

MOTHER INDIA

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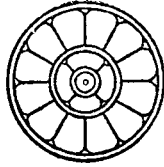
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

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Vol. XX

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"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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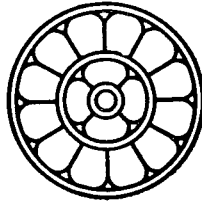
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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Nobody knows the exact truth of things here and each one speaks as if he knows but in fact nobody knows.

If the truth were revealed one day to all, most of the people here and everywhere would be terrified by the enormity of their ignorance and of their wrong interpretation.

So I advise all to be in peace and to abstain from all judgement. It is the safest.

22-3-1967

SRI AUROBINDO

ON

SPIRITUALISTIC PHENOMENA, OCCULT PLANES, MODERN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, ANCIENT INDIAN SCIENCE, OCCUL- TISTS AND SCIENTISTS, THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

(Some Conversations)

(This is a record of the talks which Pavitra (P.B.Saint-Hilaire, a French disciple) had with Sri Aurobindo in 1926. It was made by Pavitra immediately after the talks and is accurate in substance, though the actual words spoken by Sri Aurobindo may not be exactly the same as here. The matter is reproduced, with slight revisions, from the Sri Aurobindo Circle Annual, 1952, where it appeared under the title : "Talks with Sri Aurobindo.")

APRIL 24, 1926

(The talk runs about spiritualistic phenomena : materialisations, movements, etc.)

SRI AUROBINDO : Are these phenomena really physical phenomena—that is, do they make use of physical matter and are subject to the laws of the physical plane ? With the vital forces alone it is quite possible to act upon physical matter, to move it, etc. and, by compacting this vital matter, to give an illusion of the physical one.

(Pavitra gives an account of the recent mediumistic phenomena studied in Europe : Guzik, Eva, paraffin gloves, materialisation of flowers, etc.

The story is told of the stone-throwing that occurred a few years back in the house in Rue François Martin. Many other stories of similar manifestations are mentioned.)

SRI AUROBINDO : These phenomena are obtained with the assistance of vital forces of not a very high order. And that is why the morality of the mediums is often lessened when they fall under the control of such entities. It is, however, possible to manipulate by oneself these forces without such danger.

Whenever an allusion is made to the danger of *siddhis*, it is on account of the contact with these lower vital forces. But *siddhis* are not necessarily dangerous. It depends on the nature of the *siddhis* and of the use that is made of them.

The Catholic Church is not quite wrong when it ascribes the spiritualistic phenomena to "devils" ; it is speaking ignorantly but is not far from the truth. One must be very cautious in this matter.

(Pavitra speaks of "The Metapsychic Institute" of Paris, of Dr. Geley and of his

work. Dr. Geley seems to have scientifically established that there is a real self in man above space and time. This gives a strong support to reincarnation.)

SRI AUROBINDO : The real self of man is above the physical manifestations of space and time, but it is not above space and time ; it is not in the "Timeless."

APRIL 28, 1926

(Continuation of the same subject)

SRI AUROBINDO : The way in which Europe approaches the manifestations of the vital plane is wrong and does not lead to more light.

First, it is perfectly possible from the vital plane itself to imitate purely physical manifestations . The fact that an object is seen or touched does not prove that it is really physical. Most of these materialisations, like the materialised animals of Guzik, only succeed in red light. This seems to prove that the forces in action are vital forces which cannot bear white light. If there were a complete materialisation, why should red light be so important ?

When the union is close between the physical and the vital, vital manifestations imitate physical ones. In such a case a wound inflicted upon the vital body has its reaction on the physical.

It is, of course, possible that the higher physical levels are reached and not the lower ones ; that may account for the rapid dispersion of the materialisations.

Then, mediumship brings great dangers. To be a medium is to lend oneself without control to all kinds of beings of the vital plane, more often of the lowest order. These vital beings try to contact the physical plane, to find there willing instruments, to project on it their influence. They are always in search of human beings to make use of them ; this varies from a simple influence to a complete possession. The latter is a fearful danger.

Apart from possession, we must remember that the vital is the plane of desires, and that any work with forces of that plane carries within itself a danger related to these desires : ambition, greed, lust, etc.

Though new facts are thus placed before science, it does not seem to view them in the right manner and to derive more light from them. Light cannot be reached in the way now followed.

PAVITRA : Is not science bound to travel from the known to the unknown ? And is it not possible to come thus slowly to recognise the existence of realities higher than the physical, and then proceed to the study of the laws of the higher planes ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The knowledge that science possesses is one thing, and not a big one, either; the scientific attitude is another : the capacity of observation, of study, keeping up one's judgment and building a conclusion only after all available data have been gathered, the mind left open to any suggestion, to any clue towards a higher truth. This attitude is indispensable to the occultist also.

But the "criteria" of the physical plane are not valid on the vital. The vital

plane is the world of spell and deceit and power. The methods of modern science are good as far as the physical plane is concerned, they are not acceptable for the higher ones. For these, the ancient method of developing the higher knowledge under the guidance of the Guru has its *raison d'être*.

And even then there are dangers :

1. The danger of falling into the power of vital entities.
2. The danger arising from the very nature of the vital world, of the terrible might of desire. Whenever perfect conditions are not fulfilled the possibility of a fall becomes very great.

PAVITRA : Actually, is the mass of humanity able to accept a knowledge which is not purely mental ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It may be that it would not accept such knowledge.

B : The progress of science is mostly due to a few highly gifted men, who were working by intuition, checking afterwards the truth of what they had perceived.

SRI AUROBINDO : The dangers I was speaking of just now are not only met with in Yoga. In the case of spiritualism, the phenomena are due to vital entities taking possession of vital remnants of dead people and of their floating thoughts. They assume various names which they take from the consciousness of the audience, not always the surface-consciousness, very often the collective subconscious. They can even bring out facts unknown to those present, but it does not prove anything.

Why in India are *siddhis* dreaded by those who aim at high spirituality ? It is because of this double danger.

It is truly possible to develop certain powers without being overcome by them : when one rises high enough in the truth, *siddhis* offer themselves without the same risk. But even then care must be taken.

MAY 1, 1926

(The subject is Mongolia and China. Characteristics of the Chinese : the Chinese are material and strongly intellectual.)

Books of Ossendowski (Men, Beasts and Gods) and of St. Yves d'Alveydre (Mission de l' Inde), about Mongolia and the mysteries of Central Asia. Both authors speak of a great secret community of sages and adepts who are living in an underground city somewhere in Tibet. They are said to preserve all the wisdom and knowledge of the lost civilisations of Atlantis and others.)

SRI AUROBINDO : These writers, like many other "clairvoyants" who make similar accounts, do not know how to distinguish between the physical and the vital worlds. They mistake for physical realities the scenes, happenings, beings, etc. which exist only in a higher plane.

(Pavitra gives another instance of a Chinese traveller in Tibet who, in a very isolated and lonely place in a high and remote valley, found a great monastery, the adepts of which had solved the problems of life and death and were powerful occultists. Many of them were Chinese and Tibetan, but there were also Indians and several Europeans.)

SRI AUROBINDO : There is nothing very strange in the existence of a monastery in a high valley of the mountains, but the presence there of many Europeans is very improbable.

A similar case is that of a Christian Sadhu who will come down very soon—and naturally—to christianize the world. And there are many other similar instances.

(The talk comes next to what makes the characteristics of a race. It is stated that physical heredity is not sufficient to account for the similarity of characters, ideals and tendencies.)

SRI AUROBINDO : The main factor is the fact that “souls” of a certain type are attracted to a definite race and take bodies in it. This gives a first tendency towards the similarity you are speaking of.

MAY 5, 1926

(Continuation of the same subject)

SRI AUROBINDO : The pages you have shown me, containing an account by a Chinese traveller of his discovery of “The Temple of Life” in a Tibetan valley, are far from convincing. No doubt there are in such places monasteries and retreats inhabited by occultists. But the statement does not bear the stamp of truth. This international gathering is fanciful and highly improbable.

A few years ago, a Hindu, who had travelled in these regions of China, Indo-China and Tibet, brought to Europe numerous photos which he was showing with his lectures. His father was from Lahore and had married in Mauritius a Muslim woman. He had no spiritual value and his lectures were only a means to get some fame. Mira¹ saw these photos and recognized two scenes she had seen often in visions. One was the entrance of a cave with two lying statues, leading to a small brook which the sun only reached once a day. Mira had seen monks coming there to fetch water. But the Hindu traveller asserted that the place was totally deserted. What Mira had seen was then either something of the past or a vital scene on a physical substratum. The other image was a monastery in which monks were putting someone into a trance. The traveller confirmed the capacities of the monks for occultism.

PAVITRA : There is a strong desire for the marvellous in the European and still more in the American.

SRI AUROBINDO : This has come as a reaction to the period of a belief in nothing. But this liking for the marvellous is not at all spiritual. There is a complete want of knowledge of the spiritual. One cannot even speak of a search for Truth.

PAVITRA : In spite of this ignorance and this lack of discrimination, have we not here an indication of an aspiration towards a more spiritual state, of something hitherto hidden that tries to come out ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Very likely. Such a thing has happened several times in history. But always ignorance has violently rejected the Truth that tried to come down. The

¹ The Mother at that time was known by this name. (Editor)

last attempt was taken advantage of by the rising Christianity. A certain preparation had been made in view of a coming down of Truth. Christianity failed not only because all religions are bound to fail, but because it was overwhelmed by ignorance. And what was coming down reascended and disappeared...

We are now in a similar condition and the same danger is nearby. Theosophists, spiritualists, and others, did not succeed in placing themselves in the true receptive attitude. If the leading spirits of Europe were in search for the spiritual Truth there would be hope, but it is not so. That is why, in spite of all adverse conditions, the East has accomplished more in spirituality than the West. In the East it is always the highly gifted minds that have turned towards spirituality, and a strong potentiality and a spiritual reserve have thus been created.

MAY 8, 1926

SRI AUROBINDO : In the West the highest minds are turned not towards spiritual truth but towards material science. The scope of science is very narrow, it touches only the most exterior part of the physical plane.

And even there, what does science know really ? It studies the functioning of the laws, builds theories ever renewed and each time held up as the last word of truth ! We had recently the atomic theory, now comes the electronic.

There are, for instance, two statements of modern science that would stir up deeper ranges for an occultist :

1. Atoms are whirling systems like the solar system.
2. The atoms of all the elements are made out of the same constituents. Different arrangement is the only cause of different properties.

If these statements were considered under their true aspect, they could lead science to new discoveries of which there is no idea actually and in comparison with which the actual knowledge is poor.

According to the experience of ancient Yogis, sensible matter was made out of five elements, Bhutani : Prithivi, Apas, Agni (Tejas), Vayu, Akasha.

Agni is threefold :

1. Ordinary fire, Jala Agni,
2. Electric fire, Vaidyuta Agni,
3. Solar fire, Saura Agni.

Science has only entered upon the first and the second of these fires. The fact that the atom is like the solar system could lead it to the knowledge of the third.¹

Beyond Agni is Vayu of which science knows nothing. It is the support of all contact and exchange, the cause of gravitation and of the fields (magnetic and electric). By it, the action of Agni, the formal element, the builder of forms, is made possible.

¹ This statement heralds the later scientific discovery of nuclear energy and even of "fusion" (solar fire). (Editor)

And beyond Vayu is the ether : Akasha.

But these five constitute only the grossest part of the physical plane. Immediately behind is the physical-vital, the element of life buried in matter. J. C. Bose is contacting this element in his experiments. Beyond is the mind in matter. This mind has a far different form than the human mind, still it is a manifestation of the same principle of organisation. And deep below there are two more hidden layers...

That is the occult knowledge concerning the physical plane only. Science is far behind this knowledge.

The Hindu Yogis who had realised these truths did not elaborate them and turn them into scientific knowledge. Other fields of action and knowledge having been open before them, they neglected what for them was the most exterior aspect of the manifestation.

There is a difference between the scientific mind and the cast of mind of an occultist. There is little doubt that one who could unite these two groups of faculties would lead science towards great progress.

PAVITRA : Did science study the first three Tattwas ? What is then Apas ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the element that makes life possible—the desire which is the source of life. Agni is the element which renders form possible and Prithivi is the compacting element which concretises.

K : Water is recognised by science as indispensable to life. Any strong dehydrating agent is an antiseptic : *e.g.*, absolute alcohol, etc.

PAVITRA : But water is not Apas ! What is the relation between the Tattwas and the three states of matter : solid, liquid, gaseous ?

SRI AUROBINDO : These states of matter are the most exterior manifestations of those elements and they are in correspondence with them.

K : Why does Vayu, which corresponds to gas, stand higher than Agni ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Vayu has been identified with gas, but that is a mistake. It is Vayu which permits the exchanges and mutual actions—gravitation, for instance. It is an element of contact.

K : Is Vayu what has been called Pancha Vayu ?

SRI AUROBINDO : No. There is nothing in common. Pancha Vayu represents certain movements in the vital body.

PAVITRA : Do also the five senses correspond to the five Tattwas ?

SRI AUROBINDO : For some of them the correspondence is easy to recognise. We find in Sankhya, for instance, that Apas contains Rasa, the sense of taste. Agni, determining the forms, corresponds to sight ; Vayu, the contacting element, to Touch. As for smell, which has the emission of particles as a mechanism, the correspondence is less evident. It is perhaps more of the nature of a symbol !

PAVITRA : Hearing then is of a higher quality than sight ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Hearing and the sounds that we receive are very little compared to the total possibility of sound. Every manifestation originates by a movement. That is what the Veda meant by the creation by sound, by creative sound, Shabda Shrishti.

K : Shabda is then very different from what we call sound ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The range of our auditive perception is small. There exists in sound something higher, beyond its physical manifestation.

X : Some consider as different in their properties the sounds issued by living organisms and the sounds made by dead matter.

