cat by the tail or fetching guavas without her mother's knowledge?"

It was a hard job, that time, to bring back a smile to Sita's heavy face. A box of toffee, and even a toy bear which danced happily when wound, did not improve the situation. Dev of course once tried to explain that she was nowhere when they were married. But Sita poohpooed, "I was there when the whirlwind took away grandpa's cap, I was there when the little monkey danced in the square, I was there on every occasion thus. Yet you mean that I was absent only when you married! All right, all right, I too will marry while you would be soundly asleep! Do not blame me then!"

This is the point whence opened a new phase in Sita's whim, as her father amusingly encouraged her saying, "Yes, yes, my child, that would be wonderful. What use waiting to see somebody else marrying? Better you get married yourself."

She remained meditative for a moment, and seemed satisfied at the prospect of enjoying the occasion with herself as the centre. But again she resigned herself to a pensive mood. Where is the bridegroom? Collecting in her mind all the duties of a groom such as sharing the same mirror with the bride, obeying her always and escorting her to theatres, etc., and adding to all such observations the extra duty to play with her, she sped up her flight of fancy. But soon she saw that to land on a choice was not easy at all. Even the distantly related grandpa, whose milky beard was a symbol of abundance and who always bestowed upon her an orange or a toy, was married, as investigation showed. Of course, there was that little boy, Basanti's brother, who often beckoned her from the top floor of his gigantic house. Sita had seen the boy's treasury of innumerable playthings. Once she had even picked up what

she thought to be delicious apples to be shocked to know that they were made of clay. Clay or real, that mattered only for a moment, but what Sita could not forget was the fun the boy made of her disillusionment. However, in case of a total non-availability of bridegrooms, that boy would do. After all, things are amendable. As she had softened with a hammer the biting sharpness of the toy bear's tail, so also she could mend the boy's uncivilised habits.

So in due course Sita put the proposal before her father. Dev tried to avoid the matter and, failing to do so, told her that as Basanti's brother was a rich man's son money was involved in the question of availing oneself of him as the groom. "Money?" Sita said sportively. "If you do not have money, I will give it to you." Sita had a sum of nearly three rupees in her casket collected on different occasions. Now she was prepared to put her entire wealth at her poor papa's disposal. Dev smiled with a distinct touch of melancholy. Then the clever child realised that far, far more than rupees three was needed to materialise the proposal.

It was not only for a clumsy idea about the relation between money and joyous occasions like marriage that Sita's mood underwent yet another change. She was puzzled to gather from gossips that Basanti, who was given in marriage the very other day in such a festive way, was always weeping. Her father had given much in cash and kind. Yet her husband hated her and, while in an intoxicated state, threw a bottle at her, thereby bashing her nose.

Sita was at a total loss to comprehend the ways of the world. Her unusual gravity made the whole atmosphere of the house gloomy, so much so that when the old grandpa visited the place he felt as though even that toy bear had lost its usual elegance. Sita smiled again in the company of the old man. At the first opportunity of getting him alone, she asked him seriously how to find a bridegroom for herself. The old man, amused at the unexpected query, spoke out jokingly as well as sincerely, "Well, who could be Sita's bridegroom unless he was Ramchandra himself!"

Sita's face was bright again. She knew the story of Ramchandra and Sita. Indeed, the only thing she did not know beforehand was that her problem had such a simple, logical and heartening solution. She flattered the old grandpa by playing with his beard and entreated him to get Ramchandra to her. The old man sighed and told her that Ramchandra would not obey him. But he assured her that if she herself called him with every beat of her tiny heart he would certainly oblige her as she was Sita, and as Ramchandra was that compassionate.

"But what about drums, crackers, and moustached gentry as were seen during Basanti's marriage? Will Ramchandra bring everything?" She inquired eagerly.

"Everything," said the old man. Sita closed her eyes for a while, and then, her voice almost choking with emotion, whispered to the old man, "I will call him this very night. Please do not reveal this to papa and mamma."

Till it was night and Sita was taken to bed, she frequently smiled mysteriously. She advised her parents, "Do not get up in the night." Then, unable to suppress the thrill of her expectations, she sweetly murmured as if to herself, "But if you get up by

chance, you will see the fun !” Dev had heard secretly from the old relative about Sita's latest adventure in ideas. He just smiled.

Sita got up a little late the next morning. Dev did not remember her aspiration. But everything got revived in his mind the moment he looked at Sita. Generally, after her sleep terminated, Sita came and climbed up to her father's chest and loved to be fondled and flattered by him, and then she muttered lines from her favourite verse. But that morning she sat motionless. Her face expressed an elevation, which was solemn and graceful. She never spoke, but only smiled to every question, and hers was a smile of divine grandeur. She seemed to be absorbed in a distant world of dreams, wherefrom her parents perhaps appeared to her as kids of too small a sphere.

Dev did not have to go to college as the day was a Sunday. He watched Sita the whole day and was rather frightened. By evening he was impatient and tried to make her laugh and talk at any cost. His strenuous efforts compelled Sita to give out bits of the state of her mind. She believed that in the preceding night Ramchandra, as a beautiful boy with his mighty bow and his crown of burning gold, had appeared before her as her bridegroom with so much of heavenly music and with angels as companions around him !

Dev further understood that poor Sita still believed the dream to be true ! Such an enchantment she was under !

Dev reported the matter to his wife and both of them started laughing. As they laughed, Sita's tranquil look faded away and a cloud of gloom enveloped her. Never perhaps in her life did that gloom leave her.

A few days later, Dev and his wife were sadly discussing a tragedy. That was about Basanti who had at last committed suicide. As they talked, Dev found that Sita was looking at them with a stern interrogative air. Whatever be the meaning of her look, to Dev it seemed a direct question like this : “Which was then real and which was illusion ? Was the pompous marriage of Basanti to which thousands were witnesses really real ? Was my marriage, which you all laughed away as a dream, nothing but a dream ?”

*
**

Ten years passed and I was no more Dev's neighbour. Yet at intervals we exchanged information about ourselves. Recently Dev was arranging for Sita's marriage, though Sita used to decline.

Today I have received the most unfortunate news that after a slight attack of fever the sweet little Sita has passed away.

MANOJ DAS

A HYMN OF PRAISE TO THE SOUTH-FACING FORM

AN ENGLISH RENDERING OF SHANKARACHARYA'S PHILOSOPHICAL POEM

IN *A Hymn of Praise to the South-Facing Form* Sankaracharya, the great exponent of the Advaita Philosophy, reveals in various ways how the One is the Many. The Force through which the One appears as the Many is Maya. The Supreme Reality is conceived by tradition as assuming the form of an Eternal Youth facing South to be the Gracious Teacher of aspiring Souls and to reveal to them their identity with Him. The finger-sign (*chinnudra*) with which the Youth sits in deep silence surrounded by the Sages and Saints is the gesture which communicates the knowledge of Reality.

BENEDICTORY STANZA

The Final Truth revealed through Silence's Word,
The Eternal Youth environed all around
by disciples of age, austere and wise,
the Supreme Teacher with His finger-sign
pointing to the Light beyond,
the Divine Spirit embodying Joy
with a face beaming with delight,
that Form which faces South I, adore.

1

Who through Maya sees, as in sleep,
the Universe no more real than
a city beheld in a looking-glass,
as if it existed outside Him,
revealing His singular Self
at the moment of wisdom's dawn—
to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
that Splendid Form which faces South.

2

Who even like an adept conjuror
or rather like a Yogi of might
brings out through Maya by His mere wish

this varied Universe of Time and Space,
 like a sprout springing from its seed—
 to that Gracious Teacher, this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

3

Whose consciousness alone shines through
 the vacancy of created things,
 Who is known through the Vedic *Thou Art That*,
 by knowing whom there is no return
 to the endless ocean of birth and death—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

4

Truth beyond sight and sense I know
 when I see Him behind the Universe
 like a lamp in a pot with many holes
 sending out numerous rays across,
 making the pot appear the source of light—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

5

Who kills the delusions of the minds
 deceived by Maya's sportive powers,
 who, blind or loglike, or like a woman, child,
 believe they are none other than
 the body, life-force, mind or the Void—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

6

The Effulgence hidden by Maya's mask
 resembling the eclipsed Sun or Moon,
 the Pure Being, with all His powers drawn,
 remembering he has been asleep
 at the moment of Wisdom's dawn—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

7

Who through the auspicious finger-sign
 reveals Himself to His devotees
 as the shining "I" at every stage
 of human growth from childhood on,
 in every state like wakefulness or sleep—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

8

The Self that suffers to be whirled about
 in Maya's grip in dream or waking state,
 and views the Universe brokenly
 through cause and effect, and through relations
 of lord, master, pupil, father, son—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

9

Who shines in all things mobile and immobile
 as the Supreme beyond which there is nought,
 in eightfold forms that are ever His,
 earth, water, fire, ether, air,
 Sun, Moon, and the Self-in-Man—
 to that Gracious Teacher this salute,
 that Splendid Form which faces South.

10

Since it has been crystallized
 in this hymn of praise that all is Self,
 by means of hearing and thinking on
 the meaning that is embodied here,
 by contemplation or by recital,
 one might attain a God-like liberty,
 a knowledge of Oneness with all around,
 and an eightfold unimpeded power divine.

TWO POEMS

I

AFTER READING A BIOGRAPHY

SRI AUROBINDO
lend me a mystery
filled
with apples and yellow-green parrots

Sri Aurobindo
whisper the roar
that Krishna murmured
to every Christ

Let the stone's infinity
at Ellora and Ajanta
soften
to a new temple

Let *darshan*
of stars' eyes
pacify
non-divine terror

Sri Aurobindo
sweeten
sometimes
my glass of milk

2

BLUE SONNET

THE golden city dreaming in your star
Perfumes my brain but leaves a golden scar.
My eyes make love to eyes of half a moon
That haunts all flesh into a silver ruin.