Y : Another classification is given in the Tantras. They divide them into three classes : Vaikari, Madhyama, and Pashyanti.

PAVITRA : Are there five elements or seven ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The ancient seers said that everything was going by seven. But in the present state of evolution there are in play five principles of which perception is possible. But, very likely, there are seven Tattwas.

K : What corresponds to the Tattwas, on the vital plane ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There are evidently correspondences, but we enter into a far different world.

X : Is sensible matter made of Prithivi only, or is it compounded with other Tattwas ?

SRI AUROBINDO : What we perceive contains the five Tattwas ; that means that the five Tattwas co-operated in its formation.

PAVITRA : Reverting to science, it seems that it has followed for the study of the physical plane a method which has given good fruits. Does this method apply to the study of the higher planes ? The method consists of

1. Observation and experiment.
2. Deduction of laws.
3. Building up of theories and hypotheses connecting these laws. There is a twofold object :
 - a) To explain the mechanism of the phenomena and the origin of the laws.
 - b) To suggest other laws and other experiments.

Moreover, there are certain principles that have ruled the scientific mind, such as : not to accept an hypothesis which is not indispensable.

If these methods and principles are not suitable for the higher planes, what modifications are needed in order to promote the study of occult knowledge ? Here also some method is necessary.

SRI AUROBINDO : Without any doubt ! Observation and experiment avail much in occultism. But if, from what is perceived and with no other help, one tried to deduce general laws, the worst mistake would be made. Something else is necessary ; let us call it "intuition". It is a discernment which enables one to assert : it is so, or it is not so ! And it is an indispensable faculty.

Moreover, the occultist does not make any hypothesis. Experimenting and observation confirm what intuition reveals to him. He is liable to error or to ignorance. If what he has is insufficient he must search for deeper and more complete intuitions. He can commit mistakes if he builds false mental constructions around his intuitions. And mind easily makes up for the want of intuition with its own

accretions. It is a very common source of error, and it has led astray a number of occultists.

Anyhow, there are no hypotheses in occultism. After all, scientific hypotheses have no character of truth. Very often it is possible to give two different theories explaining the very same facts. They have then equal value. In such a case, possibilities are more important than truth.

MAY 12, 1926

(The book of Geley, L'Ectoplasme et la Clairvoyance, had been handed over to Sri Aurobindo for reading.)

SRI AUROBINDO : I have no time to read such books . I simply had a glance at the photos ; it was quite enough for me. They show that these are manifestations of vital entities of the lowest order, what the Church calls devils. One has simply to look at the pictures to know what the matter is : the look of the eyes is quite devilish.

Nothing good can come out of this, absolutely nothing. It is just the opposite of spiritual science.

If European scientists enter on this way, the consequences may be disastrous. They try to rend the veil put by nature between the physical and the vital. And if this way is widespread, the result will be a mass possession, a grip that will become stronger and stronger of these beings upon humanity.

Usually these vital beings can act upon man only through his desires and passions, but if one opens himself to them in that way—as the mediums do—they can directly contact the physical plane and their sway can prove to be very harmful. Europe is still protected by the grossness of its mind.

After all I do not think such practices can spread out very much ; occult forces would intervene to stop them. But it is far worse than a scepticism purely negative. Here there is a total perversion and a complete opposition to all that is spiritual. And it would stand in the way of the spiritual evolution of humanity. There is here an atmosphere that kills all that is spiritual ; it is a very repulsive atmosphere and I would not like to have anything to do with all these people.

Dr. Geley can be unaffected ; he is there simply as a spectator. For the medium there is a danger of moral degradation and loss of all moral control. Even on the spectator there is an effect, a kind of cloud is spread in the lowest part of the vital. And under its cover anything can break in !

It is not possible to climb thus from plane to plane. It is impossible, and when the vital is taken by the wrong end one is in for trouble. It is more obnoxious and dangerous than bare scepticism. These vital beings have invented this to get a new point of contact with the physical. Happily Europe is little sensitive, but if they introduced this in India the havoc would be great. The Hindu is

generally so exactly balanced between the physical and the higher planes that at the slightest touch the veil is rent.

PAVITRA : The mediums do not all of them have a bad morality.

SRI AUROBINDO : I do not speak only from the sexual point of view. Their moral comprehension becomes obliterated and they don't know how to distinguish between good and evil.

Besides spiritual knowledge there is the true occultism, of which there are two kinds : the lower, what is called "magic," and the higher.

The higher occultism consists in understanding the nature of planes and the beings who live in them, their relations with the physical plane and how to control them. To all this, spiritual knowledge adds divine comprehension and divine action—the knowledge of the manifestation of Spirit and of its evolution on earth.

But what is done in Europe is neither spiritual development nor occultism. Nothing can come out of these practices, for they can prove nothing—except the existence of the facts themselves. It is exactly in the same position as "spiritualism," which cannot prove, either, that the dead live. These vital beings take upon them the shapes of the dead and they can derive knowledge of facts from the subliminal consciousness of the audience and even from other sources. Nothing is proved or disproved by purely physical experiments.

Similarly, there was a recent article on J. C. Bose's work in which they were trying to prove that his experiments had demonstrated the non-existence of the vital force, that the vital reactions were as unconscious and automatic as those of inorganic matter. Here, also, nothing can be proved, pro or contra. The only way out is occultism, that is, to work with one's own consciousness, to study the reactions and the forces, to learn how to distinguish them, to follow their effects, etc.

K : Are the clairvoyants and those who foretell future in such a bad position ?

SRI AUROBINDO : No, unless they use the same wrong means.

The majority of those who foretell future are open to a certain consciousness of the higher part of the physical and there they can perceive images past and future. It is not the real knowledge which can be attained only by rising very high and which brings us not images but the truth concerning manifestation. Here the knowledge is fragmentary. These people are sometimes interesting, with a very simple mind and a kind of intuition concerning happenings, a kind of psychical tact.

Of course, this also is different from spirituality. One can be a great sage and not be able to foresee the future and one can be a good clairvoyant and be spiritually little advanced. And in truth there is only one thing worth seeking, it is the evolving Spirit.

PAVITRA : The future of Europe is then very dark. Placed as she is between the Church which dogmatizes, official Science which negates and Psychical Research, "work of demons", where can she find the way ?

SRI AUROBINDO : In looking for spiritual Truth; if there was sufficient aspiration for it, it would manifest.

X : But there are no persons in Europe who possess a sincere and unmixed aspiration towards spirituality.

SRI AUROBINDO : How do you know that ? There is at present no leader in the line of spirituality but there are possibilities...

Y : Pavitra is here...this is a case of possibilities ! (*Laughter*)

Z : What are the realisations of Edward Carpenter and AE ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Of AE I know only the poems, not the man. He has written beautiful things, but that does not prove he has a large realisation. With Carpenter, it is somewhat different; but I think he has more of a mental spirituality than a true spiritual knowledge.

In any case it is also something that is necessary. It is not sufficient to have nice ideas about spiritual realisation. What is needed is an aspiration towards the complete change of life itself. And for Europe the obstacle lies in the mind.

PAVITRA

HIS SACRIFICE

His Sacrifice
 Is not in vain.
 His Truth-Consciousness
 Is sun-bright
 Through the Mother, His Channel.
 It spreads the new light,
 Widens its horizon unhindered.
 Day and night
 It grows more deep, more clear,
 Concrete and solidified.
 Let the arrogant deny the Dawn.
 'Once stand mute before Her Presence
 To find the Truth within.
 The Body, seeming the same,
 Burns with a new substance
 Speaking and acting through it.

MOHANLAL

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

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

FEBRUARY 17, 1940

N : It is reported that, apprehending a big row at the Surat Congress and the risk of physical injury to you, your friends made special arrangements with Barin to keep you safe.

SRI AUROBINDO : I don't know about any row. A Mahratta leader—a lieutenant—came to me and asked me whether they should break the Congress. I said, "You must either swamp it or break it." They couldn't swamp it as the other party was strong in numbers. So they broke it. There was no question of any row.

N : People say you had three very intimate friends. One of them is dead, one still alive. We don't know about the remaining one.

SRI AUROBINDO : One was Deshpande who was very intimate : he is dead. Madhav Rao was another : he is also dead. Who is the third ?

P : Kashi Rao ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Kashi Rao was not so intimate.

FEBRUARY 18, 1940

P brought a collection of Nandalal Bose's and Abanindranath Tagore's painting for Sri Aurobindo's inspection.

SRI AUROBINDO (*after seeing one or two of Abanindranath's*) : Obviously, on the whole he is a greater artist than Nandalal.

P : Jayantilal says that in some individual pictures Nandalal has shown greater genius, and he considers him potentially a greater artist than Tagore but his potentialities haven't fulfilled themselves.

SRI AUROBINDO : Abanindranath has more force of imagination and a greater power of expression.

P : Jayantilal says that he doesn't hold the modernist view of art.

SRI AUROBINDO : Art for the mass ?

P : Yes ; he is more aristocratic and conservative. How do you find Gaganendranath Tagore ?

SRI AUROBINDO : He has rather a brilliant fancy than true imagination. Sometimes he is imaginative, but mostly he is fanciful. In Bengal art, these are the three great artists.

P : Gandhi is now going to Shantiniketan. It seems the tie between Gandhi and Tagore will get stronger now. You know that it was through Gandhi that Tagore got Rs. 60,000 for his Shantiniketan. When Gandhi went to Delhi and saw that Tagore had come out there at such old age to collect money, he said to him : "You go back. I will arrange for the money." And he asked Birla to pay the sum. In America people generously donate money for such public things.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes.

N : But in America people who give away their wealth are businessmen.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, but they know something of life too.

FEBRUARY 20, 1940

Dr. Manilal arrived : at 10 a.m. he made *pranam* to Sri Aurobindo and asked about the injured leg, for which he had advised "hanging" from the knee to help flexion.

SRI AUROBINDO : The leg is hanging very well.

M : I have brought some Ayurvedic medicine for you. I got it from a Madrasi lady who is an automatic writer and has great bhakti. She keeps your photo and Raman Maharishi's and goes into trances. In her planchette sittings, some Rishi comes and dictates to her. I asked her about the defective flexion of your knee and she gave me this medicine, which is quite harmless—it is white mustard and *rakta-pillai*. She says your knee will be all right in 6 days. The treatment is prescribed by a Rishi.

SRI AUROBINDO : Very kind of the Rishi.

M : I got a prescription for myself too. It is rice-water and flour of *dal* (lentil) to be poured on the head. It will cure headache and blood-pressure.

After the sponging had begun, Manilal started the talk.

M : The late Gaekwad wanted to have translations of English books into Gujarati. The word "jailor" was rendered *kārāgrihādḥkārī* and the "superintendent of jail" was rendered *kārāgrihādhyaksha*, and so on. Sometimes it is very difficult to understand what is meant. They have to put English equivalents in brackets.

P : But in former times people easily understood such words as *amātya*, *Subā*, etc.

M : Now *Subā* is more easily understood. But when they write *Mahāsabhā* for Congress, I take it to be Hindu Mahasabha.

SRI AUROBINDO : Why ? You can then take Congress as the American Con-

gress. (*Laughter*) In England even, it was not always easy. The word “telegraph”, for instance, was not at all easy at the beginning. By constant use words become familiar. So there is no reason why one shouldn’t have one’s own language.

M : At present Urdu words are much favoured.

SRI AUROBINDO : When we have Sanskrit, why should we leave it and go to Urdu ?

M : What about a word like “Collector” ? Isn’t the Urdu equivalent—*jilla-dhisha*—preferable ?

SRI AUROBINDO : The English word “Collector” is itself far better.

M (*after a while*) : I find *The Life Divine* very difficult, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO : What is the difficulty ? The language or the thought ?

M : It is the language that I can’t follow. Can’t it be made easier ?

SRI AUROBINDO (*smiling and shaking his head*) : Ask the Grace of God to aid you. (*Laughter*)

P : The language is not the difficulty, and it can’t be made any easier. It is the thought that is difficult to follow. Some people find it very easy.

SRI AUROBINDO : Sisir Mitra is one. He found the book very clear and remarked that after reading it there could be no questions left.

P : Quite so. One may not accept the conclusions but one has to admit that all arguments and questions have been answered.

SRI AUROBINDO (*to M*) : You have to wait for some translations into Gujarati then.

M : Translations are even more difficult—if P, who is a translator, doesn’t mind my saying so.

P : No. I don’t mind : I know.

M : I understood P’s original writings better than his translations.

SRI AUROBINDO : Have you read Kant ? (*Laughter*)

M : No, Sir !

P : After Kant you would realise how easy *The Life Divine* is.

N : Don’t worry, M, I am in the same boat as you.

P : Many doctors will be in it.

C : But Rajangam finds *The Life Divine* easy. He says that one shouldn’t read anything else except this book. He is in ecstasies over it.

P : I also find it very clear.

SRI AUROBINDO : One should have a little knowledge of philosophy. What I have tried to give in the book is a metaphysical foundation of Yoga and a new view of life. Any book of philosophy has to be metaphysical. Even then Haridas Chaudhuri writes that some people may consider it dogmatic—lacking in enough argumentative dialectics.

M : But Vivekananda’s books on Yoga are very easy to follow.

SRI AUROBINDO : His books are made from speeches and he speaks of what everybody ought to know.

M : He is a philosopher also.

SRI AUROBINDO : Philosophers may not accept him as one.

N : He doesn't go into the principles of things and the various arguments pro and con.

SRI AUROBINDO : No. (*To M*) As for *The Life Divine*, it is not the language but the thought-substance that may be difficult to follow. If I had written about the Congress in the same language, then you would have understood. (*Laughter*)

P : One has to go on reading and reading. The first reading may be very dry and difficult.

M : Yes. That was also the case with Midwifery. When I first read the book not a single word entered my head. Afterwards, it became my greatest favourite.

SRI AUROBINDO : So *The Life Divine* may take the place of your Midwifery.

N : Another difficulty besides understanding is that of keeping it all in the memory.

SRI AUROBINDO : That is a different matter. It depends on the mind's capacity to retain things. V will understand and remember everything, I suppose.

N : And also add much of his own.

S : A commentator can do that.

SRI AUROBINDO : I read many commentaries on Shankara but not a single one agreed with any other. Some were even contradictory among themselves.

M : To go back to my medicine, will you try it ?

N : The time-limit of 6 days makes me all the more sceptical of its efficacy. Why not first try on yourself the medicine prescribed for your own trouble.

S (*who had come after the medicine had been talked about*) : What has been prescribed for Dr. M ?

N : Rice-water to be applied.

S : Applied where ?

SRI AUROBINDO : On his head. Not for his hair ! (*Laughter*) The medicine has been given by a Rishi through the planchette. It will cure M's headache and blood-pressure.

M : The lady who works the planchette is very devotional and one feels an atmosphere of peace at the place. After the question one puts, she gives blessings of Pata-rangu. That means that one should stop.

SRI AUROBINDO : Did she bless you ?

M : Yes, Sir.

SRI AUROBINDO : After your questions ?

M : Yes, Sir.

N : You asked only one question ?

M : No ; I asked two more, but they are personal.

N : Ah ! Let us hear them.

C : Are they about some future fulfilment ?

SRI AUROBINDO : He is keeping the interesting parts secret.

M : No, Sir. There can be nothing secret from you. But if I speak of them I may lose faith.

C : But does the prophecy's success depend on telling or not telling ? If it is to come true, it will do so in any case.

SRI AUROBINDO : He may lose the consolation of mind which comes from faith in the future.

M : You said last time about a disciple that when he spoke of his experiences to his Guru, the experiences stopped and the Guru said, "The Devil has caught hold of you."

SRI AUROBINDO : I ? I don't remember. (*After a while*) Yes, I remember now. It was about a Sannyasi in the Ramakrishna Mission.

M : Lele also said something like that to you. And you said you would then surrender to the Devil.

SRI AUROBINDO : That was a different matter. I didn't say that to him. I said it to myself : "You have handed me over to the Divine and if as a result of that the Devil catches hold of me, I will say that the Divine has sent the Devil and I will follow him."

By now the sponging was over and Sri Aurobindo was hanging his leg while sitting in a chair.

SRI AUROBINDO (*to M*) : You see, I have kept my promise. I said that as soon as *The Life Divine* was finished I would do it.

M : I am grateful for it, Sir. But it has taken a long time to finish.

SRI AUROBINDO : I didn't know myself that it would take so long.

M : Can't a Yogi know whether a medicine proposed is right or not ?

SRI AUROBINDO : He can, but will he do so ?

M : I already see more bending in the knee, Sir, by the very talk of the application.

SRI AUROBINDO : Not by the talk, but by your very contact with the lady, which I Yogically came to know of. (*Laughter*)

NIRODBARAN

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINO

KNOWLEDGE

Q : The Mother's peace and silence have almost pressed me down from all sides. Could you kindly say why I feel myself beyond the need of even knowledge from above during such a condition ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the condition of the silent self in which there is no need of knowledge or action. 4.1.1936

Q : Is the spiritual knowledge an active thing in itself ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, active in an imperturbable calm. 4.1.1936

Q : At times it happens that if I bring down the knowledge the intensity, depth and height of the silence are diminished.

SRI AUROBINDO : That must be because the mind becomes active instead of receiving the knowledge in silence. 4.1.1936

If the silence is sufficiently intense, then no activity of mind or anything else can disturb it. 4.1.1936

Q : You said that one has to go by stages. While rising above, which stage should I attempt first ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It is not necessary for the parts of the being to understand mentally where they have to rise or determine that by the mind. That is determined by a higher power than the mind and if any knowledge comes, it must be from above or as a part of the ascending movement. 25.2.1936

Q : When one forgets oneself entirely and moves on only in the Mother's consciousness one actually feels whatever one thinks. This statement may appear strange to the limited human mind. But the experiences when sufficiently developed will prove its truth.

SRI AUROBINDO : Do you mean by "one actually feels whatever one thinks" that instead of knowing things only by thought one knows them by direct contact in the consciousness, a sort of concrete spiritual sense ? 31.1.1936

Q : I wonder if you find some ego in the knowledge I am reporting to you. But I did experience distinctly some restlessness in my consciousness while taking it down.

SRI AUROBINDO : There is a shade of ego in the tone perhaps but the substance has not been altered by it. 22-5-1936

Q : I want to know why the tone of the knowledge was influenced by the ego ? Has the ego any strong hold on me ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It is the sense of superiority in passing judgement on others that is still there, subconsciously at least. 23-5-1936

Q : The Mother's Force seems to be pressing strongly on my forehead. Is the resistance at the throat-centre still very strong ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It has evidently diminished—otherwise so much knowledge would not be coming through. 25-5-1936

It is the things which are practically necessary that the knowledge brings at the moment, I suppose. 6-7-1936

It is only the supramental that is all Knowledge. All below that from Overmind to Matter is Ignorance—an Ignorance growing at each level nearer to the full Knowledge. Below Supermind there may be Knowledge but it is not all Knowledge. 20-9-1936

Q : Sometimes it happens that the knowledge takes its start from a certain kind of realisation or a deeper perception. But afterwards it develops and runs to other things which have no connection with the fundamental realisation or perception.

SRI AUROBINDO : Yes, it happens like that. A touch of realisation is enough to set the higher mind knowledge or the illumined mind knowledge flowing.

25-3-1936

Out of one thousand mental questions and answers there are only one or two here and there that are really of any dynamic assistance—while a single inner response or a little growth of consciousness will do what those thousand questions and answers could not do. This yoga does not proceed by upadesh but by inner influence. To state your condition, experiences etc. and open to the help is far more important than question-asking—especially the questions about why and how which your physical mind so persistently puts. 4-6-1936

Q : If I cannot answer my own mental questions what shall I be able to answer ? Are not the inner, subtle and higher questions more difficult to answer ?

SRI AUROBINDO : Certainly they are if you try to answer them mentally. In the things of the subtle kind having to do with the working of consciousness in the sadhana, one has to learn to feel and observe and see with the inner consciousness and to decide by the intuition with a plastic look on things which does not make set definitions and rules as one has to do in outward life. 7-4-1936

Q : About bringing down the knowledge there is a hint : in trying myself to answer my questions some ego steals in.

SRI AUROBINDO : There may be an egoism in making answers according to one's

own mental or vital preference—but there is no egoism in trying to get an answer inwardly from the source of Truth. One may not succeed perfectly because the consciousness is not perfect, but to be inactive and inert out of fear of error is not the right thing. 7-4-1936

Q : Now I feel a great disgust with my mood of answering the questions myself. I seek your permission to give it up in future.

SRI AUROBINDO : How then do you propose to grow in consciousness and knowledge ? Simply by reading my written answers ? Unless something within you responds and sees what I mean and sees it in the right way. But that something can also get answers from within. The only safeguard necessary is that the answers should be placed before me so that if there is anything seriously incorrect it may be put right. 7-4-1936

The only thing necessary is to do the thing without the ego, but to stop doing it because the ego gets in would end in an entire inaction; for the ego can get into any action—into your asking questions from me as well as into your answering them yourself. 7-4-1936

Q : I find that no amount of knowledge and experiences has been able to decrease the strength of my mechanical mind.

SRI AUROBINDO : Knowledge and experiences can change it only if they act within it and occupy it driving out the old things. The other way to get rid of it is to develop the psychic being and its power over the nature. 21-4-1936

What I write usually helps only the mind and that too very little, for people do not really understand what I write—they put their own constructions on it. The inner help is quite different and there can be no confusion with it, for it reaches the substance of the consciousness, not the mind only. 4-6-1936

Q : Usually it is my mind that determines the subject, and the knowledge does its work. But now I don't want the mind to do it, and suggest rather that you fix a subject on which the knowledge may express itself.

SRI AUROBINDO : No. The knowledge and the subjects on which it works have to come from within. 4-6-1936

Q : About the special characteristic of the illumined mind, you wrote, "There begins to be a peculiar light and energy and ananda of knowledge which grows as one rises higher in the scale or else as the knowledge comes from a higher and higher source." Could you kindly not give me some idea of this light, energy and ananda ?

SRI AUROBINDO : No—It has to be experienced first. Things that are above the ordinary mind (intellect) cannot be submitted to rules and descriptions. 17-6-1936

Q : How many sides of a Truth can the higher mind and the illumined mind give at a time ?

SRI AUROBINDO : There is no fixed number of sides. In fact the attempt to put such rules and limitations and to define the field of these higher things is useless; such an attempt is mental and ceases to have any meaning as one goes upward.

17-6-1936

Q : My mental control seems to have been removed completely. So I miss now the service of my mind proper (intellect). It is only with the physical mind that I have to carry out my daily acts. This mind being still undeveloped is moved by the ordinary nature and its ignorance. It is such a pity. Is there no way to save the situation ?

SRI AUROBINDO : It can come only by further development and the activity of another kind of knowledge communicating itself to the physical and taking up gradually the functions of the mind in all its parts.

13-5-1936

From NAGIN DOSHI

THE ROOF IS SPLIT

My house is leaking; I can no more sleep;
 The rumour of the rain has filled my breast.
 The burst of the unexpected finds my night
 By the song-swept winds from the silver deep.
 It was all murky and muddy inside.
 The air and light in their long servile mood
 Bound to the perverse one-eyed opposite god
 Had lost their identity, their sheen of beatitude.
 But the rain has started and the roof is split—
 The house of walls by a nameless light is lit.
 I would build a house forever new and wide—
 A sphere of the blue for the heavenly Bride
 Roofed by the sun-gold of the Infinite.

VENKATARANGA

SUPERMIND

(Based on Passages from "The Life Divine" by Sri Aurobindo)

A perfect path of the Truth has come into being for our journey to the other shore beyond the darkness.—(Rig Veda, I.46.11)

ABOVE, the formula of the One eternally stable and immutable; below, the formula of the Many which, eternally mutable, seeks but hardly finds in the flux of things a firm and immutable standing-point; between, the seat...of all that becomes Many-in-One and yet remains One-in-Many because it was originally One that is always potentially Many. This intermediary term is therefore the beginning and end of all creation and arrangement, the Alpha and the Omega, the starting-point of all differentiation, the instrument of all unification, originative, executive and consummative of all realised or realisable harmonies.... And shall we not say that its very existence points back to Something beyond our supreme perception of the ineffable Unity,—Something ineffable and mentally inconceivable not because of its unity and indivisibility, but because of its freedom from even these formulations of our mind,—Something beyond both unity and multiplicity? That would be the utter Absolute and Real which yet justifies to us both our knowledge of God and our knowledge of the world....

A principle of active Will and Knowledge superior to Mind and creatrix of the worlds is then the intermediary power and state of being.... This is the Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness, the Real-Idea which knows itself and all that it becomes.... But since this consciousness is creatrix of the world, it must be not only state of knowledge, but power of knowledge, and not only a Will to light and vision, but a Will to power and works...

In Supermind knowledge in the Idea is not divorced from will in the Idea, but one with it,—just as it is not different from being or substance, but is one with the being, luminous power of the substance. As the power of burning light is not different from the substance of the fire, so the power of the Idea is not different from the substance of the Being which works itself out in the Idea and its development. In our mentality all are different. We have an idea and a will according to the idea or an impulsion of will and an idea detaching itself from it; but we differentiate effectually the idea from the will and both from ourselves. I am; the idea is a mysterious abstraction that appears in me, the will is another mystery, a force nearer to concreteness, though not concrete, but always something that is not myself, something that I have or get or am seized with, but am not. I make a gulf between my will, its means and the effect, for these I regard as concrete realities outside and other than myself. Therefore neither myself nor the idea nor the will in me are self-effective. The idea may fall away from me, the will may fail, the means may be lacking, I myself by any or all of these *lacunae* may remain unfulfilled.

But in the Supermind there is no such paralysing division, because knowledge is not self-divided, force is not self-divided, being is not self-divided as in the mind; they are neither broken in themselves, nor divorced from each other. For the Supermind is the Vast; it starts from unity, not division, it is primarily comprehensive, differentiation is only its secondary act. Therefore whatever be the truth of being expressed, the idea corresponds to it exactly, the will-force to the idea,—force being only power of the consciousness,—and the result to the will. Nor does the idea clash with other ideas, the will or force with other will or force as in man and his world; for there is one vast Consciousness which contains and relates all ideas in itself as its own ideas, one vast Will which contains and relates all energies in itself as its own energies. It holds back this, advances that other, but according to its own preconceiving Idea-Will....

We have to regard therefore this all-containing, all-originating, all-consummating Supermind as the nature of the Divine Being, not indeed in its absolute self-existence, but in its action as the Lord and Creator of its own worlds....

The Truth-Consciousness is everywhere present in the universe as an ordering self-knowledge by which the One manifest the harmonies of its infinite potential multiplicity. The knowledge that creates, because what it creates or releases are forms and powers of itself and not things other than itself, possesses in its own being the vision of the truth and law that governs each potentiality, and along with that an intrinsic awareness of its relation to other potentialities and the harmonies that are possible between them....From the beginning the whole development is predetermined in its self-knowledge and at every moment in its self-working : it is what it must be at each moment by its own original inherent Truth....

That which is an apparent discord to the mind because it considers each thing separately in itself, is an element of the general ever-present and ever-developing harmony to the Supermind because it views all things in a multiple unity. Besides, the mind sees only a given time and space and views many possibilities pell-mell as all more or less realisable in that time and space; the divine Supermind sees the whole extension of Time and Space and can embrace all the mind's possibilities and very many more not visible to the mind, but without any error, groping or confusion; for it perceives each potentiality in its proper force, essential necessity, right relation to the others and the time, place and circumstance both of its gradual and its ultimate realisation. To see things steadily and see them whole is not possible to the mind; but it is the very nature of the transcendent Supermind.