MOTHER INDIA

Your fire kingdom grows the food I need.
 My blood flows sweeter nourishing the seed.
 Your power to restore my soul's lost art
 Should not detour the channels to your heart.
 If I am fated to drink mystery,
 Your love's a hand to raise or bury me.
 Come burn the sickly jungles of my lust;
 I think our destiny is more than dust.
 I know a thousand ways of being blue.
 The flame of heaven costs a hell or two.

D. R. CAMERON

 ANANDA

A king unmoved, fulfilled I stand on the roof of the world,
 My airy limbs one with the silence's expanse,
 My heart commingling with the anguished hearts of earth —
 Gaze fixed on God, my soul rejoices in creation's dance.

Enthroned I am where world-vibrations reach me not,
 Nor injured rage of vanquished tumult surges up;
 My senses closed to the fury of abysmal dust,
 My drowse-free happy cells immortal nectar sup.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

SPREAD OUT YOUR WINGS MY SOUL

SPREAD out your wings, my soul,
A white bird
Fly
To the end of this world and life so various
Sweet the senses ache
Fly
To the end of the inexhaustible varieties
To the passionless Muse of a White Height.

Fly
Because you must
Because you know
Till you grasp in one eternal embrace
All the earthly beauties of the one multi-faceted Beauty
Your yearning's a painful cry for your Prototype.

If then you must seize them all
Moth-frenzied thought-suspended
Hurl yourself into her iridescent Light
And consumed
Become one with the stuff and breath of her being.

Spread out your wings, my soul,
A white bird
Fly
To that Beauty, the Colour of all the colours
Whose senses crave not nor burn nor ache
Because She is All-Sufficient.

Surely you know, my soul, She exists and is your goal
Else why this killing chasm of separation, this void of insufficiency ?

BIBHASH JYOTI MUTSUDDI

THE DESTINY OF THE BODY

THE SEER-VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

(Continued from the June issue)

PART THREE : THE CONQUEST OF FOOD-NEED

VIII. *The Universal Choice*

The need to exist, the instinct to survive
Engrossed the tense precarious moment's will
And an unseeing desire felt out for food.

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book II, Canto 4, p. 155)

In this bound thinking's narrow leadership
Tied to the soil, inspired by common things,
Attached to a confined familiar world,
Amid the multitude of her motived plots,
Her changing actors and her million masks,
Life was a play monotonously the same.

(*Ibid.*, p. 169)

We have seen that food constitutes the only source of energy and material replenishment for a living body. But any material substance is not a food; nor for that matter will the simple elemental forms like hydrogen and oxygen, carbon and nitrogen, which build up all so-called foodstuffs, satisfy the body's needs when fed directly to the organism. These must unite beforehand to form complex organic substances to be physiologically valued as foods. The animal organism—and man's body is no exception—requires that “its food be ready-made; it has no power to manufacture food out of the raw chemical elements.”¹

What then is ‘food’, biologically speaking? Food is any complex organic substance capable of yielding free energy on oxidation or fermentation in the living body and/or of contributing building materials for the organism's substantial structure.

As a matter of fact, all forms of life in spite of their enormous diversity, all living cells whether existing as separate unicellular entities or forming part of complex tissues of a bigger multicellular body, require such food in the shape of

(i) *energy-producing compounds* providing energy for the various life-processes and for daily activity;

¹ W. M. Smallwood, *Text-Book of Biology*.

(ii) compounds, although by themselves not energy-producers but vitally necessary for energy-exchanging metabolic reactions;

(iii) substances to supply fuel for heating purposes in the body;

(iv) structure-producing compounds to be changed into substances needed for the growth of a young body and for the material repair of an adult one:

(v) specific materials that, although essential to a particular species in its vital functioning, must be supplied to it from outside because of its inherited synthetic disability¹; and finally

(vi) materials capable of being converted into a reserve pool in the body upon which the organism may fall back in periods of emergency.

Now a question may be pertinently asked whether a single organic substance taken in sufficient quantity may fulfil all the above needs. So far as the energy-requirements of the body are concerned, the various energy-yielding foodstuffs are no doubt to a great extent interchangeable; 'isodynamic' is the name given by Rubner to this phenomenon of interchangeability. But energy-equivalence is not the only thing demanded by a body for its viability. It requires too its specific structural components and food-constituents with specific roles in the body metabolism that cannot be taken over by other constituents. Thus there must be a provision of more than one nutrient or basic foodstuff in the dietary regimen of an organism. What are these essential categories of food elements? Do they vary from organism to organism?

It is an astonishing discovery that the food of all organisms, plants and animals alike, is essentially the same. For whatever be the diversity of foodstuffs that are gulped by different organisms, these are but mixtures in variable proportions of a very small number of chemical groups otherwise termed nutrients or basic alimentary categories.

The six major categories of substances required in the organism's diet are: proteins (or proteids), fats (or lipids), carbohydrates (or glucids), vitamins, mineral salts and water. Let us have a summary acquaintance with the essential roles that these nutrients play in the total body economy.

Water: Water, being the solvent for all sorts of substances in the body and being the medium in which all the vital metabolic processes in a living organism takes place, is indeed the most fundamental of all the ingredients of an organism's diet. It has been estimated that water and water alone forms 78% of a frog's body-weight, 74% of a chicken's, 82% of a codfish's, 67% of a herring's, 79% of a lobster's, 95% of a jelly-fish's, 80% of an earthworm's and 61% of a cockroach's. In the case of mammalian bodies including that of man, the overall percentage is as high as 60, the break-down figures for different parts being 83% for blood, 80%

¹ We shall discuss in our next chapter what this synthetic disability means in practice and what are its implications for the solution of the problem with which we are dealing in our present essay.

for the brain, 75% for muscles, 70% for the skin, 30% for bones and 10% for the fat deposit.¹ The essentiality of water to the functioning of bodily life cannot thus be overestimated.

Oxygen : Since, in general and in the last analysis, an organism has to gather energy so vital to its life-processes by the oxidation of the ingested foodstuffs, oxygen is as important as any other nutrient in the proper maintenance of life. Indeed it is the continual process of the uptake of oxygen and the release of carbon dioxide formed that we know as *respiration*.

Proteins : Proteins are highly complex organic compounds consisting of chains of amino acids arranged in a particular order. *No life is known without proteins*. Indeed, aside from water, the major and most essential constituent of the protoplasm of living cells is protein; proteins are the principal nitrogenous components of all tissues.

Now a continual need for protein in the diet arises from the following reasons :

- (i) a young organism requires the growth of its protoplasmic mass;
- (ii) an adult body continually loses its vital nitrogen mostly in the form of urea due to an ineluctable wear and tear of its tissues;
- (iii) cells in certain parts of the body, such as blood corpuscles, epidermic cells and cells forming the intestinal mucous membrane, constantly degenerate and die out and are ceaselessly replaced by new cells throughout the entire duration of life.

Proteins are the only type of nitrogenous aliment available and are thus indispensable to the organism in the task of renewing exhausted cells and replacing the worn-out tissues of the body. But apart from fulfilling this double task, proteins play an essential role in the maintenance of acid-base balance, in the production of antibodies and some hormones, and above all in the formation of the vital bio-catalysts, enzymes², without which all life-processes as we know them on earth would come to a stop.

Fats or lipids : Lipids are non-nitrogenous organic compounds known as fats, waxes, phospholipids, glycolipids and sterols, and are chiefly composed of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. The fats in the dietary regimen are destined to fulfil the following roles :

- (i) to serve as sources of energy;
- (ii) to provide the body with the indispensable fatty acids like *linoleic*, *linolenic* and *arachidonic*;
- (iii) to act, in their irreplaceable function, as the vehicles, through which the fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E and K enter the body;
- (iv) to act as an insulating material to provide the body with protection against cold and mechanical shocks from outside.

¹ Adapted from a table on p. 48 of Knut Schmidt-Nielsen's *Animal Physiology* (1963).

² *Vide* Chapter VII : "Why Material Alimentation?" in *Mother India*, Vol. XVIII No. 5 p.49-50.

Mention may also be made of the fact that fats are the only type of food substances that can be stored in bulk in the body for the organism's future use.

Carbohydrates or glucids : Carbohydrates are a second group of non-nitrogenous organic compounds containing the elements carbon, hydrogen and oxygen of which hydrogen and oxygen are combined in proportions as in water; carbohydrates are present in most of the commonly occurring foods and contain *monosaccharides* or simple sugars such as glucose, *disaccharides* such as sucrose or cane-sugar, lactose or milk sugar, fructose or fruit sugar, and *polysaccharides* such as starch, cellulose and glycogen. The chief carbohydrates in human food are of course sugar and starch.

Carbohydrates are principally utilized as sources of energy and heat. About half to two-thirds of man's energy-requirements are met by the oxidation of ingested carbohydrates. Under normal conditions, the whole of our muscular activity is derived at the expense of the energy of the glucids.

Carbohydrates also have a sparing effect on body's proteins. For, if they are in short supply, the organism tends to make up its quota of energy-need by consuming its own vital protein contents, a verily self-destructive process for the creature.

Finally, a complete utilization of fats by the body depends on a normal carbohydrate metabolism; hence the delectable saying of Hirschfeld : "Fats burn in the fire of the carbohydrates."¹

Mineral salts and trace elements : Very small doses of certain inorganic substances known as mineral elements are essential to the maintenance of good health. It has been evaluated that a normal adult human body contains 1.5% calcium, 1% phosphorous, 0.35% potassium, 0.15% sodium, 0.25% sulphur, 0.15% chlorine and 0.004% iron.² The living matter, both animal and vegetal, contain various mineral salts, some in solution, others not.