This Supermind in its conscious vision not only contains all the forms of itself which its conscious force creates, but it pervades them as an indwelling Presence and a self-revealing Light. It is present, even though concealed, in every form and force of the universe; it is that which determines sovereignly and spontaneously form, force and functioning; it limits the variations it compels; it gathers, disperses, modifies the energy which it uses; and all this is done in accord with the first laws that its self-knowledge has fixed in the very birth of the form, at the very starting-point of

the force. It is seated within everything as the Lord in the heart of all existences...

Each thing in Nature, therefore, whether animate or inanimate, mentally self-conscious or not self-conscious, is governed in its being and in its operations by an indwelling Vision and Power; it is a self-aware Truth of being in which self-knowledge is inseparable from self-existence; it is this Truth-Consciousness, which has not to think out things but works them out with knowledge according to the impeccable self-vision and the inevitable force of a sole and self-fulfilling Existence.

It is a cosmic vision which is all-comprehensive, all-pervading, all-inhabiting... Since Mind too is created out of this consciousness, Mind must be a development by limitation out of this primal faculty and this mediatory act of the Supreme Consciousness and must therefore be capable of resolving back into it through a reverse development by expansion. For always Mind must be identical with Supermind in essence and conceal in itself the potentiality of Supermind, however different or even contrary it may have become in its actual forms and settled modes of operation...

But for the transition to Supermind and a real transformation and a change of our nature into supramental nature there must be a direct and unveiled intervention from above, there would be necessary too a total submission and surrender of the lower consciousness, a cessation of its insistence, a will in it for its separate law of action to be completely annulled by transformation and lose all rights over our being. If these two conditions can be achieved even now by a conscious call and will in the spirit and a participation of our whole manifested and inner being in its change and elevation, the evolution, the transformation can take place by a comparatively swift conscious change, the supramental Consciousness-Force from above and the evolving Consciousness-Force from behind the veil acting on the awakened awareness and will of the mental human being would accomplish by their united power the momentous transition...

It is a first condition of this change that the mental Man we now are should become inwardly aware and in possession of his own deeper law of being and its processes; we must become the psychic and inner mental being master of his energies, no longer a slave of the movements of the lower Prakriti, in control of it, seated securely in a free harmony with a higher law of Nature...

It is only a free and entire intuitive consciousness which would be able to see and to grasp things by direct contact and penetrating vision or a spontaneous truth-sense born of an underlying unity or identity and arrange an action of Nature according to the truth of Nature. This would be a real participation by the individual in the working of the universal Consciousness-Force...

A first opening towards this participation in an action of Supernature is a condition of the turn towards the last, the supramental transformation. But the participation and consent of the Purusha in the transition is not sufficient, there must be also the consent and participation of the Prakriti. It is not only the central thought and will that have to acquiesce, but all the parts of our being must assent and surrender to

the law of the spiritual Truth; all has to learn to obey the government of the conscious Divine Power in the members...

It follows that the psychic and spiritual transformation must be far advanced, even as complete as may be, before there can be any beginning of the third and consummating supramental change; for it is only by this double transmutation that the self-will of the Ignorance can be totally altered into a spiritual obedience to the remoulding truth and will of the greater Consciousness of the Infinite...

The admission of such a change can only be brought about by a full emergence of the soul and inner being, the dominance of the psychic and spiritual will and a long working of their light and power on the parts of the being, a psychic and spiritual remoulding of the whole nature.

A unification of the entire being by a breaking down of the wall between the inner and outer nature,—a shifting of the position and centration of the consciousness from the outer to the inner self, a firm foundation on this new basis, a habitual action from this inner self and its will and vision and an opening up of the individual into the cosmic consciousness,—is another necessary condition for the supramental change. It would be chimerical to hope that the supreme Truth-Consciousness can establish itself in the narrow formulation of our surface mind and heart and life, however turned towards spirituality. All the inner centres must have burst open and released into action their capacities; the psychic entity must be unveiled and in control...

Moreover the individual must have sufficiently universalised himself, he must have recast his individual mind in the boundlessness of a cosmic mentality, enlarged and vivified his individual life into the immediate sense and direct experience of the dynamic motion of the universal life, opened up the communications of his body with the forces of universal Nature, before he can be capable of a change which transcends the present cosmic formulation and lifts him beyond the lower hemisphere of universality into a consciousness belonging to its upper hemisphere. Besides, he must have already become aware of what is now to him superconscious, he must be already a being conscious of the higher spiritual light, power, knowledge, Ananda, penetrated by its descending influences, new-made by a spiritual change. The supramental change does not admit of any premature descent of the higher Light; for it can only commence when the supramental Force begins to act directly, and this it does not do if the nature is not ready. For there is too great a disparity between the power of the supreme Force and the capacity of the ordinary nature; the inferior nature would either be unable to bear or, bearing, unable to respond and receive or, receiving, unable to assimilate. Till Nature is ready, the supramental Force has to act indirectly; it puts the intermediary powers of overmind or intuition in front, or it works through a modification of itself to which the already half-transformed being can be wholly or partially responsive...

The spiritual evolution obeys the logic of a successive unfolding; it can take a new decisive main step only when the previous main step has been sufficiently conquered; even if certain minor stages can be swallowed up or leaped over by a rapid and

brusque ascension, the consciousness has to turn back to assure itself that the ground passed over is securely annexed to the new condition...

The necessary turn or change can also be brought about by an occult descent of the spiritual force from above, in which the influx, the influence, the spiritual consequence is felt, but the higher source is unknown and the actual feeling of a descent is not there. A consciousness so touched may be so much uplifted that the being turns to an immediate union with the Self or with the Divine by departure from the evolution and, if that is sanctioned, no question of graduality or steps or method intervenes, the rupture with Nature can be decisive : for the law of departure, once it is made possible, is not or need not be the same as the law of the evolutionary transformation and perfection ; it is or can be a leap, a breaking out of bonds rapid or immediate,—the spiritual evasion is secured and its only remaining sanction is the destined fall of the body. But if the transformation of earth life is intended, the first touch of spiritualisation must be followed by an awakening to the higher sources and energies, a seeking for them and an enlargement and heightening of the being into their characteristic status and a conversion of the consciousness to their greater law and dynamic nature. This change must go step by step, till the stair of the ascension is transcended and there is an emergence to those greatest wide-open spaces of which the Veda speaks, the native spaces of a consciousness which is supremely luminous and infinite...

These gradations may be summarily described as a series of sublimations of the consciousness through Higher Mind, Illumined Mind and Intuition into Overmind and beyond it, there is a succession of self-transmutations at the summit of which lies the Supermind or Divine Gnosis...

When the powers of any grade descend completely into us, it is not only our thought and knowledge that are affected—the substance and very grain of our being and consciousness, all its states and activities are touched and penetrated and can be remoulded and wholly transmuted. Each stage of this ascent is therefore a general, if not a total, conversion of the being into a new light and power of a greater existence. The gradation itself depends fundamentally upon a higher or lower substance, potency, intensity of vibrations of the being, of its self-awareness, of its delight of existence, of its force of existence.

A supramental change of the whole substance of the being and therefore necessarily of all its characters, powers, movements takes place when the involved supermind in Nature emerges to meet and join with the supramental light and power descending from Supernature. The individual must be the instrument and first field of the transformation ; but an isolated individual transformation is not enough and may not be wholly feasible. Even when achieved, the individual change will have a permanent and cosmic significance only if the individual becomes a centre and a sign for the establishment of the supramental Consciousness-Force as an overtly operative power in the terrestrial workings of Nature—in the same way in which thinking Mind has been established through the human evolution as an

overtly operative power in Life and Matter. This would mean the appearance in the evolution of a gnostic being or Purusha and a gnostic Prakriti, a gnostic Nature. There must be an emergent supramental Consciousness-Force liberated and active within the terrestrial whole and an organised supramental instrumentation of the Spirit in the life and the body,—for the body consciousness also must become sufficiently awake to be a fit instrument of the workings of the new supramental Force and its new order. Till then any intermediate change could be only partial or insecure; an overmind or intuitive instrumentation of Nature could be developed, but it would be a luminous formation imposed on a fundamental and environmental Inconscience. A supramental principle and its cosmic operation once established permanently on its own basis, the intervening powers of Overmind and spiritual Mind could found themselves securely upon it and reach their own perfection; they would become in the earth existence a hierarchy of states of consciousness rising out of Mind and physical life to the supreme spiritual level. Mind and mental humanity would remain as one step in the spiritual evolution; but other degrees above it would be there formed and accessible by which the embodied mental being, as it became ready, could climb into the gnosis and change into an embodied supramental and spiritual being. On this basis the principle of a divine life in terrestrial Nature would be manifested; even the world of ignorance and inconscience might discover its own submerged secret and begin to realise in each lower degree its divine significance.

Compiled by Kailash Jhaveri

IS SRI AUROBINDO NEW ?

(A LETTER)

(This letter was written about 20 years ago. It was seen by Sri Aurobindo and first published in The Advent, August 1947. The essential thesis of it still holds and needs to be underlined. It does not change because Sri Aurobindo himself has left his body. Apropos of this act of his on December 5, 1950, the author's booklet, The Passing of Sri Aurobindo : Its Inner Significance and Consequence, which was fully approved by the Mother, may be read. For immediate concentrated light we may refer the reader to the Messages of the Mother soon after December 5 and to the following two given some time later. One is dated 1951 : "The lack of receptivity of the earth and men is mostly responsible for the decision Sri Aurobindo has taken regarding his body. But one thing is certain : what has happened on the physical plane affects in no way the truth of his teaching. All that he has said is perfectly true and remains so. Time and the course of events will prove it abundantly." The other Message came in 1953 : "Sri Aurobindo has given up his body in an act of supreme unselfishness, renouncing the realisation in his body to hasten the hour of the collective realisation. Surely if the earth were more responsive, this would not have been necessary." The present article-letter is concerned to set forth the essence of "the realisation" whose pursuit constitutes the ultimate form in which Sri Aurobindo's teaching is "new".)

THE western world is often declared to be so engrossed in its new materialism that it cannot listen to any of the old spiritual messages. In a similar way the eastern world seems at times so engrossed in its old spirituality that no spiritual message that is new reaches its mind.

There are some good reasons for this unprogressive tendency. First, the spirituality of the past is really immense and its hold, therefore, cannot help being great. Second, civilisations that are, like India's, very old and have still a living continuity with their past develop an intent look backwards. Third, the accustomed meanings of spiritual terms have got impressed on our minds with such prolonged force that new complexions given them are liable to be overlooked. I was hoping, however, that there would be more than a handful who might keep on the *qui vive* for the genuinely new in spirituality and be subtle enough to understand it when it got explained in various ways and with a marvellously illuminating style as has happened in a book like *The Life Divine*. But if you declare that you have given days and nights to the consideration of Sri Aurobindo's vision and yoga and yet found nothing new, I am brought to the verge of despair. How shall I strike upon your eyes the novel shades

of his thought, the original turns of his experience ? Perhaps it is best to concentrate on presenting his newness under one aspect that would be the most spectacular, the most sensational.

To say that Sri Aurobindo is new is, of course, not to deny the many common factors between him and the Indian rishis and yogis that are gone. He stands grounded in India's colossal experience of God, and from the God-experience of no other country could he lead on to what is his own individual contribution to spirituality. In fact, the starting-point of his contribution is not anything unknown to the ancient scriptures : the Creative Consciousness of the eternal and infinite Divine putting forth the world-play and taking part in it for a various expression of Himself by purifying and illuminating our mind and life-force and body. In Vaishnavism and Tantricism the ideal of God's self-expression in our nature was the most openly held. But everywhere a definite irreducible quantity was recognised in which no self-expression of the Divine could take place. And that is why, on the most external plane, the fact of death was accepted as inherent in earth-existence. The triple formation of mind, life and body that makes up earth-existence was regarded as never capable of perfection and so always to be dropped after a time. Perfection abided somewhere beyond, whither the soul was bidden to rise, either to stay for ever or else to return after a while for the sake of suffering humanity. Birth was either to be escaped from or accepted in an endless series : in both cases no birth could be such as to allow absolute perfection of the mind-life-body formation. Disease and decay and deathwards-progressing old age were always inevitable : even the hathayogis who commanded extraordinary powers of reinforcing the ageing physical system by subtle vital energy never claimed even as a possibility a complete partaking by the body in a divine physicality which by the presence of the immortal consciousness and substance would not ever die by age or disease or stroke of accident.

You must admit that since the body is our characteristic vehicle of earth-existence there can be no entire self-manifestation of the Divine here without this vehicle being thoroughly divinised and changed into stuff of the immortal divine being with its incorruptible illumination and imperishable bliss and power. No so-called natural law or necessity should compel this body to suffer disease and grow aged and finally die or remain open to accident and be a victim to "crass casualty". Disease and old age and the death consequent upon them or due to sudden violent circumstance are a stamp of undivinity—they are in the body what ignorance and falsehood and obscuration are in our mental and vital consciousness. A divinised being on earth is one in whom not merely the mental and vital consciousness but also the physical instrument has been changed into divine and therefore fully illumined and immortal and immune substance. Indeed, no such change can be wholly effected in the former without a corresponding change in the latter—unless they stand aloof from it and do not associate themselves with it for God's manifestation on earth. As there is the association indispensable for manifesting God on earth, the imperfection of the body would interfere with the perfect working of the mental

and vital elements for terrestrial purposes. Hence it follows that, so long as the body's imperfection is accepted as in the last resort irremediable, there can be no vision by any yogi of integral transformation.

And if you give close thought to the matter you will observe that, so long as an irreducible quantity of imperfection is acknowledged, a tremendous hiatus is caused between the Divine and earth-existence. All, says the ancient wisdom, is the Divine. But if all is the Divine, then all can manifest divine values perfectly in an evolutionary scheme like our earth's : there cannot be an irreducible quantity of the imperfect in man's career through time. Once this quantity is granted in spite of the process of evolution, we automatically make a division in ultimate being : there is the Divine and there is the undivine which cannot wholly express and be transformed into divine values. To fight clear of this dualism arises the theory of *Maya*, Illusion. Whatever holds the irreducible quantity of the imperfect cannot really exist—it must be a hallucination, a strange non-being that yet seems to have existence. The only thing to do for the seeker of “the one entire and perfect chrysolite”, the innate idealist in man wanting the Absolute, the Flawless, the hundred per cent Divine, is to get rid of this illusion and pass into the formless and nameless samadhi, Nirvana, Nirguna Brahman. If we are told that something undivisible is present in the world-elements, we may yet choose to work for the world and look upon the world as valuable because there are also so many God-expressive elements in it, but the deepest self in us will always feel discontented, unappeased, impatient and know that not here is the Grand Terminus of the soul's evolution, the scene of its integral fulfilment. And in the long run the countries where this deepest self is most active will yield, in spite of all theories of the world as *Lila* or God's play, to the theory of the world as *Maya*.

India is overshadowed by the *Maya* theory not just because India has lost her ancient vigour : it is also because India is irrepressibly influenced by the deepest self and that perfection-haunted dweller within cannot accept as real whatever fails to admit of total divinisation. Nothing save extreme Shankarite *sannyasa*, nothing save extreme Buddhistic *tyaga* can be the logical result for a spiritual aspirant who accepts an undivisible factor in our nature's constituents. The pull towards the Beyond, towards utter rejection of the world for a supra-cosmic status cannot be helped—and really should not be opposed if the Divine, the wholly Perfect, is our goal. And yet even Shankara and Buddha with their illusionist attitude were drawn to world-work, to some effort at manifestation of the Spirit, at irradiation of our nature by the Secret Splendour. Here also is an instinct that is innate. But it can have justification only if our nature is really capable of divine irradiation. Between the instinct to withdraw to the Beyond because of our nature's ultimate residue of the undivisible with its consequent Mayic emptiness and the instinct to illumine our nature as much as possible as though it were something real and not Mayic—between these two instincts the fight must go on, with a trend more and more towards the former because the allure of the aloof Perfection to the dreamer in us of spiritual plenitude is greater than that of the world-intimate imperfect shedding of manifesting light. This fight is the

history of Indian spirituality in the past. It can end only if a NEW vision is both entertained and practised—the vision of complete illumination down to the very cells of the body—the vision of the body's utter divinisation !

Can you aver that such a vision has been in the past ? Can you quote to me any yogi who has said as the Mother has said : “Physical death is no part of our programme” ?¹ Where in any scripture is the assertion that the completely God-realised man has a body which is no longer subject to disease, decay and death and that this body need not be given up because of the operation of any so-called Nature's law or necessity ? Great yogis are declared to leave the body and depart from life at will; but this they do in anticipation of the stroke of death and the body they leave is no intrinsically incorruptible substance but generally the seat of some disease or other—cancer of the throat in Ramakrishna, asthma and diabetes in Vivekananda, blood-poisoning in Dayananda. Even that champion hathayogi, Pavhari Baba, whom Vivekananda was at times sorely tempted by his own ailments to consult and take as master, gave up his corporeal frame because of some affliction that had overtaken it. Never in the past has there been any vision of the thoroughly divinised body, immune even from accidents, as the external support for an integrally¹divine manifestation. If that vision put forth by Sri Aurobindo is not NEW, and revolutionarily NEW at that, tell me what significance the word NEW has !

You may be sceptical about the probability of so radical a transformation or even argue that it is not desirable. But how can you say that what Sri Aurobindo is asking for is old ? Most certainly the transformation he has in mind is not “a statement in another language of the age-old cry of the mystic”. It does not stand for merely a purified saintly life—not even for the magnificent selflessness of a Gautama. It is something no mystic has ever wholly dreamed of in a practical positive manner, though some intuition of it has always been vaguely at work behind all our efforts at manifesting the Divine. Despite that faint intuition, no mystic has dared to place in the forefront the transformation such as Sri Aurobindo wants. They may employ the same term but his meaning cannot be theirs. This is so because no mystic had the full organised wide-awake knowledge of what Sri Aurobindo calls the Supermind or Truth-Consciousness, nor the active effective experience of its mighty alchemic process. There is a tendency to think that Supermind means only “above the mind” and coincides with what other seers have discovered to be divine levels of being, higher than the mind yet lower than the “Ultimate Transcendent Reality”. The Latin word “super”, as used by Sri Aurobindo, has a particular significance which emerges with unique force once we look at his table of what is above the mind. He speaks of the Higher Mind, the Illumined Mind, the Intuitive Mind, the Overmind and then the Supermind. The word “super” does not indiscriminately cover all these levels.

¹ It must be understood that life's perpetuation for the sake of an unending activity of the unregenerate human ego is not the immortality aimed at. In fact, any perpetuation as such is not desired: what is desired is the Divine in the body and the Divine's inherent deathlessness as part of the body's realisation of Him.

It acquires, as distinguished from the word "over", a shade of utter supremacy, and in his expositions the Supermind does not do service for merely the highest level of being below the "Ultimate Transcendent Reality" but is part and parcel of that Reality : only, it is the part that is turned towards creation, towards the bringing forth and harmonisation of the truths implicit in the Transcendent for world-play.

There are many terms both in western and eastern mysticism which appear on the surface to contain the essence of the Aurobindonian Supermind, but they basically do not. Take the "Nous" of the Neo-Platonists. The Supermind is not this Nous : it is the consciousness of which the Neo-Platonic Nous is a weak, vague and diffuse description. All the planes above the mind are spiritual ones and are a play of luminous unity in a diversity of delight : there is natural to them what I have called in a poem of mine "the shining smile of the one Self everywhere", and they form a pattern and a harmony whose half-lit image-echo we find in our universe. All of them, therefore, are Nous—the consciousness whose multiple singlehood is the formative archetype of things here. The apex of this consciousness is the Overmind. I cannot tell whether Plotinus had a glimpse of the Overmind : perhaps it was his glimpse of it that he put into the poetic account found in his *Enneads* of the ecstatic interfusion of glorious God-forms in the spiritual world. But all this does not identify Nous with the Supermind. Just as the Overmind, the world of the greatest Gods, seems to be the archetype of our universe, so also the Supermind is the archetype of the "overmental" plane. In other words, as compared to life here the Overmind is perfection; but as compared to what is still beyond, the Overmind is imperfect Nature rounded off in general without a flawless balance and harmony between the One and the Many. The Overmind is not Ignorance : it is Knowledge, yet it is Knowledge on the way to being Ignorance. So the Neo-Platonic Nous is very distant from being "supra-mental"—and the proof is simply this : complete conscious awareness of the Supermind must mean the awareness and revelation of the chief secret of the Supermind which is that man's entire nature, down to his material substance, can be divinised in an immortal perfect existence on earth. Nor would such awareness and revelation stop short of a spontaneous effort to divinise and immortalise the earth-sheath. The Supermind's essence is the power it possesses to effect a total and integral divinisation. That power could never have been plumbed before, because nobody ever thought it possible to produce so fundamental a change. Not merely is Plotinus's Nous ruled out: even the Vedas and the Upanishads and the Gita were not acquainted with any direct dynamic realisation of the Supermind in relation to terrestrial Nature. They have grand hunts and glimmerings of it : the Vedas' *Satyam Ritam Brihat*, The True, the Right, the Vast—the Upanishads' *Vijnana*, the all-comprehensive Knowledge—the Gita's *Purushottama* with *Para-prakriti*, the Supreme Being with His Super-Nature. But no radically transforming intimacy with it was present. To be uplifted into it in a trance or to be lost in it and pass through its golden gate into the supra-cosmic Unknown or else to work under its glowing guidance from afar and above is not the

same thing as to ascend to it and live in it with one's physical eyes open and bring about its progressive descent—as Sri Aurobindo and the Mother do.

The constant day-to-day living in the light of the Supermind and the supramental descent into our whole constitution in order to shape a divine mind, a divine life-force, a divine body : this is the aim and the decisive condition of Sri Aurobindo's yoga. But there is a long and difficult way to go, a hard task of self-consecration, self-purification, self-discipline, a development on many lines and an opening to the Divine Shakti and her working on all the planes to be carried through before this decisive condition can be reached. That an opportunity may be given to others for this long training and process and a nucleus formed of seekers after this great transformation, Sri Aurobindo has let an Ashram grow around him. In this nucleus the seekers have to grow out of the habits and tendencies created by the past opposite trends of human existence, the clinging to the egoistic life and its ignorance and the revolt against life and finally the satisfaction with a half and half spiritual effort and realisation, and so make themselves fit for the final movement of an integral and supramental Yoga. A successful formation of such a nucleus is evidently a necessary preliminary condition for the work Sri Aurobindo has undertaken for the world since he aims not only at an individual realisation but at a great collective descent of the highest truth into life and a new power on the earth for the liberation and perfection of mankind.

I may point out further that it is this yoga's newness that is responsible for the length of Sri Aurobindo's labour. Though forty years have passed since he set forth on the *via mystica* and though all the achievements of Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga seem compassed and though on the one hand the Nirvana of Buddha and on the other the Tantric awakening of all the occult chakras in the body appear to be realised, Sri Aurobindo still declares that his labour has not come to its end. Do you imagine that a spiritual genius like him has to continue for forty years to nearly attain what others have got within half a dozen years or so ? Surely it is clear that he is at a mighty unparalleled job : there is an obvious case for considering his goal momentarily new. The period of time taken depends, where spiritual geniuses are concerned, on what their goals are and the goal of Sri Aurobindo is not reached yet because that stupendous thing—the integral descent of the Supermind—has not shown itself utterly in the most outer physical. What has already happened, however, is more significant than anything in the history of Indian spirituality, for only the last steps in the top-to-toe descent remain and not even the first extraordinary steps that lead to these last have been taken by anyone hitherto. Even before the last hundredth step there must be the sovereign entry into the Supermind with its clear vision of total transformation : can you point to any yogi or rishi who gives signs of that clear vision, leave aside indications of the practice of the full dynamics of the supramental descent ? Is there any wonder the disciples of Sri Aurobindo say that this path is new and different ?

K. D. SETHNA

LIFE IN SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

(Continued from the March issue)

THE IDEAL OF TRANSFORMATION

Misery shall pass abolished from the earth,
There shall be peace and joy for ever more.¹

THE word transformation calls for some elaboration. It is often said, "The concept of *Kaya-Kalpa*, *Divya-sharira*, *Chinmaya-sharira*, *Ichhamritya* is not new to India. Where then lies the newness of the ideal of transformation?" Madhav Pandit has dealt with the subject very lucidly in his book *Where the Wings of Glory Brood*.

Kaya-Kalpa is based on herbal treatment and requires a very severe discipline. Pandit mentions a yogi named Tapasviji who lived 185 years, in our modern times. He was born in 1770 and died in 1955. As a result of the arduous austerities that he had undergone in the course of the treatment, old teeth, nails, hair, etc. gave way to new ones and, at the end of the period, he came out a "robust, young buoyant man with all his faculties in fresh condition".

"The main principle on which this is based is that the body is made up of a number of cells. These cells are constantly being broken down and renewed. Man starts aging when these cells begin to lose their power of reproduction."

Kaya-Kalpa may help one to prolong one's life but after a time the body begins to decay. Relapses follow rather quickly. "The eyes, bright for a short time, become dull once more. The brain works vigorously for a brief period only. Afterwards infirmity reasserts itself."

Another system holds that the body is composed of *asuddha-maya*, impure matter. It has to be turned into *suddha-maya*, and further to be raised to *pranava-tanu* or *jnana-tanu*, a pure spiritual body. As a result of this change the body takes a glorious form, *divya-tanu*, and is "maintained more by the nourishment of universal forces than by the usual material food".

By adopting yogic processes so much purity is obtained that the *adhar* is said to be resistant to death. A recent case is pointed out: the life of Swami Ramalingam who is believed to have disappeared from the earthly scene leaving no material remnant behind.

There is another system which needs no material aid. "The secret of immortality lies within the human body itself." In the higher region of the body, at the crown of the head, at the famous *Sahasrara Chakra* there is a "Moon". From it drips *soma* or *amrita* which simply goes waste because we do not know how to utilise it nor are

¹ *Savitri*, Book VII, Canto IV, p. 148.

we conscious of it. If one is able to let it pass into its proper channel and not allow it to go waste, it may prepare him for the day when the ordinary law of Nature would fail to bind him.

Acharya Abhoydev tells about two women, one from Hyderabad and the other from Rajasthan, who have not taken anything for more than ten years. S, an M.P., refused to believe it and started enquiries about the one of Hyderabad. When satisfied he looked upon her with reverence. She says that she lives on a liquid dripping inwardly from the crown of her head. It is that which frees her from hunger. According to the Acharya, here is a living example of what is mentioned in the Hathayoga Shastra.

The other lady of Rajasthan, who has taken no meal nor had any call of nature for over eighteen years, visited the Sri Aurobindo Centre at Charthawal in 1961. She says she does not feel the need of any food and is quite healthy. The why or how of it she does not know. Both of them are still (1967) living and people flock to see them. An inmate of the Ashram knows her very well.

In his review of *India of Yogis* Madhav Pandit speaks of "a most interesting Yogi of 'Nad' Brahmananda who has perfected the technique of directing sound vibrations to any part of the body at will and who has succeeded in achieving what is known as 'Kundalini tan' by which the sound flows from below the navel, *i.e.*, the Muladhara".¹

These experiments are great in their own sphere. One cannot but feel amazed how deep, extensive and varied were the discoveries of our ancients in the realm of spirituality. But how can all end there? Can there be any limit to the Infinite?