The human blood contains sodium chloride in the proportion of 5 to 6% and this concentration is indispensable for the proper functioning of various organs. Sodium carbonate present in the blood helps in the process of transportation of carbon dioxide from the tissues to the lungs. Calcium phosphate is the major constituent of vertebrate bone, while invertebrate bones are chiefly constituted of calcium carbonate. Phosphorous and sulphur are essential ingredients of protoplasmic mass and iron is a necessary constituent of the hæmoglobin of blood.

Apart from these elements and salts, there are certain other trace elements such as iodine, copper, cobalt, zinc, etc., that are required in infinitesimal doses, but *essentially* required all the same, for the maintenance of the normal functions of many parts of the organism's body. These do not yield energy on oxidation but play essential physiological roles in the integrated body metabolism.

Vitamins : Experiments have shown beyond any shadow of doubt that it is never enough for the body's well-being to make good its output in energy and work

¹ Quoted by G. Bresse in *Morphologie et Physiologie animales* (Larousse, 1953), p. 823.

² *Vide* the very interesting article "The Metals within Us" by G. D. Ratcliff in the June 1966 issue of *The Reader's Digest*.

and to repair its wear and tear. In other words, a diet balanced in proteins, carbohydrates and fats, also in the essential mineral elements, fails to maintain the organism's health. In order to ensure a proper nutritional equilibrium ("*equilibre nutritif*"), certain accessory foodstuffs must be added to the creature's diet. These essential accessory substances, termed vitamins by Funk, are needed only in extremely minute quantities, "a few milligrams or a fraction of a milligram per day."¹ About fifteen different substances have till this date been recognised as vitamins but the specific requirements for these accessory food factors vary widely from species to species.

Vitamins are not energy-providing compounds nor do they play any appreciable role in the building up of the organism's tissues. The metabolic function of some of the vitamins is well understood but that of some others is not yet so. In at least eight cases so far, vitamins have been recognised as forming parts of important coenzymes.² But whatever that be, it is a well-established fact that without its quota of specific vitamins taken from outside, no organism can grow adequately or function in a viable way.

So here we are : these are the basic needs for all organisms that have developed so far upon earth. And if such are the *invariable* requirements for all embodied life, how can we possibly expect that a form of life may be elaborated in the future course of evolution that will dispense with this inexorable necessity ? Is it then the fate that living bodies must be always on the search for organic aliments, produced of course by other living bodies, and a mutual or chain devouring would for ever remain the only valid process for any earthly manifestation of life ? And, since the supply of proteids and lipids, of glucids and vitamins have to come from the only possible source, the substantial stuff of other living beings, must our body too, the body of man who is as yet the summit product of organic evolution and an aspiring candidate to a divine physical existence, remain doomed to play the unavoidable and ignoble role of a rapacious grabber that cannot subsist except by tearing up other living matter ?

But the case is not so desperate as it appears on the surface. For a closer scrutiny reveals that it is not so much the carbohydrates and proteins and fats available in other living bodies, that are in demand by a particular body. As a matter of fact except in the limited forms of simple sugars, fatty acids, glycerols and amino acids, no other ingested food-material can enter the *milieu intérieur* of a body or be utilized by its various cells. Experiments have shown that a glucose solution intravenously administered to a living body is totally absorbed and assimilated by it, whereas a cane sugar solution administered in the same way is rejected in full by the living system and totally excreted in the form of urine. It is the same case with all other ordinary food stuffs. Indeed, it is only because a living body requires in the last analysis only

¹ Knut Schmidt-Nielsen, *Animal Physiology*, p. 11.

² For coenzymes, *vide* Chap. VII : "Why Material Alimentation" in *Mother India*, Vol. XVIII, No. 5 p. 50.

a very few simple substances and these substances are not normally available in the external organic realm, Nature had to devise the process of *digestion* whose essential function is to break down and transform, with the help of digestive enzymes, any available ingested material into forms assimilable by the body. Thus, in spite of the fantastic diversity of organic foodstuffs¹ swallowed by different living species, the end-products of digestion are always the same : the ingested fats get transformed into fatty acids and glycerol, the proteins break up and yield their amino acid components, the carbohydrates get converted into glucose, levulose and galactose. It is only the solution of these limited products along with water, mineral salts and vitamins, that is allowed by the body to pass through the lining membrane of the intestine into blood-vessels or lymph spaces and then transported and made available *via* streams of internal fluids to the cells of the various tissues.

Thus the predatory behaviour of living bodies that we see exhibited everywhere is an accidental global phenomenon not at all binding in the very nature of life but fortuitously imposed on embodied existence by a provisional disability of the organism's body that can very well admit rectification if only the proper approach is made.

For all the elements like nitrogen and oxygen, carbon and hydrogen are available in the inorganic realm and the source of energy in ample abundance is there in the shining sun. Cannot then the living body manage to synthesize out of these available primary elements all that it requires for its vital processes ? Has not Mother Nature made any attempts so far that may point us the way of approach ? Has not embodied life ever struggled in the aeonic march of evolution to emancipate itself from this binding necessity of food intake ?

(*To be continued*)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ "Some invertebrates can digest substances indigestible to vertebrates. For example, the clothes moth can digest hair and wool, which are completely resistant to vertebrate digestion. Cellulose can be digested by many invertebrates .. The South African honeyguide, a relative of woodpeckers. ., is known to eat pure wax as well as honeycomb. Digestion of wax is almost unique in the animal kingdom." (K. Schmidt-Nielsen, *Op. cit.*, pp.7, 9).

THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON LANGUAGE

(Continued from the June issue)

XI

THE VICTORIAN ERA

THE fifty years, from the date of Wood's famous despatch which in the last issue we summarised in broad outline till the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon at the beginning of the present century, saw the educational system under British rule taking its familiar shape. Without going into needless details, we might outline here the main lines of its development, in so far as they are relevant to the question of language.

The most important point to note is that, in spite of the clear directive given in that despatch, little was done by the state to foster the growth of vernacular languages. English dominated the scene, both as a language of culture and as the medium of instruction. This, paradoxically enough, was an indirect if not wholly unforeseen result of the administrative measures suggested in the despatch itself.

One of these measures was the setting up of universities, first in the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and later in other centres like Allahabad and Lahore. These universities were simply examining bodies, concerned primarily with the grant of diplomas and degrees to candidates sent up by affiliated colleges and recognised schools. The despatch had no doubt recommended that in order to "encourage the cultivation of the vernacular languages of India, professorships should be founded for these languages, and perhaps also for Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. A knowledge of the Sanskrit language, the root of the vernaculars in the greater part of India, is more especially necessary to those who are engaged in the work of composition in those languages; while Arabic, through Persian, is one of the component parts of the Urdu language, which extends over so large a part of Hindoustan, and is, we are informed, capable of considerable development." But this part of the recommendations was completely ignored and no steps were taken to teach the vernaculars at the university level, except to a limited degree in the university of the Punjab where some provision was made for oriental languages.

One of the main duties of the universities, as examining bodies, was to lay down the standards and the syllabus for their diplomas or degrees. This became a potent means in their hands to control the entire educational set-up of the country. The colleges which prepared their students for the university examinations naturally wanted them to secure good results, and the schools which provided the boys for the Entrance examination of the universities were equally alive to the requirements of this examination. Now, none of the universities prescribed an Indian vernacular

as one of the compulsory subjects for their Entrance test; the Second Language which the school students were to take on a compulsory basis allowed of a choice between a classical Indian or European language, and a modern Indian or European language (other than English). The second alternative might have given some incentive to the study of an Indian vernacular, but the point was settled by the syllabus of the Intermediate examination; here the compulsory Second Language meant, except in Madras, either a classical language Indian or European, or a modern European language other than English. This led in most cases to a more or less perfunctory study of Sanskrit or Persian, just enough to pass the Intermediate examination or, in the case of more ambitious students, a slight acquaintance with Greek, Latin or French which might help in further studies abroad.

The attitude of the universities was shared by the Directors of Public Instruction whom the despatch wanted to supervise the system of aided schools. The despatch had envisaged a system where the schools should be encouraged to use the vernacular medium wherever possible. The system as it actually evolved under the fostering care of European Directors was to relegate the vernaculars wholly to the background and make the English language the chief interest of schoolmasters and their pupils. This, as we have seen, was based on the demands of universities which completely ignored the vernaculars. But little was done in the schools for students who did not want to take a university degree. In the High Schools, English was introduced as a language study at Grade Three, and it was the sole medium of instruction and examination in the four top grades, namely, Grades Seven to Ten. This meant that the students in these schools lost all interest in their mother tongue or any other Indian vernacular after the age of twelve, and concentrated most of their time and energy on acquiring mastery over a foreign tongue seldom understood by any of the women-folk at home. The vernaculars remained the media of instruction in the Primary and Middle Schools. But these Schools, in spite of their growing numbers, were considered as far inferior in status and capacity to the High Schools where English was the main vehicle of instruction. After the Mutiny of 1857, the doors of government service were opened wide to all Indians with a smattering of English and a university degree became a necessary condition for any kind of decent appointment. In the circumstances, the High Schools and Colleges multiplied in the towns and cities and attracted most of the students who could afford an education there. The vernacular schools became the training grounds for those who could not aspire to a better living standard than was afforded by the village or the very lowest rungs in the government hierarchy. The hope cherished at one time of passing on the benefits of modern European knowledge to the mass of the people through their vernaculars was belied by schoolmasters and college teachers who preferred to use the English language both in the classroom and outside.

This brings us to the far-reaching changes brought about, though in an indirect manner, by the new system of education. Generations of students who passed through the new schools and colleges grew up in complete ignorance of the Indian tradition.

Europe, and particularly England, and all they had to offer became the objects of their admiration. They adopted the English speech in their daily conversation among themselves. They took a special pride in being able to recite long passages from Milton and Shakespeare. They had some knowledge of the scientific advances of the time, but what interested them more was the political history of England and the language of freedom in John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Garibaldi and Mazzini became their heroes. Gladstone was the idol of the rising politician. But the majority of educated Indians were weaned away from all politics by the offer of lucrative positions under the Government and the prestige that these implied.