What Tapasviji and Swami Ramalingam achieved speaks much about the efficacy of *Kaya-Kalpa*, *Chinmaya-sharira*, etc. But all these could be achieved once in a century or two. After the departure of such Yogis the light brought by them in the life endures for a time and then "all is swallowed by the mouth of darkness". Yet what they achieved is so much gained for the earth, so much of heaven brought to the earth though it is all an individual achievement.

Sri Aurobindo's Yogic ideal of transformation is the result of his life-long tapasya and yogic research. His quest was for a complete life, a true life—a life endowed with beauty, light and power. He wants us to possess the Divine, possess His Light, Power and Sweetness and express them. His intention was "to create a new universe of activities",² thereby ushering in a new era, a new world, a new race, a new order, a new life, a new mode of living, a new literature, a new poetry, a new vision of things and action, as new as man was new to the animal world.

By her Yogic vision the Mother made the discovery, "Once again nature feels one of her great impulses towards the creation of something utterly new, something unexpected, and it is to this impulse that we must answer and obey."

¹ *The Hindu*, February 26, 1967.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, Part I, P. 24.

According to Sri Aurobindo, "All life is Yoga"¹ and "All Yoga is a new birth".² The salient feature of his Yoga is that every fibre of the vital being will undergo a change, our very cells will grow so conscious that "even the body shall remember God."³

He is not content with longevity, freedom from disease, decay and death nor with the mere realisation of the Divine Consciousness. He dreams of "the Divine Consciousness penetrating into Matter and transforming it".⁴ "What we have to do is to awaken Matter to the spiritual consciousness concealed in it."⁵

All his life he worked "...to bring down the supramental consciousness on earth, to fix it there, to create a new race with the principle of the supramental consciousness...governing the collective life".

What do we mean by a new race, a new world ?

Today mind is the ruler of our life, we are guided and controlled by the decisions of the mind.

"The future man will be governed by intuition."

What is intuition ? The Mother explains in her simple lucid manner :

"When the mind is perfectly silent, pure like a well-polished mirror, immobile as a pond on a breezeless day, then from above, the light of the supermind, of the truth within, shines in the quieted mind, and gives birth to intuition..."

"The faculty which is exceptional, almost abnormal now, will certainly be quite common and natural for the new race, the man of to-morrow."⁶

After covering so much ground one has to pass into what the Mother calls the "Yoga of the cells".⁷

In our body's cells there sits a hidden power
That sees the unseen and plans eternity.⁸

To make these "ignorant cells" "the home of eternity"⁹ is the crowning end of our sadhana.

There is much more to learn and I am tempted to go on writing on the point. To quote Nolini Kanta Gupta :

¹ & ² *Ibid.*

³ *Savitri*, II, p. 329.

⁴ "He (the gnostic being) would feel the presence of the Divine in every centre of his consciousness, in every vibration of his life-force, in every cell of his body." *The Life Divine* (1940) pp. 1035-36.

⁵ *On Yoga*, II, Tome One, p. 243.

⁶ ". . . In this way there might appear a race of mental beings thinking and acting not by the intellect . . . but by an intuitive mentality which would be the first step of an ascending change . . ." (*The Life Divine*, American Edition., p. 819.)

⁷ *Bulletin*, August 1966, p. 83.

⁸ *Savitri*, Book II, Canto 5, p. 155.

⁹ *Vide* The Mother's Message distributed on November 24, 1953.

“The body is composed of cells, living cells.”¹ These cells from the standpoint of consciousness are desire-cells, that is to say particles of desire, concrete and consolidated packets of hunger and thirst. A string of such innumerable packets of hunger and thirst is life—the Buddha said. The cells are to be emptied completely. Emptiness of cells is Nirvana.

“Not necessarily. For one may empty the cells of their desire contents but replenish them with something of a purer order. This is a possibility we envisage which we are working for. The Divine Life empties the cells of desire but fills it with the energy of solar Light.”²

What do we stand to achieve thereby? Let us hear the poet of the Golden Age :

Men shall be lit with the Eternal's ray,
A mightier race shall inhabit the mortal's world,
This world shall be God's visible garden-house...
Even there shall come as a high crown of all
The end of Death, the death of Ignorance.
Thus shall the earth open to divinity,
The spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the Life Divine.³

All great discoveries of the world were once the luminous dreams of great personalities. Despite its aims of material prosperity, is not the earth today an abyss of misery? Blessed was he who dreamt of making this abyss a home of bliss.

He did not rest content simply with evolving the theory of transformation. To concretise it—to transplant “heaven into a human shape”⁴—he resolved to do or die.

And to hasten the immortality of others he sacrificed his physical immortality. Till something makes itself visible, the world will not be able to assess the price the Master has paid to raise the level of earthly consciousness.

In matter shall be lit the spirit's glow...
A few shall see what none yet understands;
God shall grow up while the wise men talk and sleep;
For man shall not know the coming till its hour
And belief shall be not till the work is done.⁵

The force that the Master has brought down to effect the transformation will

¹ According to medical science the retina of the eye is covered with about 18 million cells. From this we can infer the colossal nature of the task. Cf. *Science To-Day* December 1966, p. 40.

² *The Advent*, August 1965.

³ *Savitri*, Book XI, Canto 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Book IV, Canto 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Book I, Canto 4, p. 63 (University Ed.). We saw these lines depicted before our eyes in Picture 15 among Huta's paintings which were exhibited in the period round the February Darshan of 1967.

not confine itself only to the elite of humanity but act on the whole creation, in order to turn the human world into the divine.

If a question is raised : "Will then all men become God ?", the answer is :

Now that aeroplanes are in use, have the railways, automobiles or other vehicles gone out of existence ? No, even rickshaws and bullock-carts are there. Only a superior conveyance is added to the others. Likewise, plants, animals, human beings all will be there. Only a new race of men, "masters of themselves, masters of circumstances, masters of environments...", will adorn the soil of earth.

All this may serve to give some idea of what a great experiment has been going on for the last fifty years. Even if a hundred years of more labour go for nothing, is not the experiment worth a full trial ?

Who can be a greater example of surrender than our Master ? He left everything to the Will of the Supreme, uttering not even a single word about his future work or the Ashram !

When our patience is on the brink of exhaustion and we falter, to draw inspiration we look up to the one whose life is a practical demonstration of all that the Master has said in *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Her day-to-day life is nothing short of a "Mahabharata of Mahabharatas". But she stands like a rock in the warring and roaring sea of troubles, refusing to budge an inch from the goal set before her eyes. No matter what may happen she "keeps her will that hopes to divinise clay".¹

From our level of consciousness how can we speak of the one whose consciousness is limitless as the Infinite, whose action springs from the bottomless sea of Peace ?

The human sweetness that is showered on us from time to time helps to catch a glimpse of what is divine living in a human body. Nay, her look, her touch, her delightful voice, her invisible actions inspire us to feel what is a "divine living in a divine body".

Some hints can be had from one or two of her latest utterances on what is going on in her body.

Speaking about the consciousness of the body she said, "...the body has the feeling of living only because the supreme Lord wants it to live, otherwise it would not be able to live.

"...if even for the space of a few seconds, I lost contact with the Supreme, it would die instantly. It is the Supreme alone that holds it alive.

"...several times, the body has put the question. 'Why do I not feel Your Power and Your Force in me ?' And the answer has always been a smiling answer : Patience, patience, one must be ready for it to be so." (March 4 & 9, 1966)²

Could the highest flight of the mind ever imagine what changes would take place in her body when it grows conscious and all the cells become luminous and are transformed ?

¹ *Ibid.*, Book IV, Canto I, p. 7.

² *Bulletin*, April, 1966, pp. 73, 75, 77.

That will be the day which will be the harbinger of a new age, a new epoch. That will be the day which will proclaim the establishment of a new principle on earth, the birth of a new heaven on a new earth. May we all be fortunate enough to see the day !

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

TRANSLATIONS FROM IQBAL

(Continued from the March issue)

1. In the heart sits a tiny spark of burning love,
Which illumines the path of Reality above.
2. Unless written with the heart's rich quickening blood,
Philosophy lies a trance-gripped body, dead.
3. A tenant clay-bound or free being on high,
Myself the world or its witness—what am I ?
4. Thyself the way, wayfarer, guide and goal—
What quest then keeps thee amove, O thou my soul ?
5. By fire nor Light but by earthly nature driven
Man acts to make his life his hell or heaven.
6. All manner of make-believe artful Reason can fling,
Love is none of a thinker, a priest or a sage—poor thing !
7. My cup and jar I spurn, Thy deeper wine
The soul first drank now pour again, I pine !
8. In Thy world, fate-driven, thralldom-bound I move :
But in mine I install Thee on my throne of Love.
9. Democracy is a kind of rule where they
Need but to count the members and not weigh.
10. See wisdom, India, rise and stay thy doom
Lest even thy tale bright annals leave to gloom !

(Concluded)

NARESH

AFTERGLOW

I stopped walking
And stood on the roadside.
Through the trees,
Stretching for some distance
Like a sparse wood,
I looked at the evening sky.
It was a quiet red
With the pastel afterglow
Of the autumn sun.
Soft like whispers were
The monstrous city's sounds
That came there, as though
Strained of all their harshness
Through the net of numerous leaves.

Moments passed.
The quiet red sky
Turned radiant and the trees
Were haloed with the rosy light.
It seemed hard to believe
That along a highway,
Tooting with hasty traffic,
Was a place where
Nature was calm and beautiful
Like a god in his shrine.

O. P. BHAGAT

UNAGING HELEN

“AND SHALL NOT LOVELINESS BE LOVED FOREVER ?”

—EURIPIDES, *The Bacchae*

Eternal Helen
You never die
You are born and reborn in varied raptures
To humanise the barbaric race of men
At the cost of your repeated crucifixion
For your maddening and dreadful form
Is as yet too great a marvel for mortal sight.

But your fiery Form
Thrills the fibres of a poet's heart
And he gives birth to the Ecstatic Word.

Your exquisite Form
Excites an artist's hand
To seize the Inimitable
Within the canvas-frame.
Your soul-churning voice
Born of a sweet cajoling murmur
Haunts a musician's ear
He weaves it
Into subtle infinite rhythms
Hid deep down the abysm of his Soul.

You set aflame a lover's heart
That forever yearns to heal the scar of forgotten oneness.
You restrain the aesthete from warring against
The conflicting beauties of arresting Ideals.

You enrich a yogi's realisation
Widening his soul
To a measureless sight.

Unaging Helen
Spirit divine
The sting of your omnipotence is an exalting but scorching flame
And you shall not rest from your high business
Till all men grow into the light of your image
And hold you undismayed
With a heart made all quiet
By their perfect understanding with Beauty.

And misunderstanding once crucified
There is no more crucifixion then.

BIBHAS JYOTI MUTSUDDI

THE DESTINY OF THE BODY

THE SEER-VISION OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

PART THREE: THE CONQUEST OF FOOD-NEED

(Continued from the march issue)

XIII. CONCLUSION

If the ways are crude, it is because the Manifestation itself is (as yet) very crude. And as it perfects itself, as it becomes more fit to manifest that which is *eternally progressive*, cruder means will be left behind for subtler means...

(The Mother, Bulletin, Vol. XIV No, 3. p.47)

There are many, a very large number, who ask what the new life would be like and I answer to them : ““There will be an interchange of forces, a circulating energy : the building of the body will be quite different, all these ungainly organs will disappear and be replaced by psychological functions ; and the necessity of eating, eating always will disappear.”

(The Mother, Bulletin, Vol. XVI No. 2, p. 57)

For the manifestation or building of a divine body on earth there must be an initial transformation, the appearance of a new, a greater and more developed type, not a continuance with little modifications of the present physical form and its limited possibilities.

(Sri Aurobindo, The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth, p. 71)

WE have at last come to the end of our survey. We have endeavoured to study the problem of material alimentation in all its aspects, physiological, bio-chemical and metaphysical, and suggested some possible ways in which an evolving body can expect to meet its energy-needs and replenish its substantial stuff otherwise than by the absorption of foreign matter in the shape of material aliments. The physical process of rapacious devouring will then surely come to an end ; all the crudeness associated with eating will disappear altogether ; new instrumentalities will emerge in the body and new processes subtle and potent will be discovered by it in order to maintain its integrity and growth.

The consequences of this victory over the need for material alimentation will indeed be momentous. For it is not simply the present food-habit of the body that will be replaced by something direct and refined. The liberation of the body from

its utter dependence for its very existence upon the assimilation of material aliments will undoubtedly have a great repercussion on the very structure and organ-systems of our body. For even a little reflection reveals to us that our physical system along with that of other multicellular organisms owes a great deal of its present structure and form, internal as well as external, to the elaborate mechanism devised by evolutionary Nature, for satisfying the nutritional requirements of the body-cells. It will indeed be no exaggeration to say that almost three-fourths of the complexity of the prevailing organisation of our body are due to the present mode of alimentation. Thus the various organ-systems representing the digestive system, the circulatory system, the respiratory system and the excretory system are all geared to play different but essential roles in the total nutritional functioning of the body.

As a matter of fact, our body-cells require a constant supply of aliments for their growth and proper functioning. But these cells of a multicellular body are not in direct communication with the external world. So nutrients have somehow to be brought to these cells. Hence arises the necessity of the *circulatory* system which assures through the agency of lymph and blood a continuous transport of cell-aliments to the various tissues of the body. But the nutrients that are directly assimilable by the cells are not ordinarily available in the external world. So the body has had to be provided with the *digestive system* that has for its role the bio-chemical break-down and transformation of the ingested food-stuffs into simple nutrients capable of being used by the cells. In order to effectuate these bio-chemical transformations the body has to create a large group of bio-catalysts called digestive enzymes. But this is not all. The cells have to gather all their needed energy from the oxidation of the aliments brought to their doors. So, along with these aliments, a constant supply of the vital gas oxygen must be maintained throughout the body. And thus arises the necessity of the *respiratory system*. Finally, in course of metabolic changes the cells liberate some obnoxious products like carbon dioxide gas and urea and these must be eliminated from the living body in order to maintain its well-being. To fulfil this function of elimination the *excretory system* had to be devised.

We thus come to see that so many organs and structures of our present body, *e.g.*, the alimentary tract, the stomach, the intestine, the lungs for the respiratory exchange, the heart for the pumping of the blood, the kidneys, etc., etc., are not at all fundamental and essential to all embodied life, but are merely accessory appendages brought into existence as responses to the basic need for the material alimentation of the body.

And all this has brought about such a complication in our physical structure ! At the same time it has created for the body almost a vicious circle. For although it is a fact that in order to assure the supply of energy-aliments to the body, these complex organ-systems had to be elaborated, a great part of the energy released is actually used up in driving this complicated machinery itself ! As the Mother has pointed out in connection with the possibility of a direct tapping of the universal Pranic energy :

“If you can assimilate that energy, assimilate it directly, then there is no limit to your energy.

“It is not like your stomach which can digest only a limited quantity of food and this food again can give out only a portion—a very small portion—of its energy. For after the energy spent in swallowing, masticating, digesting, etc. how much of it still remains available ? If, on the other hand, you learn...to draw from the universal energy which is freely available in the world and in any quantity, you can take it in and absorb as much as you are capable of it.”¹

Also, the fantastic complexity of the body-structure arising from the exigence of material alimentation makes our body susceptible to a great deal of otherwise avoidable disorders and complication. And the Mother is categorical when she declares:

“The body feels much, very much that everything could be simple, so simple ! And for the body—this kind of individual agglomeration—to be able to transform itself, it has just that need of simplifying itself, simplifying, simplifying. All these complications... which one is beginning now to understand and study, which are so intricate for the least thing—the least of our functionings is the result of such a complicated system that it is almost unthinkable. Certainly it would be impossible for the human thought to foresee and combine all these things—now Science is discovering it. And one sees very clearly that *if the functioning is to be divine*, that is to say, if it is to escape this disorder and confusion, *it must be simplified, simplified, simplified.*”² (Italics ours)

Sri Aurobindo too envisages a radical change in the structure and functioning of the body before it can serve as the vehicle of a supramental divine life. For, the human body’s present “minutely constructed and elaborated system of organs and a precarious order of their functioning which can easily become a disorder, open to a general or local disorganisation”³ represent too heavy a liability for the actually elaborated human body to act as the physical base of a divinised existence. In the words of Sri Aurobindo :

“Even if we suppose a soul, a conscious will at work in this body it could not arrive at a divine transformation if there were no radical change in the bodily instrument itself and in the organisation of its material workings. The transforming agent will be bound and stopped in its work by the physical organism’s unalterable limitations and held up by the unmodified or imperfectly modified original animal in us. The possibility of the disorders, derangements, maladies native to these physical arrangements would still be there and could only be shut out by a constant vigilance or perpetual control obligatory on the corporeal instrument’s spiritual inhabitant and master. This could not be called a truly divine body; for in a divine body an inherent freedom from all these things would be natural and perpetual; this freedom would be a normal and native truth of its being and therefore inevitable and unalterable. *A*

¹ Nolini Kanta Gupta, *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo* (Part Eight), p. 97.

² *Bulletin*, Vol XV, No, 3. p 49

³ Sri Aurobindo, *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, p. 60.

radical transformation of the functioning and, it may well be, of the structure...of the bodily system would be imperative."¹ (Italics ours)

Indeed, one of the urges of the supramental evolution will be to effectuate the necessary change of the most material part of the organism, its physical constitution and its bodily processes. And it is quite clear that with the achievement of the victory over food-need as a consequence of the direct and overt intervention of Supermind, many of the organs of the present human body will be automatically changed in their material working and the need of their instrumentation and even of their existence greatly diminished. This change might ultimately go so far that some of "these organs might cease to be indispensable and even be felt as too obstructive : the central force might use them less and less and finally throw aside their use altogether. If that happened they might waste by atrophy, be reduced to an insignificant minimum or even disappear. The central force might substitute for them subtle organs of a very different character or, if anything material was needed, instruments that would be forms of dynamism or plastic transmitters rather than what we know as organs."²

To minds attached to the present form of things this sort of revolutionary changes in the physical structure and functioning of the human body may appear to be a senseless and impossible chimera. But, Sri Aurobindo warns us, no limits and no impossibility of any necessary change can be imposed on the evolutionary urge. And when Supermind, the divine gnosis, takes charge of evolution, there is nothing impossible under the sun.

But a lingering doubt may still incite the sceptic to declare that even if theoretically valid, the dream of the emergence of a divine body upon earth may perhaps be realised only at the end of thousands of years. So any discussion of the divine destiny of the body or of the possibility of its conquest of sleep or food-need may appear to be premature and therefore bereft of any immediate importance.

But this doubt has got no solid foundation. For the descent of Supermind into Earth-Nature has marked a decisive transition from the evolution in Ignorance to a conscious evolution. The divine potency of Supermind has brought in an element of greatly accelerated speed in the whole process of evolutionary progression. In the words of Sri Aurobindo :

"The increased rapidity is possible...because the conscious participation of the inner being is there and the power of the Supernature is already at work in the half-transformed lower nature, so that the steps which would otherwise have had to be taken tentatively in the night of Inconscience or Ignorance can now be taken in an increasing light and power of Knowledge. The first obscure material movement of the evolutionary Force is marked by an aeonic graduality; the movement of life progress proceeds slowly but still with a quicker step, it is concentrated into the figure of

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

² *Ibid.*, p. 70.

millenniums; mind can still further compress the tardy leisureliness of Time and make long paces of the centuries; but when the conscious spirit intervenes, a supremely concentrated pace of evolutionary swiftness becomes possible. ..An involved rapidity of the evolutionary course swallowing up the stages can. come in when the power of the conscious spirit has prepared the field and the supramental Force has begun to use its direct influence.”¹

Now, such a stage in terrestrial evolution has already arrived. For, since 1956, Supermind or the Truth-Consciousness of Sachchidananda has overtly emerged in the field of evolution to become the governing principle there. And in due course this supramental action is bound to bring about a divine transfiguration of our embodied material existence. And a most important element of this figured physical transformation will surely be the elimination of material food-need with all that it entails in terms of body-changes.

But a sadhaka of the Yoga of Transformation should not for that matter force the pace, abstain from eating and adopt ascetic exercises with the false idea that he can expect to reach the desired physical *siddhi* through external means and arbitrary decisions of the mind. Imitation or semblance will not help in this matter. The main stress should therefore be laid on the change of consciousness, on an “inner liberation by an intimate, a constant, absolute, inevitable union with the vibration of the supramental forces. Then the preoccupation of each moment, the will of every element of the being, the aspiration of the whole being, including each and every cell of the body, will be this union with the supramental, the divine forces. There is no need at all any more to be preoccupied with the consequences that might follow. In the play of the universal forces and their manifestation, *what must be will come naturally, spontaneously, automatically*; one has not to think about it. The only thing that matters is keeping up the complete, total, constant—yes, constant—union with the Force, the Light, the Truth, the Power and the unspeakable Delight of the supramental consciousness.”²

So, the proper attitude for a sadhaka should be not to make any call for an extreme or precipitate rejection of food-need for a still untransformed body but rather to establish a union of the entire being, including the body cells, with the vibration of the supramental force that is actually manifesting in the earth atmosphere. When this union is established, one becomes “free not only from all attachment, from all desire and preoccupation for food but even from all need in respect of food, by being in a state in which these things are so foreign to the consciousness that they have no place there...Then to eat or not to eat, to sleep or not to sleep, all that has no longer any importance. It is an external rhythm left to the play of the universal forces in their totality, expressing themselves through circumstances and persons around you, giving to the body united, united wholly with the inner truth, a suppleteness, a constant

¹ *The Life Divine*, pp. 828-29.

² *The Mother, Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No 3, p. 145.

capacity for adaptation. If food is there, the body takes it, if it is not there, it does not think of it. If sleep is there it takes it, if it is not there it does not think of it. And so on with regard to all things.”¹

Finally, with the progress of the supramental transformation of the physical system, if and when the moment arrives for the need of material sustenance from outside to be completely transcended, it must come “as a result of the awakened will of the spirit, a will also in Matter itself, an imperative evolutionary urge, an act of the creative transmutations of Time or a descent from the Transcendence. Meanwhile the drawing in of the universal energy by a conscious action of the higher powers of the being from around or from above, by a call from above, by a call to what is still to us a transcending consciousness or by an invasion or descent from the Transcendence itself may well become an occasional, a frequent or a constant phenomenon and even reduce the part played by food and its need to an incidence no longer preoccupying, a necessity minor and less and less imperative.”²

At the end, new processes will surely be discovered by the New Body and new instrumentalities are bound to emerge therein in the course of the supramental transformation of our physical existence which will annul all necessity for material alimentation.

And if this attempt at scoring a total victory over material Hunger looks like an act of sheer folly, we may only quote what the Mother has said in another context—the context of the physical conquest of death :

“That seems a madness. But all new things have appeared as madness until they become realities. **The hour is come for this madness to be realised.**”³

END OF PART THREE

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-143.

² *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, p. 54.

³ *Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 85.

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Indian National Songs Edited by R. K. Prabhu (Publishers : Popular Prakashan)
Rs. 10.0.0.

ONE would like to know our National Songs. All songs which have been sung popularly some time or other can be termed 'National'. Their poets have imbibed the fiery spirit of India and given it to the people in literary expression. Some of these songs are written by men who were patriots and have left with us a memory to be stored as a treasure. Surely and definitely they arouse in us a gigantic courage and self-sacrificing will for our Motherland. Most of these poets are well-known and great today. This anthology of their songs sung in the fervour of those exciting days of the freedom-struggle awakens us even today from our stupor.

In the foreword, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi aptly writes : "Shri R. K. Prabhu, a veteran of journalism and the national struggle, has done well in bringing together the English versions of some of the best known and most loved of our National songs."

The book contains songs by such great poets as Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, D. L. Roy, Sarojini Naidu, Iqbal, Subbramaniam Bharati and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. Each song brings back to us the glorious time when India stood with head high to throw away the shackles of foreign rule. One and all, from North to South, East to West the poets have written from the sprung of their patriotism to assist the fighting spirit in the people of India. The INA songs too were once very popular and are appropriately put here.

Sri Aurobindo, in his book *The Future Poetry*, mentions poems which are not the inspirations of mind but come from planes far above, luminous and perennial. These poems he calls "Mantras" as of the old days of the Vedic period. At present those heights are reached momentarily and rarely by poets. But in some cases Sri Aurobindo, when asked by the poets of the Ashram about their creations, has given the sources and the planes of inspiration. His answers are very valuable to the literary mind of today.

Among the songs collected in this anthology, Sri Aurobindo has stated about the national song "Bandemataram" by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee that it is one which can be described as a Mantric song.

Shri R. K. Prabhu has done a good service by printing Sri Aurobindo's translation of the song in full. Two more translations by Sri Aurobindo, those of Dwijendralal Roy's "Mother India" and "Hymn to Mother India", appear in the book.

Plenty of "quotes" can be gathered from these songs. However, I feel that it would not be proper to take any parts out from their complete setting. It is better to read the poems as they are in full. The youths of today may find in this anthology much inspiration.

The book seems to have been priced a bit high, but seeing the binding and good colour jacket one feels that, after all, quality products must cost more. The Publishers deserve our thanks and encouragement.

KUMAR ALI

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

NINTH SEMINAR

27th November 1966

(Continued from the March issue)

WHAT IS TRUE LOVE AND HOW TO FIND IT ?

IV

IF in this terrestrial creation there is anything most powerful and pervasive, most luminous, energising and impelling, innate and intimate, a leaven sweetening life all through, perhaps the most outstanding of all the forces of Nature, that is love. Who is there who is not moved by its magic charm and does not yield to its irresistible sway? Yet what generally passes for love is but a caricature, a degraded, deformed and even repulsive state of the divine force that is true love. In its origin, love is a self-existent force. It came down upon earth as the Divine's Grace and installed itself at the very heart of the creation to take hold of the revolting elements and help them purify themselves and regain their native immaculate nature. In its essence, love is a transmuting agent in making the inconscient world conscious of its Divine origin. Its deformations and degradations that we see here are the result of its immixture in Ignorance and obscurity. But with the clear vision of a seer one can observe that the whole course of earthly evolution is a gradual unfolding of the veiled consciousness and love is its propelling incentive. It is a mediatrix between Matter and Spirit a cohesive force of oneness between man and man, between Earth and Heaven.

Love is not limited to the human species alone. But evidently, it has taken a more or less conscious shape after reaching the human level of consciousness. Ordinary human love is a kind of fellow-feeling, call it compassion, pity, tenderness, affection, sympathy (sympathy in its essential sense—a like-feeling), as you please. It may act in any form, in any degree but the inner character remains the same. This feeling may arise from various sources : mutual affinity or attraction between soul and soul, between mind and mind; or it may arise from a gross physical and vital attachment. And naturally enough, the quality of love is largely determined and governed by the main source from which it springs. It does not however necessarily follow that love born of the gross physical or lower vital must wallow in the mire all one's life long. That would be denying the law of evolution and the action of Grace.