Nevertheless, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the new generations of men were intensely patriotic at heart. They had seen the rising of 1857 end in disgrace and they were slowly getting conscious of the stranglehold that the British occupation meant. Moreover, the posture of superiority adopted by the ordinary Englishman in India was no less galling than the obvious disparities of pay and prestige in the Government service based solely on grounds of colour and race. The government servants could seldom protest, because they had signed the bond. But even they could help create a new nation. Many of them turned their attention to social and religious change, and there was a spate of reformist movements in the latter half of the nineteenth century, sponsored and initiated by the new educated class. A small section took to politics and there began, with the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885, a new kind of political agitation. It may be of interest to note in this connection that the Congress owes its origin to a circular letter addressed by its founder, Octavio Allan Hume, to the graduates of Calcutta University. But perhaps the greatest thing that the new intelligentsia did was to create a new literature in the vernacular tongues.

During the earlier phases of the controversy over the education of Indians, one of the schemes that received some support from the authorities has come to be known as the Downward Filtration Theory. The idea in brief was that the Government should concern itself with the education of a handful of Indians belonging to the higher classes, give them all that was best in western culture, through the medium of the English language, and rely on them to pass down in course of time to the rest of their countrymen the advantages of the knowledge they had acquired. This theory never obtained official recognition, but the soundness of the idea became apparent during the period we are now surveying. There soon arose among a section of the educated class a strong desire to enrich their mother tongues with their new acquisition. The results were stupendous. The vernacular languages, which at the beginning of the century could hardly show anything more considerable than some old poetry, mostly of a religious nature or of a highly stereotyped or artificial character, suddenly abounded with all manner of writing, in prose and verse. Much of this writing was imitative in style and subject matter of the new learning from the West. And not much of it was actually read by the English-educated class; it is the glory of Indians woman-kind that they kept it alive. Nevertheless, the impact of the new literature was as-

tounding when the nation awoke to a sense of its destiny in the early years of the present century. Wood had failed to create schoolmasters who would educate their pupils through the vernacular medium. But he did not fail to give an instrument in the hands of the nation that was to revolutionise it in the future.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

For D. H. L.

HAVE you become your love
Entering portals intertwined
To burn in heavily
Anticipated time
A bliss of worldly adoration ?

No faulty hope
Suffices questioning reply.
Only Olympia as bride
Provides quietus to the pagan cry.

MARILYN WIDMAN

WHOM GOD PROTECTS

THE LIFE-STORY OF A SPIRITUAL ADEPT

(Continued from the June issue)

23

THE very sight of the wonderfully handsome features of the Avadhuta, surcharged with a great love for all, had softened the hardened heart of the Bhairav today; later when he felt the pure touch of his hand all the baneful accumulations of his mind and heart were swept away. Controlling his emotions with an effort he said, "A blind man myself, in the false garb of a Guru I have so long guided simple-hearted men, who became my disciples, I have led them into blinder alleys, from darkness to greater darkness. No one can become a Guru just by thinking himself to be one; only when the Divine reveals himself and sanctions it, can one become a real Guru—this I understand very well now. I, all these days,—” he could not continue any further; choking with the surging emotions in his heart he bent down and placed his head on the Avadhuta’s feet.

Arka embraced him fondly and, making him sit beside him, said, "You are as old as my father, may a father’s affection be always on me. In the journey of life such mistakes are very natural. Perhaps it happens to all men. From the very beginning I have known how the *milieu* and the ordinary usages of one’s surroundings influence us and in what a remarkable manner; so I cannot consider this as a great fault of yours. Our meeting has become possible because I believe, nay, I am sure, that you have been touched by the Grace of the World-Mother. This touch has at once freed you from your ailment and is leading you into a fresh path of action—you are, in a word, reborn. Just now all you have to do is to be quite well and strong and remain firm here; I shall come again at the proper time. Let all the money remain with you for the present, I shall send Loknath to you soon. I am one soul with him, you will be happy to know him. In the matter of this wealth please remember that his decision is mine too. He is a great selfless *tyāgi* and has been designated by the Mother of the Worlds to do a very noble work. Have no worries at all, let nothing disturb you. Now, allow me to depart as I have something very important to attend to. I repeat, I shall come again to your ashram."

It was close upon midnight. The boat was ready and the Avadhuta, exchanging good wishes with all, returned that very night. The Bhairav could in no way detain him. Then, disregarding all advices from others, he came to the river to see the Avadhuta off. It seemed he had fully shaken off his illness. As soon as the boat was out of sight he felt a great emptiness in his heart. Slowly he became fully aware that he

had been truly reborn within these few hours. His disciples, who were there then, were no less astonished to see the change that had come upon him. One who had been suffering for so long, quite bed-ridden, unable even to sit up, was not only standing and walking about but had even walked up to the river and returned unaided. Wonder was piled upon wonder when the Bhairav with a deep affection said, "Friends, know that from now I am no longer your Guru. The Great Soul who has just been here, by the command of the Supreme and in his own right, is the Guru of us all. You have only to look at me to realise what his power is. He has not only freed me from my illness but has delivered me from all my sins, my mind and heart are totally cleansed of all sternness, craving and low depravity." He was choking with emotion and could speak no further.

All who were there passed the night where they were, talking about the Avadhuta. No one entertained any thought of sleeping during the short hours of darkness that still lingered.

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The Avadhuta returned to Parvati's ashram, intending to relieve her of all anxiety. He found Loknath waiting for him.

Addressing Loknath, he said, "In this, too, the hand of the Divine can be discerned. The hour of your fulfilment has come." Then he embraced him. After this greeting they sat down to discuss matters. In the course of their talk, the Avadhuta came from the story of Karali Bhairav to his own life and acquainted Loknath with all about his own birth and life. When he finished, he pointed out, "Now you can understand how man works and boasts of his own accomplishments, but he hardly ever knows who brings it all about."

It is probable that Loknath did not hear these last words, crowded as his mind was by his own thoughts, engrossed in inner questions and comments: "Who is this person, who is able to unfold his own life-story to another in such a simple and friendly manner? Amazing is this man who has come amongst us with a countenance resplendent with compassion! Every word he utters, every movement he makes, every action he does, seem to come from a region far above the world, as if the Divine Shakti incarnated had come to show us the way and fulfil all."

Observing Loknath deep in his own musings the Avadhuta said, "Come, let us now discuss the work that is facing us." He told him how the immense fortune had come into his hands as a gift from the Divine. He mentioned that from now on more money would flow in, there would no longer be any need to go and collect it from elsewhere: The work of welfare would be far-spreading. It would grow vaster and vaster and in the process much of disappointment, hate, envy, unhealthy rivalry, ill-repute and good repute, truth and falsehood would appear on the way and all would have to be endured and tolerated with an equal heart. These were the difficulties on the surface, the inner ones would be far more complex and persisting and must be clearly

detected, quite in advance, or else the results might be disastrous. The forces of action are intimately intertwined with the forces of reaction, however vast or beneficial the work undertaken might be. In Nature's field of action no work with an aim in view can be continuously good and favourable. In the very central power of action in manifestation is the seed of destruction, that in its own natural manner of sprouting is the cause of disharmony, bringing disruption and destruction in its wake. Lastly he explained how either by compelling one's own ego to disappear or by attuning it to the universal consciousness and thus bursting the bubble, one can avoid undesirable reactionary consequences.

After explaining all these intricate truths of principles, he said, "Those, who are caught in the whirlpool of action, imagine that the result and aim of the work are due to their own efforts. They cannot avoid the tarnishing influence of egoism."

In this way the Avadhuta, it seemed, took the role of Nature to bring to a focus the necessary circumstances and planted the seed in Loknath to fashion him into the central figure of a huge organisation. Of course the wheel of action had already begun to turn sometime before, now the favourable circumstances for its growth and expansion appeared, giving Loknath the strength to act in full vigour.

Finding a suitable opportunity, Arka came with Parvati to the ruins of the ancient temple of the Kapalik and told her all about his birth and life. Then he appraised her of the affair of the previous night relating to Karali Bhairav in all details. Parvati listened to everything in absolute silence, as if she were merged in a deep trance.

When she was herself again, Arka said, "You see, Parvati, however astonishing my life-story may appear to you, I feel that there is much that is going to happen in my future life, a great deal more remarkable, and I can quite clearly discern what it presages."

Parvati said, "The way in which you are guiding us indicates clearly to me the amazing manner in which the Divine acts. I can only think of that. I cannot speak about all men, but it seems that He is at play with some special instruments, with the lives of some chosen persons."

He said, "Amazing is his Lila, Parvati ! And it is not only with a few but with all men that He acts, and He moves them as His pawns in the great game of creation, directing all in His own way that we call fate. Who can avoid His Will ?"

"May I see the bejewelled yantra found in the casket of Lakshmi that you spoke of ?" asked Parvati.

"Of course," said Arka, "but it will also be a difficult test for you. Firstly, you are a woman, then this priceless yantra is a thing of great wonder—the very sight of it is the fruit of a great good fortune, the result of one's own good deeds. Its attraction and power are so wonderful and inescapable that the acquisition of that power cannot be had even in exchange for a large kingdom. When it has come to me now, probably you will be tempted to possess it. But its possession is beset with great dangers, for it is a yantra, mighty and divine."

Parvati said, "Since the hour of test is not near yet, then let it be. But tell me, what are you going to do with it ? More, what is the great danger in possessing it ?"

Arka said, "I believe this yantra is a very powerful instrument of a sadhak of a very superior order of Tibet, who is a worshipper of Tara. This yantra is his very life, a priceless thing to him. I think it must have been stolen from him and brought into this country and later fell into the hands of the Kapalik to destroy him. I suspect he did not even know how to use it but was attracted to it by his greed, he was able to retain it for eight days only. Who knows if it was not this yantra's influence that brought about his death on the very day of his realisation ? Karali Bhairav, too, was on the point of dying, and I have no doubt it was due to the influence of this yantra."

(To be continued)

PRAMODE KUMAR CHATTERJEE

(Translated by Kalyan K. Chaudhuri from the Bengali)

THE TRAGEDIES OF AESCHYLUS

(Continued from the May issue)

WHAT strikes us first in the character of Prometheus is his godlike patience and his strength to suffer. Not one exclamation of pain comes out of his lips while he is being nailed by Kratos and Bia (Might and Force), while Hephaistos can bear it no more as he complains, "Thou seest this sight that tortureth mine eyes?" But Prometheus remains calm and does not utter a single word until Hephaistos and the two Attendant Daemons are gone. With this dumb patience eloquent with meaning, such a strength and determination shines forth that at once all of Zeus' splendour and might sink to insignificance. And when he starts his invocation, the entire universe seems to echo and re-echo the dynamic pulsations of a majestic pathos in each of his words :

Thou holy, Sky, ye swift and wingèd Winds,
And River Founts, and laughter of the seas
Innumerable : Thou, Mother of all these,
Earth, and thou Sun that seest all things, see
What things, being God, the Gods have wrought on me !

Years seem to pass on as he goes on suffering, and thus the movement changes, as he says,

In what long tortures, on and on
Through myriad years I agonize..

Being himself a god, he knows all that has been, all that is, and all that is yet to be; the rhythm again changes—probably to indicate again the passing of the years, as his soliloquy goes on,

And yet what say I ? Clearly I foreknow
Each pang that cometh : no unlooked-for blow
Can touch me ever, and he who knows for sure
His fate doth best to chafe not, but endure,
One thing being certain, that no victory
Is his who wars 'gainst That which needs must be.

This clearly shows that even Prometheus has no power to transgress the law of *drasanti pathein* (the doer shall suffer) : because, after all, he has broken the law, has

offended Zeus and Moira, and he must suffer. It is only in the end that Zeus can overrule and make good, just as he does with Io and Orestes, which we shall see very soon. He explains the cause of his suffering too :

Hid in a rush's heart I sought, I found,
The fount of fire, to man a shining seed
Of every art and a great help in need.
Behold the sin for which I suffer high
Enchained, with piercèd heart, beneath the sky !

Suddenly he senses a benevolent presence approaching him and he says,

Ha !
What music, what fragrance invisible come to enfold me—
From god is it wafted, or man, or some being between—
To the rock at the world's end ? Oh why, except to behold me
In torment, broken ? What else can these things mean ?
Regard me then in chains, the suffering god,
The foe of Him who reigns, foe fore-designed
Of all by whom the floor of Zeus is trod—
So greatly have I loved mankind.

This word *love* and the "fragrance invisible" that comes and enfolds him—all together so soothe and soften him that the very fount of love gushes out of his godly breast and his speech thrills us with a limpid lyrical spell :

Ah me !
A rustling in the void I hear,
As of great birds, and the air sings
With a soft beat of rippling wings.
All that approacheth makes me fear.

And the Daughters of Ocean enter, singing and comforting him :

Nay, bethink thee not of ill :
It is Love upon the air,
With a racing of quick pinions, bears us on...

The "beating of the iron, clang on clang, / Through their deep caverns echoed from afar; / And a great pity shook them, and they sprang / Unshodden to their tempest-wingèd car".

And Prometheus in ever the same majestic tone, now touched with an affectionate lyricism, tells them,

O brood of Tethys—great is she
 And many-childed seed of him
 Whose sleepless river laps the rim
 Of the wide world, come gaze on me,
 Daughters of Ocean; look on this
 My bondage, how I guard amain
 The utmost crag of the abyss,
 A watch-tower of eternal pain.

Prometheus, who knows the secret to save Zeus from being driven off his throne, draws his power from this knowledge, and hopes,

That Lord of Bliss shall need me yet—
 I swear it—in my chains and woe,
 To warn him of the doom I know
 Shall break his sceptre and o'erset
 His glories. And no wizardry
 Of honeyed words shall then assuage
 My purpose, no tempestuous rage
 Subdue it, till he set me free
 From this foul bondage, and atone
 In tears the evil he hath done.

We cannot help admiring him for his love for man, as he says,

...But of man, unhappy man,
 He had no care : he counselled the whole race
 To uproot, and plant a strange brood in his place.
 And none took stand against that evil mind
 Save me. I rose. I would not see mankind
 By him stamped out and cast to nothingness.
 For that he hath laid on me this bitter stress,
 This pain which maketh weep those that pass by.
 Mercy I had for man; and therefore I
 Must meet no mercy, but hang crucified
 In witness of God's cruelty and pride.

But slowly, in spite of his lofty pride, Prometheus verges towards an attitude of resignation, as he says,

...I will drain unto the lees,
 Alone, my cup of fortune, till the pride
 Of Him who reigns in wrath be satisfied,

Strangely enough, in his own fit of pride it is he who accuses Zeus of pride !

Prometheus soon narrates all that he has done for mortal man. This is a compact yet telling history of man transmuted in the all-seeing vision of the poet. I cannot help quoting a few lines from this passage where Prometheus tells,

...Hear now the sorry tale
 Of mortal man. A thing of no avail
 He was, until a living mind I wrought
 Within him, and new mastery of thought.
 I tell you, sight they had but saw in vain;
 Hearing, but heard not; as shapes wax and wane
 In dreams, aimless for ever and confused,
 They moved; no binding of the clay they used,
 No craft of wood, to build in the bright sun
 Their dwellings; but like feeble ants wind-blown,
 Hid them in crannied cares, far from the day...

Here Prometheus is the very symbol of human progress, symbol of the conquest of mind over matter, symbol of the inspiration behind man's adolescent intelligence seeking its independence from the unfaltering guidance of the Supreme.

He is also the symbol of knowledge for Man, when he further says,

Then Number, Number, queen of all the arts,
 I showed them, and the craft which stroke to stroke
 Added, till words came and the letters spoke;
 The all-remembering wonder, the unworn
 And edged tool, whence every Muse is born...

Or when he says,

...And beneath the ground
 I saw what hidden helpers could be found
 For man's life—bronze and silver, iron and gold—
 Who thought of them before me? Who had told
 Their names? I wot, none other. Ye have heard
 A tale that can be summed in one brief word:
 All that of art man has, Prometheus gave.

Next enters the pitiable figure of Io, the Argive priestess of Hera, connected with marriage, fertility and childbirth; Io was the Argive name for the Moon, hence she is horned, and she is a consort of Zeus, driven across the sky for ever and ever, a hunted thing—like Cassandra whom we shall presently find in the *Agamemnon*. She groans as she enters, almost crazy,

Ah, Ah !
 Again some gadfly blade
 Stabs me. Ah, ghost of earthborn Argos, back !
 Hold him, O Mother Earth ! I am afraid.
 There with a thousand eyes
 He comes...on, on. Crafty he is and black,
 And though he is dead, long dead, he never lies
 Quiet in the grave. He still will rise, will rise,
 Up from the dead, a bloodhound, hunting me
 Along the sands, beside the starving sea.

Io, another apparent symbol of heaven's injustice, is introduced most probably to intensify the impression of injustice already so well exemplified in Prometheus. Towards the end of the sad story of her life and of her curse that she tells the Chorus, the reader's heart grows heavy with pity as she narrates,

Then straightway on my shape distortion fell,
 And on my mind; and hornèd, as you see,
 Stabbed by the gadfly's poisonous agony,
 A maddened beast to the sweet stream I fled,
 O Kenchreae and Lerna's fountainhead,
 Craving for rest. And there across my path,
 That earth-born herdsman, Argos, red in wrath,
 Stood watching, with his thousand sleepless eyes.
 Him, an undreamed-of, lightning-swift surprise
 Bereft of life; but still the gadfly's blade
 Stabs, and o'er nation after nation, flayed
 By that unearthly scourge, I work my path.

And naturally the chorus of the Daughters of Ocean can no longer bear it; they cry out,

Ah, God protect me ! Never did I dream
 To hear so strange a tale, a thing I dare
 Not think nor look upon, yet she must bear
 Wrong, cruelty and horror ! It doth seem
 To pierce my spirit like a sword, ice-cold...

Io seems to be much too tired of her terrible burden and she asks,

Why should I seek to live ? Oh, let me go
 Up, on yon piercing precipice, to cast

My body to the winds, and so at last
Be rid of evil ! Better die the death
Now, than live on with pain in every breath.

Young and swift and impatient Hermes enters and scoffs at the hero :

Thou over-wise, thou bitterer than gall,
Flouter of Gods, that mortal man withal
May live, thou thief of fire, give me thine ear !

Prometheus listens to him patiently, then chides him,

Aye, haughty-lipped thy speech, and thy heart brave
With boasting, as befits the Olympian's slave

And further,

My prison chains against thy servitude
I would not change; be that well understood.

Very soon young Hermes' contempt for the hero is touched by admiration as he exclaims :

So proud in chains, what wert thou throned on high ?

Prometheus, bowing his head, admits,

Woe's me !

And Hermes says, even admiringly,

That is a word Zeus knoweth not.

Prometheus replies,

By Time and Age full many things are taught.

Hermes soon gives up his pleadings and says,

Meseemeth I speak on, and speak in vain.
Thou softenest not, thou turnest not again
For all my pleading...

Then in an unusually powerful description of the details—the way Zeus' wrath is going to come down to punish Prometheus further—Hermes speaks on in a thunder-like voice,

Hearken now, if yield
 Thou wilt not, what a storm, what wave threefold
 Of unescapèd ravin shall be rolled
 Upon thee. First, this gulf of jagged rock
 The Sire shall rend in twain with thunder-shock
 And fire of lightning. Deep shalt thou be thrown
 Below the earth, gripped by an arm of stone;
 Till, when an age-long space of years is past,
 Back to the light above thou rise at last,
 And then—God help thee !—the Sire's wingèd hound,
 The blood-red eagle ravening, wound by wound,
 Shall tear thy giant corse and shred by shred,
 Day after day, unbidden, to be fed
 He comes, and heavy-pinioned shall depart
 Blood-gorgèd from thy gnawed and blackened heart...

When Hermes finishes this description, the chorus request Prometheus to yield at once. But the hero remains unperturbed and replies,

I care not. Let the fire be thrown,
 Two-bladed, curling. Let the sound
 Of thunder and the agony
 Of warring tempests wrack the sky,
 Till hills uprooted from the ground,
 By his wild wind be tossed and riven.
 Let Zeus confound in mingled roar
 The paths of waves upon the shore
 And orbits of the stars in heaven.
 Be mine own body lifted high,
 As Fate's hard eddies turn, and hurled
 To the black void beneath the world !
 Whatever befalls, I shall not die.

Hermes sails away. The chorus remain. Then begins a wild storm. It increases as Prometheus says,

Lo ! 'tis the deed, no more the word !—
 Nearer it cometh; against me

The blast of Zeus in terror strong !
'Tis here.—O Earth, O Mother mine
Most holy, O thou Sky divine,
Whose light is shed on all, ye see
This anguish and this wrong !

A thunderbolt strikes the rock, which descends to the abyss, bearing with it
Prometheus and the Daughters of Ocean.

(To be continued)

PRITHWINDRA MUKHERJEE

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

SEVENTH SEMINAR

20 FEBRUARY 1966

(Continued from the June issue)

II

HOW TO SERVE THE TRUTH ?

THE Mother's message this year, like others of the preceding years, is cryptic and touches at once the need of the hour. It forms a chain in the series of messages given by Her, all having a direct bearing on the amazing phenomenon that is at present being manifested in the earth-consciousness. We cannot therefore take this message in isolation. We need a wider perspective for a fuller comprehension.

This Truth that the Mother speaks of had its initial manifestation in 1956. And the messages that followed showed the path of its manifestation together with its inevitable results. Subtly, imperceptibly that new light grew, took deeper root in the earth-consciousness and became slowly an omnipuissant power of new creation. But together with its descent and manifestation the Darkness grew in apparently the same proportions. Hence the Mother called on us to prepare ourselves to receive it, refusing and rejecting the opposing forces of Darkness. Till now this Light was hovering above us. But now it is with us, because the Mother has hailed its advent in the last year's message. Now it is a permanent part of earth-consciousness, in spite of the resistance of the opposing forces. Her message this year implies its sovereignty over us. It also implies the destiny of the earth and humanity, calling them to surrender to its supreme Will. It indicates also the right way we must take to receive it—not by a strenuous seizure but by a self-giving as a glad, true and candid instrument.

What is this Truth for which the Mother and the Master have toiled so indefatigably for over half a century ? It is not the truth of the gods, nor the truth of religions, nor the truth of the escapist Sannyasin. It is not a way of life merely, or a faith, or a credo, or even a most-deep-rooted belief, concept, ideal or imagination of humanity. It is the sun whose veiled face the Vedic Rishis had glimpsed but could not touch or possess. It was for the Mother and the Master to have called it down by their unimaginable sacrifices, feats no human being could perform or endure. All

of their workings are veiled and beyond our limited understanding. But the fact the Truth is here implies a great and colossal endeavour. This Truth is the Truth of Supermind which alone can effect the radical change of human nature and human conditions. This Truth is the aim of the Mother and the Master and all their actions were seen, judged and carried out keeping this great reality as the ultimate ideal.

How are we to serve this Truth, we who are bound by ignorance, limited by incapacities, and chained by the error of fate and change? This service is not in an outer act, nor in a way of becoming, nor a way of thought. The service lies in our willingness to change radically and entirely. We must be able to respond to its Light, its Consciousness, its supreme Power. We must be able to hold it, channelise it, so that it could become an effective force for our total transfiguration. We must be willing to go beyond our narrow mentality, our habits, our passions, our desires, our small cravings : these are the conditions of the service. For if we did not change our nature, we could not serve it effectively. So, this Light must be at the base and end of all our quest and becoming. Our efforts cannot further our goal, if we have not gone beyond our limitations. For our nature is too stubborn to be transformed by any other lesser agency; Supermind alone possesses the key to this transformation. Thus we start with this power as our aid, our support and conclude with it as our supreme goal.

The most visible way of serving this Truth is to grow aware of it working amongst us, not as a mere intangible light but as something whose touch is flame, whose pressure is joy, whose influence is an everlasting bliss. This would mean that we must go beyond the looming shadow of materialism, of appearances and of human limitations both in act and thought. We must come to recognise our being as a limited instrument, our nature as a yet imperfect jumble of actions and reactions, desires and hungers, cravings and lusts. In other words, we must learn to station ourselves not on our ego, but on our soul and a higher spiritual entity.

Then we must slowly open ourselves to this Light, but not with impatience try to seize it. On the contrary we must allow it to come down into the silent *ādhāra* according to its will, according to the condition and receptivity of our nature. We must always be conscious of its action in our acts, speech and thought; we must become conscious that it is this Power that is working in us and not our little nature. Lastly, we must not imagine that the supramental Truth is a distant and unapproachable reality. For the supramental Truth is the Truth of the Mother and of Sri Aurobindo and once it has taken a firm root in this earth-consciousness as a result of their endeavour, their true work will have an assured beginning and a progressive fulfilment. If we have faith in them, we shall have faith in the Supermind : they are veritable representatives and ushers of this Gnostic Reality on earth and in the life of humanity.

But this does not mean that a mere passive recognition of the Truth is enough. What we need is a living faith born in the soul, a living sincerity in all parts of our being, a total and all-embracing plasticity. We cannot be supramentalised all at once.

It will take a very long time, perhaps several births. But the difficulty of the task must not discourage us. For our joyous faith and the acceptance of this task, in spite of the enormous difficulty, would be themselves a service to this Truth. We must not be discouraged by apparent failings within and without. This rejection of doubt and calculating mentality would be another service. We are now at the gates of the Unknown. We cannot by our limited vision foresee what course would be taken by this Light, what would be its mode of manifestation and expression. But we must have courage to abandon the moorings of our physical mind, our petty reason and give ourselves unreservedly to this great Power. Here is an adventure worthy of a lifetime, rather of countless lives to come. Here is the path of the Unexpected, the Undreamt, the Unseizable.

Appearances may seem grim and foreboding. That is why the Mother is asking us to side with the Truth, to come under its direct control. This gloom and the seeming unpredictableness of the conditions are in themselves sufficient reasons to cling to the Truth and serve it sincerely. This would open out a new way for us, for all those who have shared the adventure and the cross. For those who have risked all would gain all. But those who are calculating, who sit on the shore and waste their time in futile computations and confabulations instead of diving in and coming directly under the sway of the new Power, would not only lose an unprecedented opportunity but perhaps would not even know what they have lost. Let this be not our fate. Surely it was not for such meaningless existence we were born !

ROMEN

III

THE subject of this Seminar is a necessary corollary to the Mother's New Year's Message, "Let us serve the Truth", which naturally leads to the query as to what Truth is and how to serve It.

Needless to say that Truth is one, and that the Divine is the only Truth, though the ways and lines of its manifestation are many. One can serve the Truth in the field of Spirituality as well as in the field of Science and of Arts, as also in their endless divisions, sub-divisions and branches. And through all these we shall invariably arrive at the same source.

One can serve the Truth by one's sincere will and endeavour to grow more and more in consciousness and knowledge; one can serve It by one's deep devotion and love for the Divine; one can as well serve the Truth by offering one's material wealth and money to the Divine, to the cause of the Truth. In fact, every event and circumstance in life can be made an occasion to serve the Truth, to realise and express the Truth. "It is in each and every moment of the daily life that the Truth must be found and practised,"¹ observes the Mother.

¹ *White Roses*, Part I (Enlarged Edition), p. 33.

In order to serve the Truth we must try to be the faithful and docile servants and instruments of the Divine for the victorious manifestation of the Truth in every strand of our terrestrial existence. For this it is necessary that we should gradually grow conscious of the Divine's Will in us and, in a sincere collaboration, silently open ourselves to it so that the Light and Power of the Divine Truth may work unhindered in and through us. We must at the same time, bear in mind this warning of the Mother : "Never mistake your desires for the Truth, nor believe that your personal will is the Lord's Will."¹

And for this it is essential for us to develop the capacity to discriminate between what is truth and what is falsehood, between the divine and the undivine. Accordingly we should try to be conscious of the forces which are at work behind the surface. As a general rule, all that helps to elevate our consciousness and widen our outlook, all that helps to bring us closer to the Divine—to its light and height, peace and presence, harmony and beauty—is moved by the impulses of Truth; in the same way, all that lowers our consciousness and arrests our inner progress and draws us away from the Divine towards ignorance and obscurity springs direct from falsehood. The Mother says, "Those who wish to help the Light of Truth to prevail over the forces of darkness and Falsehood, can do so by carefully observing the initiating impulses of their movements and actions, and discriminating between those that come from the Truth and those that come from the Falsehood, in order to obey the first and to refuse or reject the others."²

One must be careful not to act under an impulse or decide anything in haste, because then one can never be sure whether one is actually serving the Truth or the Falsehood. We should make it a point of habit to step back and reflect awhile before precipitating ourselves into any action or decision or speech whatsoever. "If we allow a falsehood, however small, to express itself through our mouth or our pen, how can we hope to become perfect messengers of Truth ? A perfect servant of Truth should abstain even from the slightest inexactitude, exaggeration or deformation,"³ remarks the Mother.

One important point. We should try to be in a state of constant goodwill and benevolence for all, and compassion and kindness for all the lower creatures including the animals, just as the Divine Himself is All Love and All Compassion for all humanity and for all creation. In fact, this is automatically implied in the service of the Truth when we consider it from its integral standpoint.

In the individual, it is the soul or the psychic being that represents the Divine or the secret Truth. "It is the very nature of the soul or the psychic being to turn towards the Divine Truth as the sunflower to the sun; it accepts and clings to all that is divine or progressing towards divinity and draws back from all that is a perversion or a denial of it, from all that is false and undivine,"⁴ writes Sri Aurobindo. And in

¹ *White Roses*, Part II, p. 36.

² *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 16.

³ *Words of the Mother*, p. 222.

⁴ *On Yoga*, I, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 174.

different individuals the psychic being is at a different stage of development; and through each one the soul seeks to realise something new and express itself in a different mode and line. And hence each one of us has his or her own truth of being.

We should go deep within ourselves, and in a calm concentration try to be conscious of this truth of our being, to know what it is exactly which our soul seeks to realise. To express this inmost truth of our being in all our works and activities, our thoughts and speech, emotions and sensations, rejecting at every instant all that contradicts this truth of our being is, in fact, to be at the service of the Truth. Thus says the Mother, "Whatever you do, whatever your occupation and activity, the will to find the truth of your being and to unite with it must always be living, always present behind all that you do, all that you experience, all that you think."¹

"...the truth we seek," says the Mother, "is made of four major aspects : Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty."² The psychic serves as an instrument of true and Divine Love; the mind in the same way should try to serve as an instrument for expressing the true Knowledge; the vital likewise should be instrumental in manifesting the Power and strength of the Spirit, whereas the physical should serve in expressing a harmonious Beauty of the secret divinity.

One point to which we must be particularly attentive if we wish to serve the Truth genuinely is that in any field of life, intellectual or artistic or cultural, our bent or inclination as also our drive should be to attain a perfection, a greater and fuller perfection rather than a temporary success somehow or other; the latter is more in the nature of a superficial show-off than a true achievement. "The truth of the being is never static," says the Mother, "it is a continual unfolding of a growing, a more and more global and comprehensive perfection."³ Our aim is truth in its perfection and not its superficial appearance.

And for this, we shall have to make deliberate efforts to exceed the narrow limits of our ego-consciousness. Our ego is constituted of all sorts of belligerent elements perpetually at war with one another. The ego personality is a field of complete chaos and confusion, and marked with utter disharmony and division, whereas Truth is a harmonious whole marked with the qualities of spontaneous and unalloyed purity and joy, knowledge and beauty, goodness and humility which are essentially divine.

So we should consciously try to translate these divine qualities in all our ways and movements, persistently rejecting all that is undivine and false, if we aspire to be the sincere servants of the Truth. "The laying bare of each falsehood is in itself a victory—each acknowledgement of error is the demolition of one of the lords of Darkness,"⁴ announces the Mother.

And, at the same time, we should strive to realise the inner harmony and unity, first in all the different parts of our own being and nature by gradually bringing our

¹ *On Education*, p. 4

² *Ibid*, p. 10.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴ *Words of the Mother*, 3rd Series, p. 31

psychic personality in front, and then experience the same universally with all other beings and, through them all, perceive a oneness with the Divine Himself. Thus the Truth can be served in all its aspects—individual, cosmic and transcendental. To achieve this Herculean task what is needed is to undergo a total transformation, a complete reversal of consciousness.

This is certainly not an easy task. We shall have to prepare ourselves in all sincerity for this unique transformation down to the most physical. Perfect purity should be established in all the different parts of our being. Sincerity is, in fact, our base. Only on the solid foundation of a perfect sincerity can the Truth be served.

And, if we are keen on serving the Truth, it is well understood that we have genuine aspiration for this; because in all matters of serious undertaking, aspiration marks the beginning.

Now, it is extremely difficult to bring about a cohesion and unanimity in the various ill-assorted members of our being. Even though some parts may be aspiring for the Light and the Force representing the Truth, there are other parts, mainly in the sphere of the vital, which are arrogant and rebellious by nature. We must sincerely and with perseverance strive to train and educate our vital so as to make it sober and refined, and grow in wideness and power. In the process, we shall meet with innumerable obstacles and barriers of all kinds thwarting our progress. And to cross through them, we must equip ourselves with a stern determination and an indomitable courage. "With the collaboration of the vital no realisation seems impossible, no transformation impracticable,"¹ says the Mother.

Moreover, it is indispensable to have a faith, spontaneous and unwavering, in the Divine, in the secret guidance of the Mother whether outwardly we are conscious of it or not. There must be no room for any doubt or disbelief or depression to creep in. This firm faith which is inherent in the soul is, in fact, our guide.

One factor to which we must be awake, and which can by no means be evaded if we wish to serve sincerely the Truth is that we shall have to endeavour to exterminate totally all animality which has its roots struck deep in our subconsciousness. The subconsciousness must be cleared of all its quagmire that has accumulated in the course of our past experience as well as by way of heredity. This is an extremely difficult and tardy process. We must arm ourselves with an obstinate resolution coupled with an indefatigable patience. We should try our level best, keeping ourselves open to the Mother's Light and Power. Her Grace alone can effectuate the miracle and deliver us out of the crude animality.

It is not possible by one's personal effort alone to walk along the path to serve the Truth. A loving and trustful self-giving to the Mother is essential. In a joyous openness to Her Force and Light and Consciousness we should invoke Her Grace and Love which alone can lead us to the road to Truth and effectuate the much needed transformation. "With the Divine's Love is the power of transformation.... Not

¹ *On Education*, p. 7.

only into man but into all the atoms of Matter has it infused itself in order to bring the world back to the original Truth."¹ We should constantly try to be in a state of quiet receptivity so that the Truth may manifest itself freely and spontaneously in and through us.

And still, all this is by way of preparation only, to make ourselves ready to serve the Truth. Of course, in the present state of our consciousness, a sincere preparation also amounts to serving the Truth.

But in order to rightly serve the Truth in all purity and perfection, it is necessary to rise to the level of the Truth. Remaining at a lower level of consciousness, we cannot possibly think of serving the Truth at Its own divine altitude. At best, we can be sincere aspirants, but not qualified for the service of the Truth in its unbounded and supramental sovereignty. We must be totally liberated from the clutches of ignorance and inconstancy and dark obscurities, and emerge into the plenary light and splendour of the Spirit. It is only when we exceed altogether our narrow ego-sense and totally shake off all animality from our nature and are imbued with the innate divinity, that we are truly eligible for the service of the Truth and can serve It at our true height and depth and wideness of being and consciousness.

On the whole earth, this Ashram of ours is perhaps the only place where one can profitably serve the Truth, if one truly so aspires. The world, in general, is so full of corruption and vilest pretensions that as yet it is only falsehood that thrives there. "...but Truth would still be Truth if it had not even a single follower. The average man is drawn towards those who make great pretensions; he does not go where Truth is quietly manifesting."²

And it is our sacred privilege to be here in the Ashram with the purpose of serving the Truth and preparing ourselves to be the fit instruments and vehicles for the manifestation of Truth, under the direct care and guidance of the Divine Mother Herself. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, by their relentless effort and Divine Power, hastened the Supramental descent and manifestation on earth. And now, with the Light and Power of the Truth-Consciousness constantly at work in the earth nature, the work of transformation has been made much easier, and the moment is most opportune for those who wish to dedicate themselves sincerely for the cause of the Truth, so that the Truth may be victorious and the reign of Truth and Light and Harmony be firmly established here and now, and the Falsehood with its train of ignorance and suffering and misery be eradicated for ever from the face of the earth.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृत (Mundaka Upanishad, Ch. III, I-6.)

"It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood,"³ declared the Rishis of the Upanishads.

¹ *Words of the Mother*, p. 188.

² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

³ Sri Aurobindo's translation: see *Eight Upanishads*, p. 117.

“Nothing, not even the darkest falsehood can stop the ultimate triumph of Truth,”¹ affirms the Mother.

With the full flowering and manifestation of the Supramental Truth-Consciousness as a realising power, the self-government of Truth will be securely founded, and this earth will be inhabited by a superior race, the race of supermen who will be the perfect servants and instruments, messengers and standard-bearers of the Divine Truth. And till that moment arrives let us steadfastly “cling to Truth”.

Let our constant prayer rise in a flaming aspiration to the Divine, in the Mother’s own words : “Lord, give us the strength to reject falsehood and emerge in Thy truth, pure and worthy of Thy Victory.”²

ROSE
(MANJULA SEN)

¹ *White Roses*, Part II, p 12.

² The Mother’s New Year’s Message of 1943.

MARIANNE MOORE

I. HER KINSHIP WITH THE 'IMAGIST' SCHOOL OF POETS

In the introduction to *The Faber Book of Modern Verse* Michael Roberts writes : "For the moment all that the poet could do was to concentrate upon surfaces : in a world in which moral, intellectual and aesthetic values were all uncertain, only sense impressions were certain and could be described exactly. From such minute particulars perhaps something could be built up.... In 1913 a few poets, shocked at the vagueness and facility of the poetry of the day, determined :

- 1) To use the language of common speech, but to employ always the *exact* word, not the merely decorative word.
- 2) To create new rhythms—as the expression of new moods. We do not insist upon 'Free-verse' as the only method of writing poetry... We do believe that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional forms.
- 3) To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject.
- 4) To present an image. We are not a school of painters, but we believe that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal with vague generalities.
- 5) To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred and indefinite.
- 6) Finally most of us believe that concentration is the very essence of poetry.

Edited by Ezra Pound, a number of 'Imagist' anthologies appeared; T. E. Hulme wrote some of the earliest Imagist poems. Amy Lowell, F. S. Flint, H. D., F. G. Fletcher, Richard Aldington, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound himself at one time or another were members of the group, and the later development of the movement appears in the work of Marianne Moore."

T. E. Hulme remarked that "the process of invention is that of gradually making solid the castles in the air". Miss Moore does not build ethereal castles, but she observes the inhabitant of a zoological or botanical garden or of a museum case with a particularity that realizes and solidifies the object.

"The key to a proper attitude toward poetry is a genuine accessibility to experience," as she puts it in "New York". There is much to be said for those who protest that poetry is obscure and vague, that it does not fully and sharply realize the experience. So in her poem called "Poetry" she begins with a disarming admission :

I, too, dislike it : there are things that are important
beyond this fiddle.

While this statement is meant to be taken as literally true, it cleverly prepares for a thorough reconsideration of the terms of distaste. What sort of fiddle is objectionable ?

Reading poetry, she goes on "with a perfect contempt for it" (with no illusions that it is acceptable sight unseen), one finds in it, "after all, a place for the genuine". This "genuine" is the crucial test: the genuine experience, gesture, fact, however odd, small, out of the line of what one usually thinks is poetic, belongs in poetry:

Hands that can grasp, eyes
that can dilate, hair that can rise
if it must.....

These things "are important" not because they are available to one form or another of "cosmic" reference, but simply "because they are useful". The danger is that in poetry their usefulness is obscured, is lost in the verbiage. If "the genuine" is translated into poetry, anything is (or becomes in the translation) poetic; all "phenomena are important". But this does not mean that they will easily be made into poetry; "the result is not poetry" if the poets are only "half-poets". The "raw material of poetry" must be re-formed by poets who are 'literalists of / the imagination'—above insolence and triviality and can present/for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them..."¹

"This is one of the fullest (as it is one of the most persuasive) accounts of the necessities of poetry, as these had earlier been set down by the Imagists. The genuine, what the poet has to originally go on, is spoiled by spiritual faking, by deliberate obfuscation, by distortion for any number of reasons. The true poet will have so correct, so astute a sense of his art that he will be a 'literalist of the imagination'. The objects, the 'raw material...in all its rawness', will persuasively remain, but they will dwell (as real toads) in the imaginary garden—will assume a new reality in both the texture and the structure of the poem, enhancing the original and yet giving us its vitality reshaped." (Hoffman: *The Twenties*).

"Because of her unique effects, we can too easily overlook her artistic kinship with Stevens, Pound, Eliot, and Williams. Yet there is an important family resemblance to them in her exclamatory outbursts, her lyrical ironies, her subtly threaded metaphysical and imagistic argumentation, and her attempts to root her work in concrete observation. Moreover, her emphasis on the details of subhuman organic life makes her poetry alive with symbolic inwardness. Sometimes her famous 'imaginary gardens with real toads in them'—her figure for poetic creations—are very close to Blake's tiger-haunted forests." (Rosenthal)

(To be continued)

C. SUBBIAN

¹ Miss Moore's note says that the words "literalists of / the imagination" are from *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1897) by Yeats and that Yeats is speaking here of Blake.

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

NEWSLETTER

No. 7.

July 1966

1. Programmed Learning

If any one thing became absolutely clear at the National Programmed Learning Conference and Exhibition at Loughborough, England, it was that the term Programmed Learning is too narrow to encompass all media and techniques that today fall within its scope. The age of educational technology is upon us and programmed learning is one important facet of this new and exciting discipline.

Perhaps the greatest advantages of programmes are the flexibility of the worksheets and their use and their ability to allow the teacher sufficient freedom of action to use schemes normally unworkable in today's crowded class-rooms.

One of the chief speakers of the conference, Mr. H. J. Edwards, H.M.I., specifically mentioned the Dalton Plan which could, he said, enjoy a renaissance as a result of the availability of programmes. The Dalton Plan is very similar to the method with which we have been experimenting in our Free Progress Classes whereby the students choose the Worksheets (Programmes) of the subject they wish to study, only approaching the teacher when they are in need of special guidance or advice.

The Department of Information and Research has for some time been interesting itself with research into some programme problems, especially when testing and assessing the ability of students to react to certain forms of worksheets which have an ecological significance—where one subject relates to another subject in environment and purpose.

2. The Value of Examinations

There is increasing concern being shown for the very real problem of the true value of examinations. Psychologists have made considerable contribution in the last fifteen years to opening up this subject which for too long has been regarded as taboo. Mr. Furneaux, Director of the research and statistics group of the Inner London Education Authority, says : "The particular contribution that the psychologist can make in the study of examinations is to tease out what the objectives of the examination should be, what methods should be used and how the methods can be evaluated to see whether they are effective."

Psychology has revealed some very pertinent questions on the subject of examination value, especially with reference to the way different types of students react to the same examination. There is enough evidence to show conclusively that an examination which is measuring one thing in an introverted student may be measuring a

different thing in an extroverted student. In considering effective systems of examinations or tests, the examining body of the school authority or perhaps merely the class teacher has first of all to decide exactly what the examination or test is for in a thoroughly realistic and deliberate way. Then they must decide exactly what it is that a particular examination paper should measure—knowledge, ability, comprehension, critical assessment or whatever. Having decided what should be measured they must take account of what techniques are available for making this particular kind of measurement and choose the appropriate one only. Finally one has to be sure that the papers chosen are actually doing the job for which they are intended.

3. *English as a Second Language*

Apart from the very obvious fact that English can claim its place among the many languages of this sub-continent as a language of India, there is the question of its membership in the cultural and scientific international. It is hardly feasible to expect any student who pretends to an education at all to be satisfied with anything less than a good working knowledge of English by the time he completes his studies. He knows, early in his school life, that no country today can regard itself as isolated from the economies of other countries, and that any job which holds the possibilities of advancement must reach out towards the demands of international economy.

The problems of a second language are to be found in almost all the developing countries that are today bent on progress. A good example that could well parallel that of India is the energetic nation of Israel. Gideon Cohen, writing in the Israeli magazine *Ariel*, says :

“...the fact that most Jews outside Israel live in English-speaking countries, has made English a ‘natural’ choice, though other languages might have had their claims in the past. If one were to ask a young Israeli what were the problems he encountered during his formative years or even later, when learning a trade or studying for a profession, he would almost certainly mention his struggle with the English language.

“Every Israeli child must learn a foreign language, starting from Grade 6, at the age of eleven. For mainly historical reasons, the language most widely taught is English, though some schools teach French, adding English as a second foreign language at a later stage in high school. Educational television to be introduced this year will include programmes for teaching English.”

4. *Sixth Form Studies and Specialization*

The dispute, in England, over comprehensive schools has recently overshadowed the no less vital problems concerned with the academically gifted, says W. D. Halls, tutor in comparative education, Oxford University Department of Education. Whatever the secondary school structure, the functions at present largely fulfilled by the grammar school sixth form will still have to be carried on. A minority of young people need to be prepared for higher and further education, the learned and semi-

learned professions, and middle grade occupations in industry, commerce and the public services. Yet the unresolved issues concerning the sixth form are numerous. They include the now threadbare topic of specialization, the function of G.C.E. A-level examinations, the provision of new courses, and the methods of work appropriate to young people. The discussion about the narrowness of sixth form education has now lasted for a generation of grammar school pupils. It remains true that, on the whole, sixth formers devote three-quarters of their time to two or three subjects only.

5. *News—Malawi*

The University of Malawi—Africa's newest until the University of Zambia opens its doors shortly—is just beginning its third term. Hardly six months since its Chancellor, Prime Minister Dr. Banda, delivered his inaugural lecture, the framework has been established and, with the recent promise of substantial financial support from the British Government, plans for the future are going ahead.

6. *News—Austria*

Between 40 and 50 countries will be represented at the "Second International Conference of Schools, Colleges and Universities in which Esperanto is Taught," to be held in Graz, July 23 to 28, 1966.

7. *News—Britain*

Routine business of the world of 2100 A.D. may well be run by a population of computers chattering to one another in Basic English, said Professor J. A. Lauwerys, professor of comparative education at the University of London Institute of Education, when addressing a meeting of the Commonwealth section of the Royal Society of Arts last month. Professor Lauwerys said that the demand for English was stronger than ever before in all newly emerging countries such as the U.S.S.R. and China. The use of basic English would strengthen links between countries of the Commonwealth and help the flow of ideas between them.

8. *Thought of the Month—What is culture ?*

In *The Human Cycle* Sri Aurobindo touches on a definition of culture in the opening lines of Chapter Ten thus :

The idea of culture begins to define itself for us a little more clearly, or at least it has put away from it in a clear contrast its natural opposites. The unmental, the purely physical life is very obviously its opposite, it is barbarism; the un-intellectualised vital, the crude economic or the grossly domestic life which looks only to money-getting, the procreation of a family and its maintenance, are equally its opposites; they are another and even uglier barbarism.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT

SADHANA

It's the little things that send me round the bend—
Tho' I try to keep my 'pecker' up—no end !
While I'm doing all I can,
To help the Divine Plan,
Life is filled with mocking laughter, from a fiend.

It's the little things that drive me 'up the pole' !
And suddenly I'm in a deep dark hole...
But if they try to keep me down,
I just leap right up and clown,
And I find I'm one step nearer to the goal.

It's the little things that send me 'off my nut' !
And there I am—back in the same old rut.
But they'll never keep me there...
For I'm soon back in new air,
And all their nuisance-plans have just gone 'phut'.

It's the little things that fill me with All-Bliss—
That Eye, and Smile, and Touch, and Heavenly Kiss.
Then I know I'm on Her Stair...
And I'm darn well staying there,
After all, that's what I'm here for, *only thus*.

LEENA