Conversely, love born of mental affinity, especially between opposite sexes, starting, say, as Platonic love, may, unless the parties are on their guard, outstrip the limit and carry them into the abyss. Besides, ordinary human nature is a complex of inconscience, subconsciousness, physico-vital and physico-mental trends; it casts what was pure divine love in its own complex mould, nullifies its homogeneity and desecrates its absolute purity. Not that there are no sublime exceptions. But such exceptions must be the *élite* of humanity, a small number of rare individuals scattered here and there. That is why a good number of spiritual leaders advise shunning the world and all its attachments. But to the infinite and unprecedented good luck of man and the world, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, the two mighty Incarnations of the Supreme Love, have come upon earth and plunged right down to the base of Inconscience in order to join it with the Superconscience and turn the Earth into the Home of Love, Light and Bliss. In the New Age they are initiating, nothing will be rejected as earthly or earthy. On the contrary, Heaven will emerge from everywhere, even from Hell. For there is nothing that is not the dwelling of the Divine. The Supreme's Love knows no withdrawing from anything however ugly or unlovely, however hideous, monstrous or abominable.

In the sphere of human love, we must take serious note of the Master's warning : "Love without knowledge is a passionate and intense, but blind, crude, often dangerous thing, a great power, but also a stumbling-block."¹ What then is the knowledge and from where to seek it ? It is from the Master himself, from his inspiring teachings, from the ideal itself he has so powerfully held up before us—powerfully, because his very words are charged with mantric power. Says he, "We are sons of God and must be even as he".² Submerged in human feebleness, we may take it as too high for us, inconceivably far beyond our capacity. But we must draw strength from the divine truth that we are : "We are sons of God." The more we think of this truth, the more we meditate upon it, constantly impress it upon our consciousness, in a word the more we live it successfully, *ipso facto*, perhaps, our sense of ego, our I-ness and separateness will diminish and yield place to our identity with Him and progressively help shuffling off the animality in our manhood. Then only will it be possible for us to be imbued with true Love, the Love Divine, the Love that knows no give-and-take but gives, gives and gives, with no demand for a return. Self-giving to and not possessing the beloved—that is the criterion of true Love. Another criterion is boundless expansiveness, with no restriction. Love universalised, intensifying the spirit of oneness, embracing the whole earth, all humanity, as one intimately-related family—this is the divine destiny of Man and Earth.

The way to find true Love is no groping-about-in-the-dark business. True Love is innate in our psychic love, or the Divine's Love taking the form of our psychic love. To call it forth into our conscious being as a governing factor of our life,

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga I, The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 623.

² Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book I, Canto 4, p. 77.

or make it a dynamo of spiritual energy needs only our sincere and constant aspiration and prayer. Then will the Grace from above come down as its fulfilment. Especially in this vibrant Hour of God, vibrant with the Supramental Power constantly in action, any sincere spiritual endeavour, however arduous, is sure of fulfilment. God bless us all.

BAREN GHOSH

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After all the speeches were over, Kishor Gandhi read out the following words of the Mother specially written on the subject of the Seminar :

Do *you* know what is true love ?

There is only *one* true love, the love *from* the Divine, which, in human beings, turns into love *for* the Divine.

Shall we say that the nature of the Divine is love.

8.11.1966

The Mother

Then he read out the following short extracts from Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's writings bearing on the subject, to which he had referred in his introductory speech.

(1)

Love is the crown of all being and its way of fulfilment, that by which it rises to all intensity and all fullness and the ecstasy of utter self-finding.

(*On Yoga I, The Synthesis of Yoga, p.623*)

(2)

Love at its origin is a self-existent force, an absolute, a transcendent (as I have put it), which does not depend upon the objects—it depends only on itself or only on the Divine ; for it is a self-existent power of the Divine. If it were not self-existent, it would hardly be independent of the nature or reaction of its objects. It is partly what I mean when I speak of transcendent Love—though this is only one aspect of its transcendence. That self-existent transcendent Love spreading itself over all, turning everywhere to contain, embrace, unite, help, upraise towards love and bliss and oneness, becomes cosmic divine Love ; intensely fixing itself on one or other to find itself, to achieve a dynamic unification or to reach here towards the union of the soul with the Divine, it becomes the individual divine Love. But there are unhappily its diminutions in the human mind, human vital, human physical; there the divine essence of Love easily becomes mixed with counterfeits, dimmed, concealed or lost in the twisted movements born of division and ignorance.

(*On Yoga II, Tome One, pp.744-45*)

(3)

The Divine's love is that which comes from above poured down from the Divine Oneness and its Ananda on the being—psychic love is a form taken by divine love in the human being according to the need and possibilities of the human consciousness.

(On Yoga II, Tome One, p.735)

(4)

As supramental Truth is not merely a sublimation of our mental ideas, so Divine Love is not merely a sublimation of human emotions ; it is a different consciousness, with a different quality, movement and substance.

(On Yoga II, Tome One, p.724)

(5)

Love, when it is worthy of the name, is always a seeking for union, for oneness, but also in its secret foundation it is a seeking, if sometimes only a dim groping for the Divine. Love in its depths is a contact of the Divine Possibility or Reality in oneself with the Divine Possibility or Reality in the loved. It is the inability to affirm or keep this character that makes human love either transient or baulked of its full significance or condemned to sink into a less exalted movement diminished to the capacity of the human receptacle.

(On Yoga II, Tome One, p.745)

(6)

Nothing lasts in the mind and vital, all is a flux there. The one thing that endures is the soul, the spirit. Therefore love can last or satisfy only if it bases itself on the soul and spirit, if it has its roots there. But that means living no longer in the vital but in the soul and spirit.

(On Yoga II, Tome One, p. 732)

(7)

Love is the one emotion in us which can be entirely motiveless and self-existent ; love need have no other motive than love.

(On Yoga I, The Synthesis of Yoga, p.637)

(8)

One can love divinely only by becoming divine in nature ; there is no other way.

(On Yoga II, Tome One, pp.734)

(9)

Love leads us from the suffering of division into the bliss of perfect union, but without losing that joy of the act of union which is the soul's greatest discovery and for which the life of the cosmos is a long preparation. Therefore to approach God by love is to prepare oneself for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment.

(*On Yoga I, The Synthesis of Yoga*, p.623.)

(10)

The inner loneliness can only be cured by the inner experience of union with the Divine ; no human association can fill the void.

(*On Yoga II, Tome One*, p.790)

(11)

It is as the love of the Divine grows that the other things cease to trouble the mind.

(*On Yoga II, Tome One*, p. 790)

(12)

The love of the sadhak should be for the Divine. It is only when he has that fully that he can love others in the right way.

(*On Yoga II, Tome One*, p.791)

(13)

Love is not sexual intercourse.

Love is not vital attraction and interchange.

Love is not the heart's hunger for affection.

Love is a mighty vibration coming straight from the One, and only the very pure and very strong are capable of receiving and manifesting it.

(*Bulletin*, November 1963)

THE MOTHER

(14)

The Rungs of Love

At first one loves when one is loved.

Next, one loves spontaneously but one wants to be loved in return.

Further on, one loves even if one is not loved but one still wants one's

love to be accepted.

And finally one loves purely and simply without any other need or joy than that of loving.

(*Bulletin*, April 1966)

THE MOTHER

(15)

Of all loves, the most perfect love, the most lovable love is the Lord's Love.

(*Bulletin*, August 1965, p.126.)

THE MOTHER

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

Compiled by KISHOR GANDHI

HER 'CORDON' WAS NOT 'BLEU'*

It was a Caramel Custard...Supreme !
In fact, it was an Epicure's dream.
But was she satisfied ?
Not her—for she cried :
"The top must be *brown* for my scheme."

She peered with fanatical gleam,
At this gourmet's delight, full of cream.
But she had quite a bout...
To get the thing out
Of the pot. She was cooking by steam.

And to come to the end of this theme,
It shot in the air like a stream
Of H.M.S.¹ white-wash
And she yelled out : "O, My gosh—
Quel horreur, quel dommage, *quel 1 yme* !"

LEENA

* Being an eye-witness account of the rise, decline, and fall of a 'Crème Caramel'.

¹ The Ashram's "House Maintenance Service"

UNPALATABLE MAN

THE LATEST ANTHROPOLOGY

ONE of man's earliest ancestors, says Anthropologist Louis Leakey, was a puny creature named *Kenyapithecus africanus* that inhabited the earth 20 million years ago. Bones that Leakey found in his native Kenya are the basis of this conclusion. But they also raise a troubling question. How did the weakling those bones belonged to ever survive his hostile environment? He would have been no match for faster and more powerful carnivorous beasts, such as the forbears of lions and leopards, and man did not begin making weapons capable of warding off attacks of big cats until about 2,000,000 years ago.

The answer, Leakey has been telling audiences on his current U.S. speaking tour, may be simply that predatory animals cannot stomach man unless they are desperately hungry. "Nature endowed us, like the shrews," he says, "with something of either a nasty taste or smell."

Back in Kenya, Leakey has seen hungry lions walk through camps past sleeping, defenseless men to stalk and kill nearby antelope. On the rare occasions when they do kill a man, he says, they merely sniff at his body and walk away in disgust with nary a taste. He also notes that the big cats feast on baboons but generally disdain chimpanzees, which are closer relatives of man and presumably give off their version of the manlike odor that these predators find so unattractive. "To this odor," Leakey believes, "we owe our survival. Man is not cat food."

(With acknowledgements to Time, February 24, 1967, p.56)

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

NEWSLETTER

No. 4

April 1967

1. All Life is Education

Sri Aurobindo once wrote "All Life is Yoga." One need not stretch the imagination very far to agree that the practice of yoga is a form of education, and that the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, the Purna Yoga, is an education that would embrace all aspects of life, physical, vital, mental and spiritual.

It is high time that the educators of the world found the initiative to investigate the enormous benefits the Integral Yoga has to offer humanity.

Yoga is union with the Divine—that is, union with the Truth Consciousness. To turn towards Truth is the only possible way man has of solving the complex problems that increasingly beset his life in the world today.

Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga does not deny life but rather embraces life to a much fuller extent than ordinary man can envisage. The average man in the street is merely living to die; at best it is only a half-living because he is so rarely conscious of his true self or more than a small part of his being. Somewhere along the line of evolution man has to be educated to live in his whole being; sometimes he has to be made aware of the great potentialities that lie dormant in the larger part of his consciousness. That time is now and the somewhere should be here and now when the world problems cry out for the help of higher powers of consciousness, wider ranges of vision if man is to progress to the next step in his evolution towards that Perfection to which his soul aspires.

Education can only be truly effective if it takes cognisance of five basic principles—that is, if it

- (1) has a strong foundation, *i.e.* tradition, teaching, (religious, spiritual or yogic),
- (2) brings forth the best that is latent,
- (3) recognises the values of creativity,
- (4) has patience to allow freedom of growth,
- (5) knows how to direct values to their true goal and purpose.

Ideally, the fifth of these principles should reflect the first. The goal should already be written in the constitution of the foundation as always something to be achieved, aspired to, won. The second can only come about if 3 and 4 are agreed to and understood as prerequisites to "educate" that which is latent in the being. Actually school life can only prepare one to acquire a habit or will to learn, or at least a love for learning. To continue to live to live—as opposed to live to die—one must continue

to learn, to progress in knowledge and awareness, whence each new dawn is the promise of a new adventure in living, in growing towards perfection in consciousness and the delight of existence.

Anyone with a basic intelligence will agree that this is an ideal which all men ought to pursue. Then where does it go wrong? Where do the majority of men get side-tracked into the rat-race of life, the vicious competitive misery of the modern world? Undoubtedly it is to be found in our educational system. Probably as early as the kindergarten "sweet" or "toy" for the child who is, not necessarily the most promising pupil, but he who does what the teacher wants him to do. Certainly as this attitude of "competitive grab" progresses to prizes and then on to pieces of paper with *Baccalaureus Artium* or *Magister Artium* written on them the species is well established on its 'selective' road to ruin. The harm done to the inner being of the individual is only reparable by long years of purification and *tapasya*—quite unnecessary if only this 'competitive grab' process is not maintained during the formative years of a child's growth. Competition stems from one dog trying to steal another dog's bone. It is an instinct of the animal. Man has to aspire to transcend his animal nature, because this is the first step necessary to becoming a true member of the human race with the status and dignity of an individual. We have been playing at being half animal half man long enough; it is time we acted our age (about 50,000 years) if we are to cope with the problems which modern life confronts us with today.

In most western countries the competitive 'spirit' has always been encouraged, has always been considered a virtue. A virtue for what? Towards what? For getting the better of one's fellow? Towards fighting for one's desires? Towards one World War after another?

To the sensitive individual, the poet, the thinker, introspective by nature, it is a horror. And yet he is the individual who carries the seeds of creativity from one generation to another. It is left to the extrovert, the competitive spirit of the fighter for the bone to destroy what his brothers have built up.

How long will most men admire only physical force, physical love and physical beauty? Surely we have outgrown such admiration. Surely there are among those who sit in authority a few who see the Path along which the human race must tread if it would raise its head above the valley of the shadow of death, climb the peaks where the Sunlight of Truth can be seen heralding the Dawn of an Era yet to be.

2. *English Educational Terms*

In answer to several inquiries about English educational terms the following are the most up-to-date.

Maintained Schools : There are 30,000 primary and secondary schools, wholly supported through taxes, that compose the great part of the system of public education in England and Wales—in short, state schools.

Registered Schools : There are 3,500 independent schools, not open to government inspection.

Grammar Schools : A term mainly applied to maintained secondary schools that are selective, offering an academic curriculum leading to General Certificate of Education and higher education.

Secondary Modern Schools : Secondary maintained schools that are non-selective, which therefore take the bulk of secondary school students offering a combination of academic and vocational work.

Public Schools : A term which most often means the 200 independent institutions, including many of England's most prestigious boys' boarding schools.

Streaming : The division of students by ability in both the primary and secondary schools into separate classes.

Eleven-Plus : The procedure by which students at the end of primary school (about the age of eleven) are assigned to grammar, secondary, modern or other types of schools; the decision is based on several factors, the chief one being an examination in English and arithmetic.

Sixth Form : Generally the last two years of secondary school which involve specialized study for national examinations.

3. *Thought of the Month*

A divine life in a material world implies necessarily a union of the two ends of existence, the spiritual summit and the material base.

Sri Aurobindo, *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*, p. 9.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT