

MOTHER INDIA

MAY, 1968

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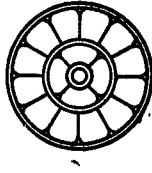
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Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XX

No. 4

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail"

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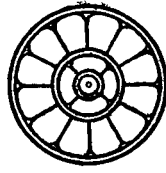
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WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Stop fearing and
the bothers will stop
also.

A child of mine
cannot fear

blessings
F

UN ENTRETIEN DE LA MERE

IL faut être d'une sincérité absolument transparente. Le manque de sincérité est la cause des difficultés rencontrées actuellement. L'insincérité est dans tous les hommes. Il y a peut-être cent hommes sur terre qui soient totalement sincères. C'est la nature même de l'homme qui le rend insincère, c'est très compliqué, car il est constamment en train de tricher avec lui même, de se cacher la vérité, de s'excuser. Le yoga est le moyen d'arriver à être sincère dans toutes les parties de l'être.

Il est difficile d'être sincère, mais on peut au moins l'être mentalement, c'est ce que l'on peut exiger des Aurovilliens.

La force est là présente comme jamais, c'est l'insincérité des hommes qui l'empêche de descendre, d'être ressentie. Le monde est dans le mensonge, tous les rapports entre les hommes n'ont été jusque là basés que sur le mensonge et la tromperie. La diplomatie entre les nations est basée sur le mensonge. Ils prétendent vouloir la paix et s'arment d'un autre côté. Seul la sincérité transparente chez l'homme et entre nations permettra la venue d'un monde transformé.

Auroville est la première tentative de l'expérience. Il naîtra un monde nouveau si les hommes veulent faire l'effort d'une transformation et d'une recherche de sincérité; c'est possible. De l'animal à l'homme des millénaires ont été nécessaires; aujourd'hui l'homme, grâce à son mental, peut accélérer et vouloir une transformation vers un homme qui sera Dieu.

Cette transformation à l'aide du mental (en s'analysant) est une première étape, ensuite il faut transformer les impulsions vitales. C'est beaucoup plus difficile, et surtout transformer le physique : chaque cellule de notre corps devra devenir consciente. C'est le travail que je fais ici; cela permettra de vaincre la mort. C'est une autre histoire; ce sera l'humanité du futur, peut-être dans des siècles, peut-être plus rapidement. Cela dépendra des hommes, des peuples.

Auroville, c'est le premier pas vers ce but.

Février, 1968

A TALK OF THE MOTHER

THERE should be an absolutely transparent sincerity. Lack of sincerity is the cause of the difficulties we meet with at present. Insincerity is in all men. There are perhaps a hundred men on the earth who may be totally sincere. It is man's very nature that makes him insincere—it is very complicated, for he is constantly tricking himself, hiding truth from himself, excusing himself. Yoga is the means to become sincere in all the parts of the being.

It is difficult to be sincere, but you can at least do so mentally, it is this that one can demand of Aurovillians.

The force is there, present as never before, it is the insincerity of men that prevents it from descending, from being felt. The world is in falsehood, all the relations between men have so far been based only on falsehood and fraud. The diplomacy among nations is founded on lies. They claim to desire peace and, on the other hand, arm themselves. Only transparent sincerity in men and among nations will permit the advent of a transformed world.

Auroville is the first attempt of the experiment. A new world will be born if men are willing to make the effort of a transformation and of a quest for sincerity; it is possible. From animal to man thousands of years were necessary; today man, thanks to his mind, can speed up and will a transformation towards a Man who shall be Divine.

This transformation with the help of the mind (by analysing oneself) is the first stage, afterwards we have to transform the vital impulses. That is much more difficult, and, above all, to transform the physical : each cell of our body should become conscious. This is the work I am doing here; it will permit the conquest of death. That is another story; that will be the humanity of the future, perhaps in centuries, perhaps more rapidly. It will depend on men, on peoples.

Auroville is the first step towards this goal.

February, 1968

THE MOTHER

READING SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

A LETTER OF THE MOTHER

Q. Comment lire les livres de Sri Aurobindo et de la Mère ?

R. La vraie méthode est de lire peu à la fois, avec concentration, puis de garder le mental aussi silencieux que possible, sans essayer activement de comprendre, mais tourné vers le haut, dans le silence, et aspirant à la lumière. La compréhension viendra peu à peu.

Et plus tard, dans un an ou deux, tu reliras la même chose et alors tu sauras que le premier contact avait été vague et incomplet et que la vraie compréhension vient plus tard après avoir essayé de mettre en pratique.

16.10.1967

Q. How should one read the books of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ?

A. The true method is to read a little at a time, with concentration, then keep the mind as silent as possible, without trying actively to understand, but turned upward in the silence and aspiring to the light. The understanding will come little by little.

And later, in a year or two, you will re-read the same thing and then you will know that the first contact was vague and incomplete and that the true understanding comes later on when you have tried to put into practice.

16.10.1967

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

Q: An old man of sixty began practising Yoga by reading your books. Eventually he developed signs of insanity. His son describes his condition and asks for advice. I am sending the letter.

A: As for the letter, I suppose you will have to tell the writer that his father committed a mistake when he took up Yoga without a Guru—for the mental idea about a Guru cannot take the place of the actual living influence. This Yoga especially, as I have written in my books, needs the help of the Guru and cannot be done without it. The condition into [which] his father got was a breakdown, not a state of siddhi. He passed out of the normal mental consciousness into a contact with some intermediate zone of consciousness (not the spiritual) where one can be subjected to all sorts of voices, suggestions, ideas, so called inspirations which are not genuine. I have warned against the dangers of this intermediate zone in one of my books.¹ The sadhak can avoid entering into this zone—if he enters, he has to look with indifference on all these things and observe them without lending any credence,—by so doing he can safely pass into the true spiritual light. If he takes them all as true or real without discrimination, he is likely to land himself in a great mental confusion and if there is in addition a lesion or weakness of the brain—the latter is quite possible in one who has been subject to apoplexy—it may have serious consequences and even lead to a disturbance of the reason. If there is ambition, or other motive of the kind mixed up in the spiritual seeking, it may lead to a fall in the Yoga and the growth of an exaggerated egoism or megalomania—of this there are several symptoms in the utterances of his father during the crisis. In fact one cannot or ought not to plunge into the experiences of this sadhana without a fairly long period of preparation and purification (unless one has already a great spiritual strength and elevation). Sri Aurobindo himself does not care to accept many into his path and rejects many more than he accepts. It would be well if he can get his father to pursue the sadhana no farther—for what he is doing is not really Sri Aurobindo's Yoga but something he has constructed in his own mind and once there has been an upset of this kind, the wisest course is discontinuance.

21.4.1937

¹ This warning against the dangers of the intermediate zone was given by Sri Aurobindo in a long letter which was first published in 1933 in the book *The Riddle of This World*. This letter is now included in *On Yoga* II, Tome Two, pp. 158-66. (Editor's Note)

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. Mamlal, Dr. Becharlal, 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.)

MARCH 3, 1940

B: There is a superstition that by looking at the moon one gets mad. Is there any truth here?

SRI AUROBINDO: Ramachandra says that. According to him, Premshanker got mad by concentrating on the moon. Poets are said to be influenced by the moon, but, I suppose, poets are mad people.

B: I personally get much peace by looking at the moon.

N: But you have a fear of getting mad? *(Laughter)*

SRI AUROBINDO: If you simply look without concentration, it is all right! *(Laughter)*

P: In a journal K gives an explanation of the earthquake in Turkey. He says that it is due to the war-fever in Europe.

SRI AUROBINDO: How? What has Turkey got to do with the war-fever?

P: His argument is queer. He says: "When the stomach is upset, the head aches; when the hand steals, the back gets a beating."

SRI AUROBINDO: That doesn't always hold. The head may ache without any stomach-upset or the hand may indulge in stealing without the back getting beaten.

P: In his view the question is whether the moral law is partially active or absolutely active. Is there any room for accident or chance?

SRI AUROBINDO: Why take for granted that these are the sole alternatives? There may be so many other factors.

P: He speaks of fate.

SRI AUROBINDO: There may be things like that.

P: Gandhi's explanation of the Bihar earthquake is similar. He said it was due to the sins of the people.

SRI AUROBINDO: That at least is more reasonable than K's idea. The sins are Indian and the earthquake is Indian. But why should the war-fever in Europe make Turkey have an earthquake? I don't understand, in any case, why people always associate events with morality and give interpretations in terms of sin and punish-

ment. It is a question I have raised in *The Life Divine*. If, for instance, a man gets knocked on the head by some accident, why bring in the question of morality and say that it must be due to his sin or karma? And what have the peasants dying in Anatolia by earthquake got to do with the sins of people arming and fighting in Europe? The disaster is due simply to the movement of Nature's forces.

P: K says it is a question of faith, not intellectual explanation.

SRI AUROBINDO: Then why argue about it and give reasons? We might as well say that S is suffering because of the sins of mankind. According to the Hindu Shastras, four generations suffer for the sins of the father.

S: That is hereditary syphilis. (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO: And, according to the Mahabharata, the King is responsible for the sins of his subjects. In that case, Mustapha Kemal will be responsible for the earthquake because he abolished the Caliph, religion, etc. If the headache is due to the stomach, what about Gandhi's blood-pressure? Is it due to the stomach also? It would be more correct to say that it was due to the sins of Jinnah. (*Laughter*)

S: Moral Law is not the creator and upholder of creation.

SRI AUROBINDO: No, prior to man there is no moral law. In the material or vital world, moral law doesn't exist. It comes in with man, and at a certain stage of his development it is useful. Even then, it is a social necessity, because without some kind of moral law society can't exist. But to say that the world is regulated by moral law is to deny the facts of existence. That is absurd. There are two ways: one can either go beyond moral law as we seek to do by spirituality or one can uphold moral law as an ideal to be realised. This is understandable. If there is a moral legislator of the world, why does he give the same punishment for different sins?

P: K says man ought to learn lessons from these things.

P: Vinoba Bhave maintains that one must even starve to death.

SRI AUROBINDO: For nothing?

P: For ahimsa, non-violence.

SRI AUROBINDO: Perhaps that's nothing. (*Laughter*) Even then it won't solve the problem, for you will be killing so many germs in your body by starvation.

P: He says one has the right to take one's own life.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is questionable. You have no right to take the life that has been given to you for a particular purpose.

MARCH 4, 1940

N: A says he has not done very well by withdrawal, since he gets disturbed by reading papers, talking about politics, etc.

SRI AUROBINDO: Mere withdrawal is not enough. A man may separate himself from the contacts of the world but it doesn't mean that all his desires and hankerings have ceased. If you simply withdraw without throwing away the seeds of attachment and not replace the ordinary by the spiritual consciousness, the problem remains

unsolved. If you permit the seeds to remain, they may keep quiescent for a time but as soon as circumstances present themselves they may come up. Withdrawal may lead to a neutral state but that is not our Yoga. We want spiritual dynamism as the source of action.

N: If he is doing his philosophical writings with a spiritual attitude the spiritual consciousness must be there.

SRI AUROBINDO (*laughing*): Must it? Attitude is not enough. There must be an inner change too. Of course if one wrote from his personal experience and vision it would be different. But remaining withdrawn need not lift one into the spiritual consciousness: one may very well be in the mental consciousness. Philosophical writings and political activities are both of the mental plane.

N: He speaks of the fundamental calm and peace.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, but that is not sufficient. There must be the spiritual dynamism too, which would be projected in all his activities. When his mind is quiet, he is in contact with the calm and peace which is a reflection of the Brahmic Consciousness, but when he comes out into activity his mind works in the same old way. He doesn't seem to have used his withdrawal in the right manner, or he may have been satisfied with the fundamental calm and peace.

S: There are many people who have peace or have experienced a descent of peace into them—solid peace which is the peace of Brahman. (*To N*) You had it yourself.

N: No, I didn't.

SRI AUROBINDO: He is indignantly denying it.

S: At least experience of light and force.

N: Not of light.

S: In the name of A he is speaking about his own problem, Sir. (*Laughter*)

N: In a way—as I want to understand.

SRI AUROBINDO: His own problem? It is to get to the Brahman or to the psychic being.

N: His psychic has emerged.

SRI AUROBINDO: Simple emergence will not do, the psychic must come forward.

N: I have no trouble with newspapers.

SRI AUROBINDO (*laughing*): That's because you had no ambition for political work and that is hardly a merit. A had a great attraction to it.

N: I am a little surprised. When you said that there are five or six people in the Ashram who are living in the Brahmic Consciousness, I thought A was one of them.

SRI AUROBINDO: The Brahmic Consciousness? I must have used the term loosely. Peace and calm is only a part of that Consciousness and not the whole of it. One may be in contact with it or able to go into it at will or there may be the reflection of it in the mind and the vital. All that is partial. One has to go further into the top consciousness above the head and remain there.

N: Then I suppose one won't be disturbed by these things.

SRI AUROBINDO: Even if they come, one won't be touched by them. They will

be on the external surface, coming and passing away, or one may look upon them as if they belonged to somebody else. This Brahmic Consciousness descends first into the mental and then the peace and calm remains in all the activities of the mind. The test comes when it descends into the vital. Unless the vital is purified, one may fail. This is called falling from yoga, *yogabhraṣṭa*, as it happened here in the early years. When the Brahmic Consciousness descended into the vital, all broke down.

N: But one can keep it in the mind. It need not come into the vital.

SRI AUROBINDO: No, but that would be the old Yoga, in which people wanted to depart from the world, living in their highest mental consciousness. But when they come into contact with the external world, they can't keep that poise and silence. The seeds have not been thrown away: they have only remained dormant. There are also cases where people leave the vital to do as it likes. You know the story of the Vedantin and Ramakrishna. The Vedantin came to the Math with a concubine. Ramakrishna asked why he was moving about with her. He replied: "What does it matter? Everything is Maya." "Then I spit on your Vedanta," Ramakrishna exclaimed.

S: There are many Yogis with this Consciousness, who live in the world and have contact with the world and yet are in that Consciousness.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, one may exercise a sufficient mental control over the vital.

N: Then the question is: Are they controlling the vital by the mind or has the Brahmic Consciousness actually descended into the vital so that all their activities come from that higher dynamism?

S: Of course their activities are of a limited kind. They accept life only as much as is necessary for their purpose.

N: Then that is different from what we are speaking of.

S: Some people here say that such a realisation is imperfect.

SRI AUROBINDO: Not imperfect. They mean incomplete, and that too from our standpoint. From the standpoint of others it is complete and perfect.

S: It is only you, Sir, who have brought in this idea of acceptance of life, descent and transformation. Others wanted liberation.

SRI AUROBINDO: Liberation is all right. Everybody wants it and must have it.

S: Even the Vaishnavites and Tantriks wanted an extra-terrestrial Goloka or an escape into Shiva. In the South, Ramalinga Swami had the idea of physical transformation and immortality.

SRI AUROBINDO: In the South such an idea is more common.

S: In reference to Dr. B's mention of getting peace by looking at the moon, I may say that some people whom I know get peace by concentration on breath and by repeating a mantra—say, Rama-nama—with each breath.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, that is a quite well known method with pranayama. Any kind of concentration that quiets the mind gives peace.

S (*looking at N and smiling*): If N's path had been of Brahmic Consciousness he would have got it by now. His is of the psychic perhaps.

N: I may get it unconsciously one day.

SRI AUROBINDO: Unconsciously you may have got it already. (*Laughter*)

N: I couldn't quite follow the first part of your answer about the replacement of the ordinary consciousness by the spiritual.

S: He has to carry the message to A. (*Laughter*)

SRI AUROBINDO: What I said was that withdrawal is not enough. The seeds of the ordinary life have also to be thrown away and one has to get the spiritual consciousness, one has to get to the true spiritual dynamism which is the source of right action. What A is doing is the old mental way—namely, the peace and calm behind but the source of action mental.

N: In such action the peace and calm gets disturbed, doesn't it?

SRI AUROBINDO: Does he say it gets disturbed?

N: Perhaps he gets preoccupied with the action.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is different. One can be preoccupied without getting disturbed. And if the mind and the vital are agitated, it means that his consciousness has gone out into the action instead of remaining untouched. He has to see for himself how things are. I don't mean that one shouldn't withdraw. But that is only the first step. Doesn't he know the source of the ideas he is putting forth?

N: He does, but he doesn't know why after a long absence they are coming again.

SRI AUROBINDO: They are coming because there is still something responsive to them. These visitors at Darshan time have a mind similar to his and they know that he has interest in politics.

N: He admits it is a weakness still persisting in him.

S: It is there because India's problem hasn't been solved.

SRI AUROBINDO: Not only that. There is his patriotism. He is thinking of India being this or India being that.

S: D also has this weakness. He can't even sleep if any exciting event takes place. It goes right into his heart.

SRI AUROBINDO: A is not so bad as that, as he is more intellectual. The whole world situation is extremely confused and our Indian problem is no less.

S: It is a reflection of the world problem.

EVENING

S: There is a difference between the reflection of peace and the descent of peace, isn't there?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, descent of peace is more intense and powerful. Besides, the descent opens a way.

S: For other things?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes—and also for the ascent.

S: Another question: how can one be free from ego, have a complete release from ego?

SRI AUROBINDO: What do you mean by a complete release?

S: I mean that the sense of individuality will be lost.

SRI AUROBINDO: When one gets to the Cosmic or the Transcendent, the sense of ego is lost. But complete release is difficult unless the nature is transformed. When the sense of ego is lost, the habit still remains of the old nature. Of course, there is no "I"—ness, one is not egoward in one's actions, etc., but the habit persists. Even when everything is rejected from all the parts, the subconscious remains and has the stamp of all the old things. Only, one is not affected or touched by the habit. One can see that it is something exterior, not properly belonging to one's being. People sometimes think and say that they have no ego, that their ego has disappeared. But others can see quite clearly the egoistic movements or actions which are not apparent to themselves. It doesn't matter if I tell the name now of a case in point, since he is dead. B used to say that he had no ego. The more we contradicted him and pointed out to him the truth, the more he would insist. He used to say that he was moved by some Force. That is true, but he was moved by it because it flattered his ego; if it had not flattered his ego he wouldn't have been moved. He was lacking in self-criticism. You can judge from one statement of his whether he had ego or not. He said: "I alone possess the Truth." (*Laughter*) He was of a rajasic nature and it is very difficult for that nature to get rid of ego.

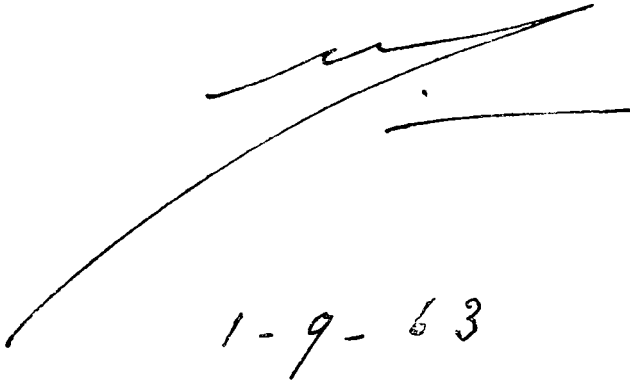
(To be continued)

NIRODBARAN

SALUTATIONS

(Continued from the April issue)

*This is how
all sincere aspirations
are fulfilled
With blessings*



1-9-63

32

Miwani (Africa), 19-7-1954

Dear Mother,

Truth and kindness are wasted with men. You alone know everything. Only by dedication at Your Feet can all peace be gained. All else—vain thought, wrong groping—is useless.

By the prayers, the invocations, the contemplations, the good thoughts and deeds offered to You, one can conquer life. But who knows the complications and entanglements of human life? There is such hypocrisy among men! And that is why the innocent heart gets blows and the soul shudders. I just wonder whether there is

any end to all these things, any shore of peace! Wherever I cast my eyes, I see nothing but a Void.

But no! out of a Void everything is born. Space is a Void. Yet at night this very Void kindles with innumerable stars and brightens the gloom. In the morning it takes into its bosom a swarm of birds and fondles them and takes joy in their chirrupings. It also gives refuge to the sun and delights in its burning rays. So zero is not nothing but everything. So let the hypocrites, branding Truth as Falsehood and extolling Falsehood as Truth, put away all divine things as the Void. But that very Void illumines the future. Everything arises from It.

Mother, Your highest Truth is bound to triumph in the end.

33

Miwani (Africa), 25-7-1954

Extremely dear Mother,

You have made this night magnificent. We all Your children have gathered together and started prayers, meditations and readings. What was read was *Savitri*, the Epic of Sri Aurobindo. I felt within as if You Yourself had been reading it to me and making me understand. On all sides cataraacts of divineness, peace and light were falling and in this wonderful atmosphere my soul had as if come out of its body and begun swimming.

It was as though You had been addressing me and telling me all that my heart felt. And that *very night* I resolved to abandon this illusory world and embrace the Divine Life.

After that a change began in my life. All the knots were slowly unwound and my mind became firm. Now there is nothing but You and You and You. That divine experience was a hint of my future. How can I forget that, O Mother? By all such experiences surely You will make me Yours. This is what the inner hum of the heart tells me.

So now I have no worry. Always I pray to You to make me worthy of the Divine Life. You know the goal of my life. Whatever I have is Yours. All that You wish for me must be the best for me. Do not leave me. I am Yours...

34

Jinja (Africa), 30-7-1954

My dear Mother,

Little by little You make me give up attachments. I see this clearly, and is it not the best thing for me?

You know what my thoughts were in the past and what they are at present. Now You have taken the helm of my life in Your Powerful hands; so why should I worry?

Many religious observances have I practised; I have sought and seen many Sadhus, run to many holy places. But where was the Truth to be found? During that time I could not find You anywhere.

Yes, I have not seen You yet. But I have heard a great deal about You. Further, on seeing Your beloved photograph I have felt that You alone are my *true* Mother and everything. Indirectly You have begun showing me the true path. On that very path I shall walk by Your Grace, Love and Blessings. And, yes, You most tactfully lead me to give up all attachments. Make me leave all the illusions of the world for ever. Finally You alone shall remain for me. And this is just what I want.

Friends, relatives, parents, brothers, sisters—all are merely a picture-play and their feeling of love is but momentary.

Now I at last understand perfectly what the world's allure really is like. So, Mother, now I am much on my guard. You make me see everything and experience all. Now there is none for me in this world except You. I have no desire left now to do anything on my own. Let that happen which You have wished for me.

Mother, I pray for Your sweet Love, Grace, Blessings, so that I may become Yours, wholly, eternally...

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Jinja (Africa), 2-8-1954

Dear Mother,

It is my experience that when I move in the spiritual atmosphere, You are as if in front of me. But when I am plunged in the ordinary atmosphere I feel that I have fallen from a height and You are farther and farther away from me.

Mother, now in whatever atmosphere I may be, I suddenly become aware and the sweet memory of You is revived.

You are mine and I am Yours. Bless me so that I may never leave or forget You.

(To be continued)

HUTA

THE HERO

AN EPISODE OF THE EIGHTEEN-SEVENTIES

A SHORT STORY

QUIET, to a musician, is not relief from sound; it is only a chance to make him listen better to the voice of his art. André Chaudanson found night the happiest time, for he could then concentrate most intently on the sounds that rose and fell continually through his mind. And on this particular night he listened more intently than ever because he felt the sorest need of soothing harmonies. Life was breaking up all around him; discords were written on the face of every man he met. The Prussians were reported to be less than thirty miles from the town where he lived. Any moment the tide of war might sweep towards the inhabitants of Rocheville and submerge the slow sweet routines of peace. Hitherto the red waves had boomed elsewhere, but a sudden *contretemps* had turned them south to Rouen and if the little army opposing them failed to stem the rush, there would be Uhlans galloping through the streets and German gutturals and polysyllables shattering the air of Gallic grace which played round the thoughts and emotions of Rocheville.

André kept on his piano a picture of his Master, and before composing anything he would gaze a long time into those eyes of deep fire and at that brow at once narrow and high which spoke the pure intensity of the soul of René de Bourneval. Surely that face had seen a glory beyond our world; and why should he, André, doubt it who had watched the Master at work and marvelled at that religious passion of his which made the white hair look like a halo over his head. It was not only music that bound André to his Master; it was the particular glow of the Beyond, the far-way note, in the music. He himself had striven to keep the same note sounding in his own work, so that his music might have the distance of a deep slumber as well as the immediacy of a tremendous hand stretched across that distance to touch the hearts of men and guide them towards some great living peace. And now when two nations were at bitter strife, peace was indeed a thing to be desired. So André gazed and gazed at the picture, praying for inspiration.

He imagined the face in front of him to be full of a slow movement, alive with intimate expression, conveying to him what he should put into his music. He thought the eyes shifted gently upwards, and with that motion something in André seemed to pierce a veil of silence extended infinitely above his head, and through the rent in that veil he felt a thin light stream down. With a start he looked up: it was only the sky-light letting in from the roof the rays of the moon that had climbed high over the housetops of Rocheville. But how could he have felt that moonlight? It flowed in a line behind his back and he had not caught any reflection of it in his eyes. Strange that he

should have had that luminous feeling and the moon should have just thrown a thin silver thread through the skylight. There was indeed the candle burning before him but its flicker could not have caused the faint tremble of white fire above his head. What blending of the occult and the natural was here—experienced by him as though through his Master's eyes? Anyway, it was no use keeping the candle burning now that the moon was gradually beautifying the room. André blew out the delicate cone that had kept a wavering play of gleam and shade over the Master's picture; but with the puff with which he blew it out he breathed a spontaneous sigh—an unconscious self-expression, but no sooner had it escaped him than a far music floated to his ears in answer to his yearning and seemed to pass across his face, as it were, fluttering his eyelids, caressing his nostrils with a strange fragrance, curving his mouth into a mysterious smile—until a flame possessed his brain, thrilled through his nerves and the hands ran up and down the keyboard.

There was a tinkle of bells and there was the rush of a mighty wind, both almost combined as if a tempest had set dancing an innumerable carillon. But the tempest itself, as it swept again and again round that invisible belfry, became a giant tune—so immense that André feared his piano might burst with that endless sonority. What puzzled him was that the ringing of bells persisted in spite of the large music and it was a steady unvarying sweetness, a centre to the changing and sweeping glory and rapture. Then his fingers leaped and glided through a more subdued pattern of sound, yet in and out of the controlled harmony the old energy moved until there appeared to be no need any more for power to hurl itself gorgeously at some intractable enemy and a restrained richness swayed like some virgin goddess through the room, all her body a multiform moonlit message of pure peace. Suddenly André stopped; an ominous thud came from afar—another—still one more—and he was on his feet. A scurrying of steps led to his door and his wife rushed in.

"Oh André, Jacques just came to say that our gallant men have lost. We're at the mercy of the enemy. What shall we do?"

"Be at rest, my treasure. Whatever happens, no harm can befall you."

"Jacques also says the whole town is astir to put up a defence."

"That would be extraordinary! We'd be the first to bring a civilian force—a step of men brave indeed. All my sympathy is with them. But I must have a short spell of leisure before it's too late. Leave me a while, and I'll be down with you presently."

She left. André took out his blank sheets of paper and scribbled hastily. The music was still fresh in his ears; he wrote for nearly an hour, adding as he went along, pursuing further in his mind strains he had been too excited to capture wholly; but he felt that what he had got was only a fragment—greater revelations, more powerful enchantments were to come; for, he had echoed but the first few footfalls of some divine peace harmonising the life of the earth—the peace he had invoked in face of the ruin that threatened the town. There was too much noise and confusion in the rest of the house and in the street. The whole town was up; men were shouting, women

talked shrilly, and repeated calls reached him from below. He got up and went to meet the general clamour.

"It's unavoidable!" A chorus of voices enveloped him. "We must fight—they are within a few miles. The barricades are already raised. Not an inch of French soil will be surrendered without being soaked in our blood. But what about our families? There's no time for them to fly."

"We don't care," cried André's own wife. "We shall stand beside you. But don't let the Prussians mock at us as at cowards."

André was surprised at the fierce energy shown by his pretty little wife. He was a gentle citizen, he had never been a fighter, but the defiant note in the woman's voice stirred him. Yes, manhood must be upheld. Let them not take the citizens like rabbits; they will have to march over the murdered body of a heroic resistance. Most of the citizens already carried pistols and rifles. André walked back to his house, and pulled down from the wall his gun, opened the breech and started loading it. Then he carried the fire-arm upstairs to his music-room. The piano stood invitingly, his dear companion; he laid the gun aside, went to the still unshut keyboard, let his fingers drag lovingly over the ivories; a sudden tremor ran through his frame and he heard music again. A shout of joy escaped him as he darted to his stool and sat—but no! he wouldn't play: how could he? All the same, there was no harm in recording as rapidly and as quietly as he could the inflowing harmonies. So he picked up the score-sheets he had cast off and began writing; but before he had gone a couple of lines forward he felt guilty. Was this the time to waste on art? His fellows were preparing to face death. What if the Prussians were known not to molest anybody who offered no resistance? He could not stick at home and let others fight: his manhood was greater than his art.... But he hated killing; he had never indulged even in shooting birds, he had been almost squeamish about these things. He felt terribly perplexed. Flinging away his papers, he fell on his knees. Tears gushed from his eyes, as he spoke, slowly and with deep resolution: "Holy Spirit, ruler of this world—Spirit to whom I have prayed for peace—here I kneel before you, offering up my life at the altar of that Conscience which you have planted in me. If your voice there points me to the battle-field, I will not hang back. Bring out the hero hidden in me as in each man—slay my personal fears, my personal attachments. Let me serve you alone. I have prayed for peace, and I will not shrink when you offer me the peace of the grave."

The door flung open and his wife sank beside him "Oh André, my hero, I have heard you. But forgive me for being weak. Stay back, do not go: I have your child in me—and who shall protect me if you die? I spoke rashly in the street."

"Would my child like to know that its father was a coward?"

Josephine was silent.

"Besides, you will not starve, my dear. Your father has enough to keep you happily."

"Happily? How shall I live without you? It is not starvation I dread. Why are you so cruel?"

"Why count on my death?" And yet he knew that short of death there was no issue out of the problem—none save shirking the problem altogether. Men were aware of his frail health; they would not mind if he kept back with his wife and her aged father. But he could not: his health was after all not so broken really as to excuse him at this critical hour; all the fibres of his manhood protested.

He got up from his knees, took his gun and led his wife downstairs. When he made his appearance outside, his thin hands holding the rifle, all the men shouted "Bravo!" and came and slapped him with a rough affection on his shoulders. But it was not for their praise that he was giving the sacrifice.

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A week later, an old man was on his way to Rocheville. He reached it towards nightfall, much hampered on the route by Prussian officials who held up the train often to inspect the passengers. Here in the town, however, there were only a few of the enemy left, as after capturing it and shooting many of the surviving civilian fighters they had surged onward in a westerly direction. Hardly anybody knew who the old man was; some months ago he had visited the place and a number of interested youths had clustered round him, but those youths were to be seen no more. And because André was one of them the Master had come down from Paris to collect whatever he could of his pupil's papers and to console the young widow.

She was sitting beside her father, near the fire. On seeing René de Bourneval through the window, she rushed to the door.

"Oh my friend, you've come! But poor André! How happy he would have been, André my hero."

And then the whole pathetic story was related. How his wife had overheard his prayers, that heart-rending self-dedication. Then the fight in the streets and the supreme courage displayed by the weak musician. He was among the first to meet the Uhlans. His comrades had wavered a moment at sight of the overwhelming numbers against them, and André had jumped forward, calling on them to follow. The scuffle had been short but fierce. André was struck down; yet his example had put miraculous valour into his friends and they had fought desperately. Even the Prussians remarked, later, on the recklessness with which the men had given battle. And special consideration was shown towards the young widow of that fair-haired and frail berserk who had led the charge. It was a great honour that even an enemy reputed to be brutal had shown chivalrous appreciation.

As the story proceeded, two or three wounded men joined the group and added their testimony to the dead musician's boldness. One of them who had evidently heard about that last prayer remarked:

"He had the soul to live music, not only write it. He moved to his death to the glorious harmony of rifle shots. Admirable I call it. Man who knew the voice of God in his conscience!"

The Master kept silent. Words of consolation failed him. When the talk was over, he expressed a wish to see his dear pupil's papers. "Here they are, sir," cried Josephine. "I have tied them up carefully; they contain the last thing he composed; he was disturbed in the middle of it by the guns."

The Master opened the roll and glanced at the last sheets; his face lit up. "Where is the piano?" he asked, but now in tones almost threatening. Josephine, a little frightened, led him upstairs. He sat and played the unfinished piece. Once more the unearthly bells and the storm of music; once more the controlled cadences—and the paths of peace. The old man got up, trembling—kept a check upon his features and insisted on leaving. "I'll come back," he said, "I want to breathe the open air."

Out into the darkness he walked. Across the streets he went into the clear night of the adjoining fields. And there he stood, his face buried in his hands. Tears rolled down through his fingers. Like a child he wept. Then in the midst of those tears a great fury broke from his lips.

"Fool! Imbecile! To think that he could serve God by heroism. Who ever created him to be a hero? Thousands of men can fight—not one in a thousand can produce masterpieces of music—and he sacrificed himself to the ideal of manhood just to please his petty conscience, when he was made the receptacle of God's rarest gift—that superhuman gift—genius! Set with the mind of a genius and the conscience of a paltry patriot. Waster, disgusting traitor to God, coward enough not to be able to resist his third-rate conscience and serve the Divine. Hero forsooth! Bah..."

K. D. SETHNA

HOW THE MOTHER'S GRACE PROTECTED US

A RECENT INCIDENT

It was on the morning of 4th April 1968, that I was informed by Mrs. Iris G. Rasmussen, an American psychologist, that she was going to visit Mahabalipuram's historical monolithic temples on her way back to Madras. As she was going by an Ashram car, which was to return the same night, she offered to take me also to visit these temples along with a Tibetan Lama who too was going to Madras.

Mrs. Rasmussen, a keen research scholar of family life psychology, was very curious to know about the Ashram life in detail. Though she came to consult me for some chronic spine ailment (slipped disc) of hers, we soon became very friendly, so when she told me that there was place for one person in the car I gave a thought to accompanying her. I had heard previously a great deal about these temples of the 8th century, still standing full of grandeur and architectural beauty and I had often dreamed of visiting them but somehow it had been postponed.

This time, however, I felt a pull and so decided to go. In addition to seeing the temples I was interested in having some more informative and valuable discussions with the eminent lady psychologist about problems arising from psycho-somatic maladjustments, etc. It was just after the usual morning meditation. I was finally informed that she would come to pick me up at about 11-30 a.m.

But there was hardly any time for seeking the Mother's permission and blessings. Still, without informing her I could not go. So I just wrote a few lines asking for her blessings and protection for the three of us and handed the note to Amrita to give it to the Mother when he saw her that afternoon.

Exactly, at 11-30 a.m. Mrs. Rasmussen came in her car to pick me up and we set off immediately. We soon absorbed ourselves in a kind of friendly serious discussion with intermittent long spells of silence, while the Tibetan Lama kept absolutely silent as if non-existent.

It was an empty road all through and on both sides there were shady trees. The car was winding its way very smoothly along the long silent road. We were engrossed in our talks, only now and then we looked out to see how near we had come to our destination. Now we were only 10 miles away from Mahabalipuram. The car was moving with a rhythm, all around it was silence. A bright mid-summer sun was on top filling the world with clear light and warmth.

Suddenly we got an unusual jerk with a bump and as if the whole body were shaken to the bones. We noticed the very alert driver had taken a sudden turn to the left to save us all from an inevitable disastrous clash. Before we could ask him anything a car running from the opposite direction at very high speed passed away like a storm and went out of our sight in a moment. Only a few seconds' difference—

our car was saved without a scratch. A slight touch with that car could have smashed ours to pieces and God knows what would have been our fate. Mrs. Rasmussen was unnerved for a moment. She requested the driver very gently to drive slow.

Then turning towards me she said, "Doctor, do you know, last night only I saw in a dream that I had met with an accident while motoring back to Madras.

I was simply wondering at this strange working of the Mother's all-powerful Grace and protection towards her children. I told Mrs. Rasmussen that the Mother had saved all of us and that I had already informed the Mother about our journey just before we had left Pondy.

Then onwards we proceeded very securely and saw the famous temples and enjoyed the beauty of this ancient place of Pallava Vinga. As Mrs. Rasmussen was interested in Nature Cure also, we were to see the New Nature Cure Hospital at Adyar, Madras.

After making some arrangement for her short stay at Madras I came back home at 9-30 p.m. leaving Madras at 7 p.m.

On my way back home sitting alone in the dark lone car I kept on musing about the Grace and protection extended by the Mother to her children at crucial moments.

When I narrated this story to one of my friends here he remarked, "Who knows, you probably went with Iris to save her from a serious pre-visionsed accident!"

TARAK BOSE

HOW HITLER'S DEATH WAS ESTABLISHED

AN INCIDENT OF MAY, 1945

THROUGH the smoking rubble of Berlin in May, 1945, a Russian girl, Yelena Rzhevskaya, clutching the false teeth from a burned corpse in the shattered Nazi Chancellery, searched frantically for Hitler's dentist.

Was the body that of Hitler? The crucial question had to be settled there and then, for all time, for the sake of history.

Strange edicts were coming from the tortuous mind of Stalin, back in Moscow, that Hitler was not dead, was in hiding, had fled to South America. Soviet intelligence agents, the only ones of the war-time Allies on the spot in Berlin as the "thousand year Reich" was hammered into oblivion, were being called off the search.

But one of them, Yelena, and her chief, Colonel Vasily Ivanovich Gorbushin, were determined to obtain irrefutable proof that Hitler was dead. If they did not, it might be that no one ever would.

Only now has the macabre account of the Russian version of how Hitler died and how they proved it come to be known in the West. Yelena, now a well-known Russian writer, was allowed to publish it, and much of it is given in an article in the authoritative British journal, *International Affairs*, by Mr. Reuben Ainsztein, a specialist in Soviet affairs.

Yelena tells how she was with men of the Soviet Third Assault Army who had been ordered to capture Hitler and how they broke into the Chancellery in the heart of Berlin and rushed down into the Fuehrerbunker, from which Hitler had been giving his last crazed, desperate orders to armies which no longer existed.

They found Hitler's own room empty, except for a portrait of Frederick the Great on one wall and two of Hitler's coats. They were told by Nazis still in the bunker that Hitler was dead and that his body had been burned.

But there was no evidence, and Yelena came across a telegram which Martin Bormann (believed by many still to be alive somewhere in South America) had sent to his adjutant: "Agree with the transfer proposed by trans-oceanic southern countries."

Yelena and her colleagues believed that this might refer to some arrangement for the flight of Hitler or Bormann to South America and so the search for Hitler was intensified.

A group of Soviet generals from Marshal Zhukov's headquarters went to the Chancellery. One of the generals pointed to a corpse with a Hitler-type moustache, grey coat, and darned socks and said: "Here is our man." But it was soon obvious it was not Hitler.

In fact, there was one man who could have told them what had happened and

tried to tell the Russians, a little German stoker in the Fuehrerbunker. But Yelena recalls: "In the chorus of louder and self-assured voices, the voice of truth was not heard. The stoker was so insignificant, so modest, that one found it hard to fit him into events of such a magnitude."

The stoker was trying to tell the Russians how he had seen Hitler and Eva Braun's bodies, wrapped in grey blankets, being carried to the garden entrance of the bunker.

It was in the garden eventually, a day or two later, that bodies were found, the badly burned corpses of a man and a woman, along with two Alsatian dogs.

A commission of Red Army doctors signed a death certificate stating that inside Hitler's mouth they had found fragments of a broken glass capsule, that "death resulted from cyanide poisoning" and that Eva Braun had died from the same cause.

But that day the Soviet press published a report that Hitler was in hiding. "Some of our chiefs," writes Yelena, "aware of the way the wind was blowing at the top, had lost interest in our investigation...and did not demonstrate too much support for our determination to find out."

The team of investigators was severely reduced. It was then that Colonel Gorbushin and Yelena decided to press on to obtain irrefutable proof that the body was that of Hitler. With Hitler's teeth in a kind of little case used for perfumes or jewels, they rushed to the hospital where they had been told they might find Professor Karl Von Eicken, known to have attended Hitler.

They found him, but he said he had treated Hitler only before he came to power. In fact, he had attended Hitler in recent times. He told them that Professor Blaschke, Hitler's dentist, was the man they needed. A Bulgarian student guided them through the city of rubble to the Kurfuerstendamm, where Blaschke's house still stood. Blaschke had flown.

But Blaschke's assistant, a young German woman named Kaetchen Heusermann, was there, and Yelena demanded Hitler's dental files. Heusermann went through the files of Himmler, Ley, Dietrich, the Goebbels family, and then found Hitler's. But the X-rays of Hitler's jaws were not there—and these were needed for real proof.

Fraulein Heusermann suggested they might be in the Chancellery. So off they all rushed to the Chancellery several miles away. The Red Army guard refused to admit them. Colonel Gorbushin had to use all his powers of persuasion.

There, in an air raid shelter that had somehow survived the Soviet bombardment, they found the X-rays and several gold crowns which Hitler's dentist Blaschke had had time to place on Hitler's teeth.

Yelena and the Colonel then had Fraulein Heusermann describe from memory Hitler's teeth, with Yelena writing down the words. Only then were Hitler's teeth shown to the Fraulein, and she recognised them.

The same procedure was followed with the dental mechanic who had made the bridges and crowns in Hitler's mouth. And so, writes Yelena, "the investigation

was completed. Hitler's teeth, irrefutable proof of his death, and all the other documents were despatched to Moscow."

But Stalin, as long as he lived, ordered the Soviet press and even Soviet historians to avoid the subject of Hitler's death, while encouraging rumours that he was still alive in South America and that his whereabouts were known to the Western powers. For years afterwards it was still a forbidden subject.

RICHARD BAXTER

(Reproduced from the "Sunday Standard," Madras, June 11, 1967)

SRI AUROBINDO STUDY SEMINARS AND SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY CONFERENCE

The Tapogiri, Ramgarh (Nainital), U.P. programme is as follows:

(1) *June 3 & 4* (Forenoon and afternoon sessions)—Basic Paper: "The Mother and Her Varied Manifestations (in original statements of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo)."

(2) *June 5*—A whole-day visit to 'Mountain Paradise' and a deep association with nature, the hill stream, the forests and the fruit-laden trees.

(3) *June 6 & 7* (Forenoon and afternoon sessions)—Basic Paper: "The Marvelous Work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and our Great Privilege (in original wordings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother)."

The forenoon sessions are normally devoted to the principles, the essential truths, and the afternoon ones to their application to life and personal queries regarding them.

INDRA SEN

JUNE 15, 1968: THE DATE WHEN WORLDS COULD COLLIDE

It will take only a microscopic change in the atmosphere and gravitational force to bring a mile-wide, billion-ton mass of spinning rock into disastrous contact with the earth in the early morning of June 15, 1968.

The "missile", with a devastation-potential several times greater than the largest nuclear bomb, is a planetoid named Icarus, one of a thousand "wandering worlds" which veer in erratic orbit around the edges of the earth's atmosphere.

It's estimated that twice a century these objects actually collide with the earth. The last occasion was in 1908 when a meteor fell in Siberia, doing breathtaking damage and felling trees for 20 miles around. So another attack could be technically due any time...

Icarus is only one of several dozen huge projectiles at present orbiting in what astronomers call the "asteroid belt". The largest is Ceres, at least 400 miles across, and there are many others over 100 miles wide.

Most of them swing in orbits which take them well away from earth, but Icarus is different. It moves on a circular route which cuts diagonally across those of three planets, including ours.

On June 15, Earth and Icarus will be speeding towards each other at right-angles to miss by about two million miles—a hair's breadth in space terms.

That is if things go according to plan. And not all experts agree that they will. Professor S.T. Butler of Sydney University says that although he doesn't expect a crash, "it would take only a microscopic change in the calculated orbit to put Icarus on collision course with us."

The planetoid's orbit could, he believes, be affected by the earth's gravity. If it did crash through the protective layers of our atmosphere, it could lay waste a city the size of Paris.

Astronomers at the University of California, where Icarus's progress has been carefully observed for the past two years, are confident the planetoid will pass us with space to spare.

This view is backed by Sir Bernard Lovell, chief of the Jodrell Bank radio observatory, and by members of the International Astronomical Union.

But, of course, no one can be sure.

For a small body like a planetoid can have its orbit-twisted suddenly and dramatically if it gets near a planet—changes like these are regularly noticed in comets—and the smaller the object and the closer the approach, the more violent the twist.

In these circumstances, a two-million-mile swerve would be nothing to a planetoid which, like Icarus, will be hurtling through space at one full degree every 20 minutes.

Experts believe there are at least six planetoids at present on orbits which will eventually bring them close to the earth.

There is Eros, brick-shaped, 15 miles by five, and weighing about $2\frac{1}{2}$ trillion tons, which circles the sun between the orbits of Mars and Earth, and has at one point come to within six million miles of the earth's orbit.

In 1937, astronomers got their first glimpse of another of the earth's constant companions, the planetoid Hermes, which zoomed past us a mere 400,000 miles away.

If Hermes—some seven million tons in mass—struck land at its present velocity, it would cause an earthquake about a thousand times bigger than this planet has experienced in recorded history.

And certainly we haven't seen the last of it. Sir Bernard Lovell is only one astronomer who believes that Hermes could, in the not-too-distant future, pass us at about the moon's distance—or even closer.

There's no doubt that some planetoids and asteroids do get immovably on collision course—the estimated 100,000 craters pock-marking the moon's face are evidence of this.

The tracking of these objects is one of the most hazardous operations in astronomy.

When a planetoid approaches and is spotted on film, it is only a matter of luck whether it can be found on other observatory plates to show how its position varies, so that distance and orbit can be calculated by computer.

What can we do to guard ourselves from these raiders from outer space? First, more information is vitally needed; what are asteroids made of? where did they come from?

It seems likely they are the result of a planetary catastrophe between Mars and Jupiter some time during the formation of the solar system.

But the first positive attempt to find out will be made some time in the middle of 1968 when an American Saturn V rocket of the type expected to take the first US astronaut to the Moon, will attempt to capture a small asteroid and televise its secrets back to earth.

One day, it may even be possible for spacecraft to chase large planetoids and even land on them—a project disclosed by American delegates at the recent International Space Congress in Madrid.

Cape Kennedy technicians have even gone further, and have devised theoretical schemes for the "capture" of an asteroid and its conversion into an earth satellite—moving it into the earth's gravitational field by means of powerful rockets.

But before this, science intends to concern itself with the more urgent tasks of tracking planetoids more efficiently and, if possible, protecting the earth against their attacks.

At the moment, there is little we could do to deflect an asteroid from collision orbit.

We need a lot more information before we could, for instance, consider firing nuclear charges into its path.

Until then, we must trust to luck—and keep our fingers crossed on June 15, 1968.

G. R. LANE

(With acknowledgements to the "Weekly Mail", Madras, 27-3-1967)

NEW DELHI, APRIL 13

THE disastrous collision of the Asteroid Icarus with the earth, which some scientists have predicted for July 15 next, will definitely not occur, a Soviet astronomer said today.

Mr. Yevgeny Fedorov, Director of the Astronomic observatory of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, was speaking to a Tass correspondent.

The calculations jointly made by Ukrainian scientists and their counterparts in Moscow and Leningrad proved that the asteroid would come no closer to the earth than 7 million kilometres away, he said.

Long observations of the asteroid serve as the basis for this prognosis. The asteroid's movement, its distance from the earth and the time of its approaching the earth have been calculated under the laws of celestial mechanics.

Prof. Fedorov announced that an expedition is to be sent to a point which can provide a better view of the asteroid approaching the earth.

Meanwhile, Tass reports that the Soviet astronomer Lyudmila Chernykh, discovered a new asteroid yesterday noon.

She was photographing the sky by means of a double 40-cm. astrograph at the observatory in the Crimean peninsula (Ukraine), where conditions for observation are most favourable.

Another photograph clearly showed yet another asteroid, detected recently. Four positions of this fast-moving celestial body were taken.

Closer to the earth than the others, and brighter, it has yet to be named or entered into the catalogue. Scientists are now computing its orbit.

The search for small planets helps to develop Cosmogony, the theory of the origin of the solar system.

The interest in these studies has increased of late, particularly in connection with the advance of cosmonautics.

Spaceships in flight have to pass a belt of small planets, and to avoid collisions, it is important to know their orbits.

Some small planets which pass close to the earth and other large planets may even become staging posts for long-range space flights.

Twenty-nine small planets have been detected from the Crimean observatory this year.—UNI.

(“The Sunday Standard”, Bombay, 14-4-1968)

THE INSIGHT OF HELEN KELLER

SOME EXTRACTS FROM HER WRITINGS

(Helen Keller, blind and deaf from childhood, grew up dumb as well. But she learned to speak with the help of a remarkable teacher and, acquiring education with surprising skill, became an accomplished writer and public speaker. Her expression is of a rare spirit full of natural wisdom.)

It is very interesting to watch a plant grow: it is like taking part in creation. When all outside is cold and white, when the little children of the woodland are gone to their nursery in the warm earth, and the empty nests on the bare trees fill with snow, my window-garden glows and smiles, making summer within while it is winter without. It is wonderful to see flowers bloom in the midst of a snowstorm! I've felt a bud shyly doff her green hood and blossom with a silken burst of sound, while the icy fingers of snow beat against the panes. What secret power, I wonder, caused this blossoming miracle? What mysterious force guided the seedling from the dark earth up to the light, through leaf and stem and bud, to glorious fulfilment in the perfect flower? Who could have dreamt that such beauty lurked in the dark earth, was latent in the tiny seed we planted? Beautiful flower, you have taught me to see a little way into the heart of things. Now I understand that the darkness everywhere may hold possibilities better than my wildest hopes.

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Once I knew death where no hope was. Then Love came and set my heart free. Once I knew only darkness and stillness. Now I know what is hope and joy. Once I fretted and beat myself against a wall that shut me in. Now I rejoice in the consciousness that I can think, act, and attain heaven.

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I know what evil is. Once or twice I wrestled with it, and for a time felt its chilling touch on my life; so I speak with knowledge when I say that evil is of no consequence except as a sort of mental gymnastic. I can say with confidence that the struggle which it necessitates is one of the greatest blessings. It makes us strong, patient, helpful men and women. It lets us into the soul of things, and teaches us that although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of 'overcoming'.

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My optimism is grounded in two worlds: myself and what is about me. I demand that the world be good, and lo, it obeys! I proclaim that the world is good, and lo! facts range themselves to prove it overwhelmingly true. I trust, and nothing disturbs my trust. I recognise the beneficence of the Power which we all worship as Supreme—Order, Fate, the great Spirit, Nature, God. I recognise this Power in what makes

all things grow and keep life afoot. I make a friend of this indefinable Force and straightway I feel glad, brave and ready for any lot heaven made for me. This is my religion of optimism.

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We see only in shadows and know only in part, and all things change; but the mind, the unconquerable Mind, compasses all truth, embraces the universe as it is, converts the shadows to realities, and makes tumultuous changes seem but moments in an eternal Silence, short lines in the infinite theme of perfection. Though with my hand I grasp only a small part of the universe, with my spirit I see the whole; and in my thought I can compass the beneficent laws by which it is governed. The confidence and trust which these conceptions inspire teach me to rest safe in my life as in a fate, and protect me from spectral doubts and fears. Verily, blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed!

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As I look on the mass of events which we call history, I see it take form and shape itself in the ways of God. In the world within and the world without I see a wonderful correspondence, a glorious symbolism which reveals the human and the divine communing together, the lesson of philosophy written large and repeated in fact.

Far back in the twilight I see the savage fleeing from the forces of nature which he has not learnt to control, and seeking to propitiate supernatural beings which are but the creation of his superstitious fears. With a shift of imagination I see him emancipated and civilised: through suffering he has learnt to build a roof over his head, to defend his life and his home; and over his state he has erected a temple in which he worships the joyous gods of light and song.

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As I stand in the sunshine of a sincere and earnest optimism, my imagination paints yet more glorious triumphs on the cloud-curtain of the future; out of the fierce contending systems and powers, I see a brighter spiritual era slowly emerge—an era in which there shall be no England, no France, no Germany, no America, no this people or that: but one Family, the Human Race; one Law, Peace; one need, Harmony; one means, Labour; if I were to say anew my creed of the optimist, I should say something like this: I believe in God, I believe in Man, I believe in the powers of the Spirit.

No man has any right to complain of a universe which God has made good and which thousands of men have striven to keep good. I believe that we should so act that we may draw nearer to the age when no man shall live at his ease while another suffers. These are my articles of faith, and there is yet another on which all depends: to bear this Faith above every tempest which may assail it, and to make it a principle in disaster and through affliction!...

HELEN KELLER

Compiled by CHIMANBHAI

NOVEMBER SEEN

JUST a tree sharing now with me—
A now November punctuates with rain.
Semi-colons soak; exclamations jet!
But no full stop intervenes its wet
To persecute a foot for tarrying.

Nearby, cones of friability,
Night's little seep of unerupting hills
Plot mole's inverted sift of neighbouring.
Though pyramids rebel, no heap avoids,
Offends erosion's gruff authority.

For eyes intent on knowledge-sight
Earth's brittle leaf-unlocking tilt
Provides redundant heights of pilgrimage.
Those sites too high for eye to button through
Revoke the tether-tunnels of the mole.

MOGER

GODHEAD : A BIRTH-DAY POEM

LET us love
A tree
Forked
In triumvirate branchings

A paradoxagon
Of brown-ribbed being
Breathing wild river
And wind

A still yearning
In the sky
Earth-balanced
And green-feathered
In bright leaves

RICHARD BODNER

ESSAYS ON SAVITRI AND PARADISE LOST

THE PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

(Continued from the issue of December 5, 1967)

CLOSELY linked with free will, rises the problem of pain. To pessimists like Schopenhauer, pain is the inevitable condition of existence. Does Milton subscribe to this view? In that case what place has happiness in the scheme of life? We have heard the Vedic seer claiming the universe to be bliss. So why does pain arise at all?

Milton is not an extremist like Schopenhauer and pessimism has not yet distorted his way of thinking. But his puritanical bias looks with suspicion at all aspects of mirth and frivolity, which he links with happiness. If we read through *Paradise Lost* we are struck by the note of sobriety: the note of felicity is markedly absent. And the state of anguish that Milton depicts in Satan and the states of lament spoken of about the fallen pair ring very true in contrast to the states of joy that come to us before the fall and that in heaven have not in them the note of authentic felicity but give us room to suspect that Milton was a pessimist at heart. All this came about from failure in life rather than from doctrinal adherence, and his fighting nature made capital out of this failure and the necessary viewpoint taken. This means he was not a pessimist when young, but was forced to adopt that viewpoint and his inspiration came as a challenge to this defeat.

Another poet to take pain as something divine was Tagore. Pain without its grossness and limitation, an instrument of change that defeated the vulgarity of common mirth: this was the Tagorean doctrine. Milton does not reach this aesthetic summit; to him pain has no philosophical implications, but is a crude result of something wrong, something that was fated to be there due to man's failure. We then ask, What is joy? Is it false? And especially what link has it with the original condition of bliss? A mere statement that pain was a distortion of bliss does not solve the problem; we have to prove its necessity to be, because we see the role of pain occupying ample place in both the epics.

Pain may appear as a vast question mark in the world-scheme. If pain is true, the joy of soul can have no meaning. The adventure of soul into birth bears no significance if it only is for pain, for we know that bliss is the creator and not pain. An ascetic may take pain to be the leaping-ground for an escape. It may turn man, from the irrelevance of his nature, to something deeper; or again it may stand as a stark remembrancer to the darker aspect of life, the naked mask of the ugliness of existence. Judging from the aspects of Milton's epic we experience pain as the last refuge of man, when God and Paradise have both denounced him. The Puritan sect and in fact the whole of the Christian faith have a close association with pain

and suffering has been thus regarded as something sacred, something that leads to the realisation of God. In *Savitri*, however, Savitri's mother is against the ruthless aspect of suffering and she wonders at the utility of the cosmic scheme which made suffering an integral part of it. All have given no reply to queries of such nature which are posed, except to state that pain exists; beyond that we are left in the dark. In *Savitri* we get a very tangible reply through the mouth of Narad.

Pain like ignorance is a deformation of the original condition of bliss. But this deformation has a singular purpose. If we study the process of evolution, we discover pain to be a drive towards progress, the effective agent to rouse nature from torpor, its uncreative sleep and subhuman rest. If pain were to disappear, the direct and ruthless weapon of progress too would disappear. For the cosmic rhythm moves in a self-repeating circle; pain breaks this rhythm, undoes the monotony that has got access into the core of existence and starts a new rhythm, a fresh momentum for a larger destination. This may seem a crude way of doing things. But crude conditions need crude ways of working. So long as the power of ignorance was active in the world, it would work out its problem of change and progress in the primitive fashion. But when man has sufficiently roused to the call of the spirit such methods would be futile. The presence of pain in us reveals our condition. We are yet not sufficiently purified to bear the load of the spirit, hence Nature's primitive way of working goes on in us.

Our humanity itself is not an invariable sign of our progress: there are deeper and subtler differences to be met with and resolved and until this has been done, Nature would continue her hammering action. In a way we may say that the fall that came was a boon in disguise. The pain that visited the primal pair was a necessity. Only, neither Milton nor Christianity has realised the positive aspect of the question. If this fall had not occurred and man had remained in the original ideal state, there would have been no problems, no difficulties, no opposing conditions, even negative circumstances would not have come into being. This fall was necessary. But what lay on the other side of the human journey is missed by the Christian thinkers. They emphasise too much the immediate aspect of sorrow and miss the larger context of world-nature. In contrast, the Indian thinkers lay too much stress on the after-life side of the question to feel the real importance of pain in this present existence. This is wrong by its shirking the question with reference to the immediate issue and postponing it to some uncertain future.

But Sri Aurobindo sees both sides of the question and his conclusion not only solves the issue but also shows the inevitability of pain in the scheme of things. He shows that the problem of pain, seen from a partial point of view, seems insoluble. The larger vision can come from the wider side of our nature which can detach itself from the immediate issue to be able to see the whole gamut of human existence in one great sweep. Then perhaps the conditions may not appear insoluble after all. Otherwise we may take pain as an infliction accorded to us as a result of our action; or again it may seem the harsh curse of some cruel divinity who

enjoys our penury. A more philosophical mind might conceive of a world besieged with sorrow, from which the only solution would be an early escape. All these are partial viewpoints overshadowed by ignorance. Because men themselves are unilluminated, the question remains and the problem of pain has a legitimate cause to exist. Our suffering is all the more acute due to our mind's intervention and our life-part's revolt. The animal does not question the issue, the problem has no scope to exist for it. Pain is to it the very web of its existence. But man, in spite of his mentality, cannot change the conditions. This means pain has a deeper root than his rational thinking can discover. It is a reminder of his shortcoming, and a symbol of his defeat by the conditions of Fate. The solution lies in his surpassing his lower nature and in his becoming the living instrument of the higher spiritual power.

How can he do this—by a single effort or by a concerted attempt? The answer is: the advent of the Avatar or the Incarnation, who will not stand aloof from the pangs of humanity but share its dilemmas and riddles and all its scourges. He would not attempt to escape the tentacles of suffering by taking recourse to his divine status, but like man must suffer the pain he has come to alleviate. Thus Savitri too comes and suffers along with Satyavan his earthly poverty, shares his hopes and finally accompanies him with Death to rescue him into immortality. Sri Aurobindo has described how she suffered in unshared grief, unwept tears, the great load of a tragic fate. She suffered like a human, so that she could touch the very bedrock of mortal penury. The pain becomes yet more striking, the wounds of the sorrow become yet more profound, because she is conscious of her blissful origin. She has sacrificed readily all her felicity to be able to be near her beloved soul. There are several allusions in *Savitri* to the pain suffered by the Incarnation as a reward for the light of deliverance he brought to the world. This was one of the bitterest ironies of the human condition.

Pain is one of the conditions the soul accepts deliberately so that it could be chastened by the fire of the ordeal and purified by the flame of its doom. Pain is only a mask. Behind it is the intense ecstasy; if one shirks to go through this perilous experience, pain overtakes the man and redoubles its flame of suffering. But if one goes through it joyously, pain becomes the balm of joy. If one sees behind the veil, one then does not become stern, morose or saturnine like Dante or a cynic like Milton or a pessimist like Schopenhauer. Pain is there as a condition put before us to be overpassed: its mud is not to be wallowed in. By itself pain is a neutral entity, its negativeness nullifies the levity, commonness and torpor and its positiveness creates conditions of progress and, in its essential character, it is bliss, oblivious of its immortal totality.

Tragedy and pain seem allied. But fatality and tragedy are not. For pain does not destroy and tragedy can be explained in terms of a larger context. But fatality leads to doom and an end and its character is not neutral like suffering. Its violent and negative character seems to be the close of all things from where there is no issue. Such a fatality is there in *Paradise Lost*, which ends the tale of man not only as a

tragedy but as a doom admitting no escape. The pain that is there in *Savitri* is not inevitably negative. We feel behind it the sanction of a Divine Will making it come deliberately in the path of Savitri. The pain that is there in *Paradise Lost* has not this character; there is a finality of issues and a sense of inevitable closing down of the scene, the act of man's disobedience appearing merely as a starting-point of this power. Here pain appears as a vast destructive force, ruthless in its form, invincible in its way of working. That is why the sense of a fatal sorrow is so much embedded in the Christian mind that it has learned to look at all happiness with scorn, suspicion or even hostility.

(To be continued)

ROMEN

APOCALYPSE

How does it burst, this tiny bud
 Into a bloom, a tongue of light?
 How from the dark earth's mortal breast
 A pile on pile of beatitude?

O close the eyes, go deeper still,
 To the thrilled depths, the fire,
 The unthinkable diamond Core
 Of the universe! By its will

The soundless worlds of rapture-glow
 Roll and reveal their treasure. Know,
 Self-lost in the vast burning sea,
 Thou art THAT, O Ecstasy

VENKATARANGA

CAN THE EXISTENCE OF GOD BE PROVED ?

(Continued from the issue of April 24)

(This is a discussion between three philosophers : (1) an Anselmian (A) who believes that the existence of God can be rationally and strictly demonstrated; (2) a Kantian (K) who holds that all arguments that claim to demonstrate God's existence are fallacious; and (3) a Critical Philosopher (C) who agrees with K, but at the same time holds that the proposition 'God exists' is self-evident to the wise.

In the opening 'discussison A expounded the Anselmian argument, better known as the Ontological Argument, to prove the existence of God.)

- C. At our last meeting I said we must look carefully into the notion of necessary existence. But before we do so let us allow A to complete his argument. Suppose we grant that the only two alternatives in the case of God are necessary non-existence or necessary existence. What follows?
- A. I think that necessary non-existence can be ruled out. We can only say of something that it is necessarily non-existent if the concept of it is self-contradictory. *E.g.*, a square circle necessarily does not exist. The concept of God, however, is not self-contradictory.
- K. I agree, but can one be sure of that? The concept of God implies the notion of a maximum, and some philosophers suggest that the notion of an absolute maximum is self-contradictory.
- A. I think that is true only of quantity, or, what by its very nature, is indefinite and so cannot have an absolute maximum. But the infinitude of God is qualitative.
- C. In fact finitude is really a negative concept and implies the concept of the Infinite which, therefore, cannot be self-contradictory. The finite is that which falls short of the Whole and points beyond itself to the Infinite which is, in its essential nature, complete and self-existent.
- A. I am glad we are agreed on this point that the concept of God as the Perfect Being is a genuine concept. From this it follows that we cannot say God necessarily does not exist. Hence the only alternative left is, God necessarily exists.
- K. You are saying that, logically, the question of God's existence cannot be open and that it can only be closed in favour of God, so to speak?
- A. Yes, that sums up my position neatly. And I may now revert to the interpretation given by C and K of the modal hypothetical, if God exists, He necessarily exists. You both said that this means that there is only one possible mode of God's existence, *i.e.*, necessary existence. Similarly I would say that the proposition, If God does not exist, He necessarily does not exist, means that there is only one possible mode of His non-existence, *i.e.*, necessary non-existence. But both

God's necessary non-existence and His contingent existence are inadmissible for the reasons I have given. So we are left with the only alternative, *viz.*, God's necessary existence. Now, C, let us hear why, according to you, the consideration of the notion of necessary existence would raise new difficulties for my argument.

- K. I would request A to state the argument again in a summary form so that we can follow C's comments better.
- A. Briefly, the argument is this: It is possible for God to exist; hence we cannot say, He *necessarily* does not exist. Now of the two modes of existence, contingent and necessary, the latter is superior, and since God, by definition, cannot have an inferior mode of existence, He must exist necessarily.
- C. The last part of A's statement is crucial for his argument. For convenience let us call it 'the superiority premiss'. If we do not grant this premiss A's argument would, of course, break down.
- A. Now what is your objection to the superiority premiss?
- C. I would first like to make a distinction between two kinds of modality, ontological and logical. I want to show that A's use of the term 'necessary existence' refers to ontological modality and, as such, it will not yield the conclusion A seeks to draw from the superiority premiss.
- K. First clarify the distinction between the two modalities.
- C. Let us take the proposition 'God necessarily exists'. This is a modal proposition. Now by logical modality I mean that the proposition is seen by the intellect to be necessarily true, *i.e.*, its opposite is seen to be self-contradictory or in some way impossible. For instance, when we say ' $7+5=12$ is a necessary proposition', the necessity here is logical. ' $7+5=12$ ' represents an intellectual insight which makes the denial of the proposition a logical absurdity. Logical modality thus has reference to our thinking. It stands for what the Idealist thinkers are fond of calling 'a necessity of thought'.
- K. That is how necessity is usually understood. What is ontological modality?
- C. Ontological modality would be the objective correlate of logical modality. It would refer to a characteristic of a thing concerning which we make a necessary proposition. Thus, if it is true that God necessarily exists, God's existence must be conceived as qualified in a certain way corresponding to the necessity of thought which the proposition 'God necessarily exists' expresses.
- K. Do you mean that if we take the two propositions 'X necessarily exists' and 'Y exists contingently', we would have to say that the existence of X, *qua* existence, differs from the existence of Y?
- C. Yes, that's what I mean.
- K. I don't think there is any such thing as ontological modality.
- C. My objection to A's argument would certainly be stronger if what K says is true. But I want to show that even if we grant that there are these two modalities, A's argument passes illegitimately from the one to the other and so has only an apparent validity.

- A. Are these two modalities disconnected?
- C. No, they are essentially correlated. It would make no sense to disconnect them since the logical modality merely reflects the corresponding ontological modality.
- A. I accept the distinction of the two modalities as C has stated it. And since they are correlated the term 'necessary existence' must be understood as referring to both the modalities.
- C. Yes, but I think your argument can only start with a reference to the ontological modality and derives its apparent plausibility because it leads one to assume that we are referring to the logical modality.
- K. Perhaps I shall understand what this ontological modality is if you state your objection to A's argument more fully.
- C. Let us examine the superiority premiss: Necessary existence is a superior mode of existence to contingent existence. Then God, by definition, must have necessary existence.
- K. If He exists!
- C. Oh, let us not start that all over again! Now if we take 'necessary existence' as expressing logical modality, the superiority premiss would be: if we *see* that something cannot conceivably fail to exist, *i.e.*, if we *see* that its non-existence is self-contradictory or impossible, then we must attribute to it a superior manner of existence.
- K. Superior to what?
- C. To that concerning which we see that though it exists its existence is contingent, *i.e.*, it might not have existed.
- K. What is the interpretation of the superiority premiss if 'necessary existence' stands for ontological modality, whatever that may be?
- C. The superiority premiss may then be explained thus: If the existence of, say, X has a certain characteristic which may be described as the objective correlate of the logical modality expressed in the proposition 'X necessarily exists', then the existence of X is superior to the existence of Y which has a characteristic which is the objective correlate of the logical modality expressed in the contingent proposition 'Y exists, but it might not have existed.'
- K. I notice that you indicate the so-called ontological modality only in terms of the logical modality, *i.e.*, as its corresponding objective correlate, while in your explanation of logical modality you do not make any reference to the ontological modality.
- C. I agree, and this is because the ontological modal characteristic is nothing that we can single out from the characteristics that a thing has. God, for instance, is Love and Wisdom. These are positive identifiable characteristics, but when we say He is the absolutely necessary being there is no distinguishable characteristic which 'necessary being' refers to.
- K. Well, isn't that another way of saying there is no such thing as ontological modality?

- C. Perhaps, but I still think that a necessary proposition must express the nature of the thing about which it is made.
- K. Well, I wouldn't object to that, provided you admit that this so-called ontological modality can only be referred to and determined through logical modality.
- C. I couldn't agree more. I would like to add that, in the order of being, ontological modality is prior, but, in the order of knowing, logical modality comes first and it is only through it that we can determine whether or not a thing has the corresponding ontological modality.
- K. I'll settle for that. My real objection to the notion of ontological modality was its use to refer to an alleged distinguishable characteristic of a thing.
- A. I am reluctant to interrupt, especially as you two seem to be getting along like a house on fire. I don't agree with all that you have said about ontological modality, but may I enquire what the relevance of all this is for deciding whether the superiority premiss is valid or not?
- C. It was necessary first to clear the ground. The application of all this to A's argument is fairly clear. When one says that necessary existence is superior to contingent existence the reference could be either to ontological modality or to logical modality.
- A. The reference is to both.
- C. That, I think, is the whole point. It is not possible to refer to both unless one first proves the existence of the thing one is talking about, in which case the superiority premiss becomes superfluous.
- K. Kindly take the trouble to explain your point.
- C. Take the proposition 'Necessary existence is superior to contingent existence.' From the standpoint of logical modality this would mean: if we see that something necessarily exists then we can say of it that it exists in a superior manner. But this means that, independently of the superiority premiss, we have to prove that that thing exists; in which case the superiority premiss becomes superfluous. That is to say, in order to assert that something has a superior manner of existence we have first to show that it necessarily exists, and the whole point is, how shall we do this?
- A. But you seem to forget that in the case of God we already know that His existence is of the superior type. This we know by definition—God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived.
- C. I am not forgetting that. That God's existence must be of the superior type is true, but irrelevant. Your argument requires that superior existence be connected with necessary existence so that it may pass from the former to the latter. But on my analysis your argument really passes from necessary existence to superior existence. For this, it cannot take the help of the superiority premiss. In fact this premiss becomes superfluous if you must first prove that God necessarily exists. And this, your argument has failed to do.

- K. How would the superiority premiss fare if we interpret 'necessary existence' as referring to ontological modality?
- C. My point is that we can't refer to ontological modality. As I tried to show, and K agreed with me, the ontological modality can be reached and determined only through logical modality. There is no distinct characteristic of a thing to which we can point and say 'That is its ontological modal characteristic', and hence the only way we can posit necessary existence in God as an ontological predicate is through the logical proof that God necessarily exists; and this proof A has unfortunately failed to supply.
- K. I think your criticism of A's argument is conclusive.
- A. I'm sorry to say your criticism sounds as specious to me as my argument sounds to you. There are two lines along which I can reply to your criticism. First of all let me point out that my argument does not posit necessary existence in God as an ontological modality. While I accept the two kinds of modality C has mentioned, my argument does not refer specifically to either. Let me put it a little differently to show how the argument avoids all discussion about kinds of modality. God's mode of existence cannot be of the inferior variety. Now contingent existence is an inferior mode of existence. Therefore God's existence cannot be contingent existence.
- C. But this is only another way of saying: superior existence is necessary existence. You are ignoring my analysis of the term 'necessary existence'.
- A. I think I can bypass your objection by putting the argument this way: There are two ways of conceiving the existence of God. We may conceive it either as contingent or as necessary. Now my argument is that we cannot conceive God's existence as contingent, for then we would be conceiving an inferior mode of existence. Hence we can only conceive God's existence as necessary. So the conclusion follows that God necessarily exists.
- K. How is this a different way of stating your argument?
- A. C objected to the superiority premiss on the ground that to say that the superior mode of existence is necessary existence would first require us to prove that what we are talking about necessarily exists; and this, he said, would make the superiority premiss superfluous. To avoid this objection I now suggest that we merely conceive God as existing contingently or as existing necessarily. Now to conceive God as existing necessarily we do not have to refer specifically to either kind of modality, and, what is more important, we do not first have to show that God's existence is necessary (or contingent).
- C. This is no doubt a different way of stating the argument, but it runs into difficulties of its own. Your argument now requires that we can have a concept of something as existing or as existing in a particular way, just as we can have a concept of something as having a particular quality or standing in a particular relation. You further assume that just as we may, *e.g.*, conceive grass as purple without asserting or having to show that it is purple, so also we may conceive

God as necessarily existing without asserting that He exists in this manner and therefore without having to show that He does so.

- A. Why should one be required to prove that a thing is of a certain kind in order merely to conceive that it is of that kind?
- C. The concept of God as necessarily existing is in a different case from the concept of, say, grass as purple; not because it is the concept of God, but because the concept tries to include existence within its scope. I agree, however, that you do not first have to prove that God necessarily exists in order to have the alleged concept of God as necessarily existing. As I said, in this altered form, your argument is open to a different objection. The objection is that, while one can conceive something as having a particular quality without asserting that it has that quality, one cannot conceive something as existing without asserting that it exists. That is to say, there cannot be a mere concept of something as existing.
- A. Why should that be so?
- C. Because, as K kept on insisting on the first occasion we met, existence is not a predicate or a quality. One may conceive a thing to have a quality without asserting that it has it, but one cannot conceive a thing to exist without asserting that it exists.
- K. Exactly! I felt all along that A's argument was guilty of the fallacy of regarding existence as a quality, like a colour. I confess it hadn't occurred to me that the fallacy was committed by failing to see that the concept of something as existing is really a pseudo-concept, or, if you prefer it, it is the *assertion* that something exists masquerading as the *concept* of that thing as existing.
- C. To be fair to A, this criticism applies only to the latest version of his argument. The earlier version, the one with which A started, does not commit the fallacy of treating existence as a quality.
- K. No, that rests on the superiority premiss and I think you have shown conclusively that this premiss presupposes what it sets out to prove, and so, in a rather subtle manner, begs the question.
- C. Precisely!
- A. May I be permitted once again to break up the honeymoon? I shall come presently to this overworked slogan 'Existence is not a predicate', and will try to show that while it is generally speaking true, *i.e.*, true of existence in general, it is not true of the absolutely unique kind of existence which belongs to God. And remember I said there is another line of defence against your criticism. This concerns your view that 'ontological modality' does not stand for any distinguishable characteristic. But first let me dispose of what is comparatively a minor point. I talked, not of conceiving God as existing, but of conceiving God's existence as either contingent or necessary.
- C. I don't think that makes a difference. To conceive the existence of something as contingent or necessary is to take for granted that it exists. If, however, you take 'necessary (or contingent) existence' as a single predicate the original diffi-

culty remains—you are conceiving something as existing. But, I repeat, to conceive something as existing is really to assert that it exists.

- A. Perhaps one can get round that. Is it not possible to conceive that God *may* exist without asserting that He does?
- C. Yes, but to anticipate your further argument, let me point out that from 'conceiving that something may exist' one cannot go on to 'conceiving its existence as contingent or necessary', for, in the latter case, you would be passing from concept to assertion.
- A. Very well. I shall now fall back on my main lines of defence which were two. One is that the slogan 'Existence is not a predicate' does not apply to God's unique existence. It is one with God's nature to exist in the manner He does. In His case, and His alone, existence and essence cannot be distinguished. The second line of defence is that it is not true that ontological modality does not refer to a specific characteristic. 'Contingent being' stands for 'dependent being,' while 'necessary being' refers to what is self-existent.
- K. I see that there is still plenty of fight left in A. I am feeling a little dizzy. I suggest that we adjourn now and meet again when our minds are fresh.
- A. Yes, I too will be glad of the respite. I still hope to convince you two tough-minded philosophers that the existence of God is rationally demonstrable.
- K. If so, it will be *ad maiorem dei gloriam*!
- C. Or at least to the greater glory of A—*ad maiorem Aei gloriam*!

(*To be continued*)

J. N. CHUBB

NOTE

1. This statement is unaffected even if we say, as I think we must, that all predicates are ascribed to God analogically.

THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

THE VISION AND THE REALISATION IN SRI AUROBINDO'S YOGA

(Continued from the March issue)

CHAPTER V

THE MISGIVING AND THE FROWN

All that is born must taste death too...

Gita, II, 27.

Life, indeed, ends in death.

Dhammapada, 148.

Will all beings die? Buddha said: "Short, O monks, is the life of man...it is impossible that what is born should not die."

Abhidharmakosavyākhyā.

Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Genesis, III. 19.

The impossible is the hint of what shall be,
Mortal the door to immortality.

SRI AUROBINDO, *More Poems*, p. 78.

O Death, thou speakest truth but Truth that slays,
I answer to Thee with the Truth that saves.

SRI AUROBINDO, *Savitri*, p. 697.

NOT to feel content with the essential soul-immortality alone but to immortalise even the bodily mansion, the mutable material robe of the Spirit, has been a dream persistently held by the human race. But it may pertinently be asked: "Sadhak or not, is it really possible or at all feasible to wage a successful battle against the inexorable phenomena of senescence and death?" This vain attempt on the part of man to secure for himself earthly immortality, is it not altogether absurd and futile, faced as it is by insuperable odds? Does it not look like a sheer act of folly even to contemplate this prospect in thought?

To answer adequately these and allied questions, we have to discuss the necessity of death, biological as well as metaphysical. But even before we proceed to this task of study and exploration, we would like to repeat, as a counter-reply to this charge of folly, what the Mother said in one of her class-talks on this subject to the young inmates of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram:

“That seems a madness. But all new things have appeared as madness until they became realities. The hour is come for this madness to be realised. And since we are all here for reasons perhaps unknown to most of you, but reasons that are yet very conscious, we can propose to ourselves to fulfil this madness. At least, that would be worth the trouble of having lived.”¹

Now, what is the nature of the problem at its base and how is it to be solved fundamentally?

To quote the Mother again: “Why has the body the need to sit down as soon as it has made a progress? It is weary and asks ‘Wait! Give me time to rest.’ That takes it towards death. If it had within itself this ardour to do always better, to be always more clear, more beautiful, more luminous, eternally young, one could escape this gruesome process of Nature.

“For her [Nature] nothing of all that has any importance. She looks at the whole, she sees that nothing is lost, and that it is only a shuffling of innumerable microscopic and insignificant elements to pull out of them a new object. But this game is not amusing to everybody, and if one could attain a consciousness as vast as hers, and more powerful, why should not the same thing be done in a better way?

“That is the problem which is now set before us. With the addition, the new help of the supramental force which is now at work, why should not one take up the tremendous game of making it more beautiful, more harmonious, more true—in a word, more divine?

“It is sufficient if there are some brains powerful enough to receive this force and formulate the necessary action for its realisation. Consciousnesses are needed powerful enough to convince Nature that there are other means than hers.”²

And thus, since the ‘accomplishment of this act of madness’ is in the nature of things going to be attempted through the action, upon body and matter, of a progressively growing consciousness acquired through the agency of Yoga and rising higher and higher in the scale of its luminous potency till we reach the absolute potency of Supramental Gnosis, we must at once meet and dispose of another prevalent misconception that the practice of Yoga, having for its result the amassing of spiritual experiences, far from helping the health of the body—not to speak of accomplishing the conquest of death—is rather inimical to the health of the body and tends to have a bad effect of one kind or another and even finally leads to a premature

¹ *Bulletin of Physical Education*, Vol. IX, No. 2, p. 85.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, No. 2, p. 85.

or an early dropping of the body.”¹ Not only this, but according to the traditional belief held by many minds, progress in spirituality ought to lead to the undermining of bodily health, a result rather to be desired and valued, since it helps in the “liberation and release from life in this world, Mukti”.²

To illustrate this attitude, we may be allowed to cite here the view held by so great a personality as Sri Ramakrishna, an acknowledged master of Yoga and spirituality. On the occasion of his last visit to Keshav Chandra Sen who was then suffering from a fatal illness, Ramakrishna addressed Keshav and said:

“Why is it that you are ill? There is a reason for it. Many spiritual feelings have passed through your body; therefore it has fallen ill. At the time an emotion is aroused, one understands very little about it. The blow that it delivers to the body is felt only after a long while. I have seen big steamers going by on the Ganges, at the time hardly noticing their passing. But oh, my! What a terrific noise is heard after a while, when the waves splash against the banks. Perhaps a piece of the bank breaks loose and falls into the water.

“An elephant entering into a hut creates havoc within and ultimately shakes it down. The elephant of divine emotion enters the hut of this body and shatters it to pieces.

“Do you know what actually happens? When a house is on fire, at first a few things inside burn. Then comes the great commotion. Just so, the fire of knowledge at first destroys such enemies of spiritual life as passion, anger, and so forth. Then comes the turn of ego. And lastly a violent commotion is seen in the physical frame.”³

Whatever may be the validity of Sri Ramakrishna’s utterance in the particular case of Keshav Chandra, one cannot put forward solely on that basis a general and absolute proposition correlating the illness of a Yogi with his spiritual endeavour. For, as Sri Aurobindo has made abundantly clear in course of his refutation⁴ of a disciple’s contention that the illness of a lady devotee was due to her trances, “illness and deterioration of the body” witnessed in the case of some spiritual seekers is not “the natural and general result of the practice of Yoga” nor is this practice “the cause of an inevitable breakdown of health or of the final illnesses which bring about their departure from the body”. As a matter of fact, through the proper use of Yogic consciousness and Yoga-Shakti, “illness can be repelled from one’s body or cured, even chronic or deep-seated illnesses and long-established constitutional defects remedied or expelled and even a predestined death delayed for a long period.” And as an instance Sri Aurobindo cites his own personal case: “I have got rid by yogic pressure of a number of chronic maladies that had got settled in my body.”

Thus we see that a deterioration of health leading to the premature disintegration of the body is not the natural and inevitable result of the practice of Yoga. However,

¹ & ² Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 650.

³ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1947, p. 266.

⁴ See Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, pp. 650-652.

this appears to be a fact of common observation that people undertaking the pursuit of Yoga happen to suffer from some disabilities of body, which in normal circumstances would not perhaps have befallen them. How to account for this strange phenomenon?

Fortunately for us, the Mother has thrown a flood of light on this obscure point, analysed the phenomenon in great detail and prescribed the appropriate remedy for arresting this undesirable, and in no way necessary and obligatory, trend. Incidentally, she has also explained the basic psycho-physical factor that ordinarily produces the progressive degeneration of the bodily system leading ultimately to its dissolution in death. At the same time she suggests a way out of the difficulty, following which we may expect to annul the nemesis of death.

In the light of the analysis given by the Mother we may say that the whole world is in a process of progressive transformation; everything is perpetually growing and progressing; the whole creation is evolving towards a perfection. Now the force that becomes operative in one who takes up the discipline of Yoga helps him to speed up in his being this process of transformation. "But it is your inner consciousness that obeys this accelerating impulse; for the higher parts of your being readily follow the swift and concentrated movement of Yoga and lend themselves more easily to the continuous adjustment and adaptation that it necessitates. The body, on the other hand, is ordinarily dense, inert and apathetic...incapable of moving as quickly as the rest of the being."¹ This divergence between the rapid progress in the inner being and the inertia of the body produces a disharmony in the nature and a dislocation in the system, and wherever and whenever this dislocation occurs, it can translate into an illness. "This is why people who take up Yoga frequently begin by suffering from some physical discomfort or disorder. *That need not happen if they are on their guard and careful.* Or if there is a great and unusual receptivity in the body, then too they escape..."

"In the ordinary life of man a progressive dislocation is the rule...After some years,... the dislocation is so serious that the outer being falls to pieces.... *The divergence between the demand and the answer, the increasing inability and irresponsiveness of the body, brings about the phenomenon of death.* By Yoga the inner transformation that is in slow constant process in the creation is rendered more intense and rapid, but the pace of the outer transformation remains almost the same as in ordinary life. As a result, the disharmony between the inner and the outer being in one who is doing Yoga tends to be all the greater, unless precautions are taken and a protection secured that will help the body to follow the inner march as closely as possible."²

What is then the remedy for this ugly state of affairs? Let us listen to the Mother: "If the whole being could simultaneously advance in its progressive transformation, keeping pace with the inner march of the universe, *there would be no illnesses, there would be no death.* But it would have to be literally the whole being integrally from

¹ The Mother, *Conversations*, p. 128.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

the highest planes, where it is more plastic and yields in the required measure to transforming forces, down to the most material, which is by nature rigid, stationary, refractory to any rapid remoulding change."¹ (Italics ours)

More recently the Mother has said the same thing again in one of her class-talks: "The subtler the states are, the nearer their rhythm of advance approaches that of the divine growth. But the material world is rigid by nature, there transformation is slow, very slow, almost imperceptible for the measure of time as human consciousness perceives it, so that there is a constant lack of balance between the outer and the inner movement. It is this lack of balance, this incapacity of the outer form to follow the movement of progress that has made the disintegration and change of form a necessity."²

But this necessity is not an abiding one, nor is it in its nature intrinsic and irrevocable. In fact, it is wholly fortuitous and can thus be very well remedied. What is needed is, in the words of the Mother, to "...infuse into this matter sufficient consciousness so that its rhythm of growth falls in line with that of the subtler parts of the being and...it becomes plastic enough to follow the inner progress."³ In the eventuality "...the rupture of the equilibrium would not occur and *death would no longer be a necessity*."⁴ (Italics ours).

And this is so because, as Sri Aurobindo has so emphatically asserted, "it [*death*] has no separate existence by itself, it is only a result of the principle of decay in the body and that principle is there already—it is part of the physical nature. At the same time it is not inevitable, if one could have the necessary consciousness and force, *decay and death is not inevitable*."⁵ No doubt, life as it is lived at present upon earth has death attached to it as its ineluctable end, but "it does not in the least convey the idea that it can never be otherwise or that this is the unalterable law of all existence. It is at present a fact for certain reasons...if these are changed, *death is not inevitable any longer*."⁶

It may not be altogether out of place to mention here that the Mother and Sri Aurobindo have not contented themselves merely with a theoretical analysis of the problem of death and its solution. The Mother has actually enjoined on her children, the sadhaks of the Integral Yoga, to translate in their lives what is theoretically valid and justified into truths of manifested reality. For, she has declared:

"It is for us then at present—for us who know a little more about it—to bring about the necessary transformation, as far as it lies within our means, by calling the Force, the Consciousness, the new Power⁷ that is capable of infusing into the material

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

² *Bulletin of Physical Education*, Vol IX, No. 2, p. 85.

³ & ⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ & ⁶ Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, Tome Two, p. 334.

⁷ This new Power is the Supermind or the Truth-Consciousness of Sachchidananda whose manifestation in the earth-consciousness occurred on February 29, 1956. About this momentous spiritual event "for which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother had luminously laboured for decades and for

substance the vibration that has the capacity to transform it, make it plastic, supple, progressive.¹

Buoyed up with this supreme assurance and divine command coming from the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, we now proceed to the task of gleaning biological evidences for and against the prospect of earthly immortality.

But why biological? Because there is almost a scientific axiom that the existence of an organ presupposes the existence of a field for its operation. Thus fins imply the prior existence of a watery medium to swim in and wings that of a gaseous fluid like air to fly in, and so on. As Mr. A. W. Momerie has so pertinently pointed out:

"Important discoveries have frequently been made by following up this simple clue. I will give you an example. An explorer, while traversing a desert, came across a little saurian with a swim-bladder. He took the hint and continued his explorations, until he found the shores of a dried-up lake, where ages before the little saurian had found a home."²

Thus, it can be safely assumed that the unquenchable thirst for physical immortality woven into the inmost fibres of man's being must correspond to some basic supporting facts scattered throughout the realm of evolutionary life.

(To be continued)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

whose swifter advent Sri Aurobindo sacrificed his body in 1950" (*Towards February 29, 1956*, p. 1), the Mother has remarked: "The greatest thing that can ever be, the most marvellous thing since the beginning of creation, the *miracle* has happened. And that is the only thing that concerns us most intimately and the only thing we should be concerned with. A new world, yes, a completely new world, is born and is here." (*Ibid.*, p. 18.)

¹ *Bulletin of Physical Education*, Vol. IX, No. 2, p. 83.

² A.W.Momerie, *Immortality*, pp. 19-20.

THE INFINITE WHOLE AND THE PART

SOME THINKINGS BEYOND THOUGHT

ONLY an infinite insecurity in manifestation could approach, envision, and realize the perfect and infinite security of the Supreme in a divided consciousness.

Only an unlimited and infinite insecurity could realize supreme and infinite security in a limited awareness.

For infinite indefiniteness and thus eternal question alone could leave and providing room for a supreme and infinite perfection in a finite awareness.

But what about an infinite and absolute and supreme omniscient awareness or consciousness?

Only an infinite consciousness can obscure and manifest and control an infinite existence and power.

Then why cannot The Infinite Whole give infinite wholeness to the part?

It can and is actually doing so. But finitely viewed, this is seen as weakness and failure.

Infinitely viewed from beyond mind, this is seen as potential and implicit in All. Seen from beyond the indescribable awareness there is silence.

Why must this Infinite All be forced to go through even this implicitness of perfection? (It is not really; appearing so only to a lesser vision.)

For the sake of wholeness; for if imperfection were lacking in the All, then perfection would necessarily be incomplete.

When is a retardation a progress?

That is when a step forward or even staying in a present position would be fatal.

How can an ignorant and helpless failure be regarded as a fortunate progress?—When a brilliant and powerful victory would be fatal. This is symbolized aptly in queen Sita's recondite remark to Ravana, when she seemed to compliment him by telling him that he was like the full moon and that Rama was like the new moon.—Here Ravana's victory in being a completed orb, outshining the new moon, was fatal, for this was the limit of his possibility, while Rama as the new and partial moon would grow on beyond his present condition.

Manifestation is the most powerful self-embrace of the Supreme.—Since these are all such absolute extremes, then a simultaneity of obtainment becomes an even more inexorably absolute requirement...

Thus the explanation of what is meant by Sri Aurobindo when he writes in *The Life Divine*...cryptically: contradiction and opposition and difficulty are nature's profoundest seal and method and express the highest sanction of the Supreme.

The solution: to embrace both at once—this is what is meant in the Upanishads when it states that there are two knowledges and both are to be known. There is the

unity and there is the multiplicity, or vidya and avidya—both are to be known. *Tyaktena bhuñjithā.*

It is as if the larger the problem stated—the larger the solution possible.

The more powerful and absolute the reality when conquered, the more reduced, weak, and diminished the reality would need to become that an individual, finite, small, partial human being could encompass it.

So an elephant kneels that it might be mounted with more ease.

The final and absolute of this would be, that at the uttermost absolutely small and minute point and part, the uttermost absolute and supreme totality and perfection could be manifest—or formed, or realized.

How can a Supreme Perfection be realized and manifested by a point?

First, it must be reduced existentially by infinite division and fragmentation.

Then it must be stupified by an infinite inconscience; then it must be weakened by an infinite incapacity.

This results in a divided vision of an utterly miserable rubble.

Perhaps the most difficult and seemingly even insuperable impossible truth about the whole thing is the necessity for a simultaneous obtainment of both these things at once—the definite whole and the infinite multiplicity; for this requires that the thing be done apparently at some point of space and time, or at least that it be simply done constantly and totally, simultaneously and eternally. So where do we begin? (There is no beginning. This question is put by a limited mind.)

Thus it should be seen that the impossible is constantly, invariably, and unmitigatedly occurring and manifesting, and that it is within this framework that the limited mind must work and begin.

MADAS

EDUCATION FOR ONE WORLD

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS OF TODAY AND SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR A NEW APPROACH

This is one of the speeches prepared for the Conference on Education for One World held last year by World Union in Pondicherry. Owing to its length and the time-limit necessarily imposed on speakers it could not be put across in its full significance to the audience. We are publishing it because it has an important central idea with several useful corollaries, all worth pondering even if one may not see eye to eye with some shades of them or particular emphases or certain extreme conclusions of the author.

The author, P. N. Driver, has been a Professor in Arts, Agricultural, Co-operative and Engineering Colleges during the last 34 years. He was Principal of the College of Agriculture, Poona, Director of the National Co-operative College and Research Institute; a member of the Agricultural Economics Faculty at Cornell University in the U.S.A., and a joint Director of Agriculture in Maharashtra State.

ONE of the dilemmas of our age is that whilst nationalism is fast becoming out of date, due to technological reasons as well as the force of world events in all directions of man's material and spiritual wants, narrow national feeling and, in some places, even regional feeling show no signs of proportionate change or abatement. Even when One World and World Unity is a pressing necessity, we do not have the educational foundations necessary for the same. Taking the world as a whole, much of the trouble here is nurtured by the separatist national systems of education formed by each nation separately in the exercise of its sovereignty.

NATIONAL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION AND THE EMOTIONAL BERLIN WALLS OF TODAY

The limitations of the differing systems of education are many and include, as we shall see, the emotional Berlin Walls created by the absence of a common world language medium for acquiring the world's knowledge quickly and for communication among all the world's peoples.

Whilst human nature tends to be the same everywhere, and the language of the human heart is international,—and also whilst true understanding among human beings about their basic common interests ought not to be difficult—we have made a mess of the world and created much misunderstanding due to several mistakes, which we hug as signs of sovereignty and individuality. Among these I may mention.

- (a) Undue emphasis on one's own "cultural" background, or religion, or language, etc.
- (b) The writing and teaching of "national" histories—mostly on the basis of real and imagined national suffering and avowed national mission or destiny.
- (c) Worship of and overemphasis on real and imagined national heroes.
- (d) An illogical condemnation of things which are called "foreign" but which are really useful and even more important than other elements deemed to be indigenous.

ARTIFICIALITIES OF DIFFERING FLAGS AND DRESSES IN A WORLD BASED ON MUTUAL AID

No one desires to decry or deny the importance of individual freedom and identity for existence in the form of individual groupings of human beings. But one has to beware of artificialities which unnecessarily separate mankind from each other in the present crisis of humanity. The love of one's own flag or dress or language, for example, may be justifiable under certain circumstances but not beyond certain limits. Public opinion has to be educated enough to know these limits and prevent politicians from indulging in senseless shows of their patriotism. One wonders for example whether the use of national flags or dresses is justifiable even in a world organisation like the U.N. which is meant to make us world conscious. Where we are supposed to shed a little of our own separatist national consciousness can we not make this clear by acceptance of the U.N. flag *alone* in that august assembly? Small beginnings like this will yield in proper time good results.

The use of a distinct national dress is sometimes necessary and lends colour to an assembly, but such dress in a wrong place can only accentuate differences, and put us in iron armour when our objective is to cut out differences and embrace each other. National uniforms and international uniformity do not often go together. Union of hearts is not dependent on outward affinities like a common dress, but such affinities do help in the matter. Apart from affinities required in the U.N., would it not help in the task of cutting across national consciousness for purposes of One World if, as an experiment, we suggest a common mode of dress for, say, all teachers or perhaps even students throughout the world? We must have noticed how a miner or a motor mechanic can feel a strange affinity even with a stranger from abroad if dressed like himself. Our objective here is not regimentation but creation of world affinities.

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HISTORIANS AND HISTORY

Flags, dresses, and the like are less harmful than the deeper underlying currents of feeling, which create the real differences and divisions among mankind. The latter are due to teaching of wrong ideas and concepts. Teaching of one-sided

national history has become part and parcel of "national" systems of education. It is well-known how history has been taught in some countries of Europe in order to keep up just what is traditional hatred. Countries outside Europe are not free from this either. Much of the poison here is based on intentional untruth and lies, but there is also much due to ignorance or suppression of the truth. Students in Pakistan and India for example would do well to know that in the struggle between Shivaji and the Mughals, whilst the principal army generals of Aurangzeb fighting Shivaji were Hindus, the principal naval officer of Shivaji was a Mussalman. They should also be taught that Shivaji constructed a special mosque in front of his own palace at Raigad, gave Inam lands to Muslim shrines, and revered a Muslim saint (Baba Yakut) "as much as he did Ramdas".¹ It may not also be known that the Hindu commander of the Mughal armies had a special temple constructed for him on the Northern frontiers of the Empire. In the matter of the one-sided teaching of history it is difficult to conceive of any proper change in the interest of truth unless we have a world effort through a world organisation.

The need for a world organisation for history arises from the fact that all history really requires a linking of local, national, and world history. Besides, in history we have matter which requires modification and revision, *i.e.*, statements made earlier on basis of insufficient data have to be modified. The modifications necessary mean an open acknowledgment of the fallacies taught earlier and this is not easy. The central objective of history teaching, at least in countries like England, has been to show to a child the development of his own community. This requires a change everywhere, specially if a child is to understand the world and its environment fully. Instead of running down things other than our own as "foreign", we should encourage the study of our debt to all countries of the world and to all "foreigners". Only by this can we realise the cosmopolitan nature of culture of mankind. In India, a careful study of the influence and help of the English, French, Greek, Roman, Arab, Turkish, Persian and other peoples and languages could be very useful. I wonder whether the champions of Marathi know or acknowledge that Eknath, the greatest Marathi writer of the 16th century, used 75% of words and expressions which were really Persian. I am reminded here of a friend of mine, a Central Minister, who recently described the English language as "foreign"—without realising perhaps that the National Congress to which he belongs owes its existence to an Englishman and the English language. At least he should have known what Gokhale has told us, *viz.*, that no Indian at the time could have organised the Indian National Congress. It required a foreigner and, when A. O. Hume died, the 27th Session of the Congress rightly called him "the founder and father of the Congress". My friend forgets that it required a "foreign" language to make us a political union for the first time in our history and 63 out of the 845 languages and dialects of India are really non-Indian or shall we say "foreign"?

¹ See SARDESAI. *Main Currents of Maratha History*: Revised Edition 1947, page 69.

Mistakes like those pointed out above would not be possible if history were to be taught to all senior students, as it should be, only as a course ranging through world history and the connections with all things "foreign" well brought out. Perhaps it may not be necessary to discuss whether world history should supplant or supplement national history, if we adopt the right approach referred to here.

THE NECESSITY TO UNDERSTAND THE RIGHT BASIS OF THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF MAN

Apart from History, several other disciplines or subjects also require to be re-cast if they are to contribute to world harmony and truth. Take Economics, for example. The foundations of classical economics of Ricardo, Smith and others which were used by Marx as the basis of his prophecies about capitalism and class war require a re-thinking today in the interest of harmony. On the one hand, Marx has proved to be a false prophet. On the other hand, we have in the writings of economists like the American Henry Charles Carey the fresh breeze of harmonious thinking which is required. Carey has shown how economic conditions could be and are really those of harmony and co-operation rather than struggle and antagonism. Carey's thinking was on the basis of his experience of pioneer life on the American frontier. Marx himself was appreciative of Carey and regarded him as an economist of importance but disregarded his views on economic harmony as being entirely due to the undeveloped conditions of America prevalent at that time. In actual fact, during the last hundred years since Carey wrote, American society has been advancing *more* towards harmony than class war, as we all know. Carey, in his views on labour-capital relations, seems to have arrived almost intuitively at an economic concept, which may interest students of the Supramental Yoga and its likely effect on economics. According to him, "the ultimate objective of all human effort is production of the being known as Man capable of the highest achievement."

To Carey, the ultimate objective of all human effort was not the accumulation of wealth or other things of this world but the achievement of civilisation itself, the creation of a more and more civilised mankind. To him labour and capital exist on the intellectual and spiritual planes as well as on the material plane. The way by which we can achieve a higher civilisation, as it seemed to him, was not by way of revolution on the lines of Marx, or by exploitation of the poor by the rich, but by the association of all men for this common purpose. How far removed is this concept of harmony from the concept of Marx who, comparing Ricardo to Hegel, wrote, "If the Englishman turns men into hats, the German turns hats into ideas." Marx was here speaking sarcastically of English Political Economy compared to Hegelian philosophy. To him economics was just a machine for turning men into hats (*i.e.*, a mere commodity). But neither the Hegelian basis of Marx nor the Marxian basis in Lenin, Stalin and the whole lot of them has brought happiness to the working class of the world. The Marxist scientific economists, who claim to save mankind from poverty, have failed, because of their failure to see the harmony inherent in spiritual values. Father Bruck-

berger, a French writer, tells us in his book, *Image of America*, that Economics has a lot of pedantry and hypocrisy because it has not been exposed as Medicine was exposed by Molière. The time has come, it may be repeated, to teach to the world the harmony and values of human life inherent even in economic conditions, as Carey intuitively felt. Here is knowledge of the Spirit with knowledge of Matter.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTUITION AND THE ABILITY TO SENSE THE UNKNOWN

The intuitive faculties of men like Carey remind us of the truth that proper education should develop the creative and intuitive faculties of a child. Knowledge has to be presented with this end in view. It must develop the ability to sense the Unknown, both desirable and desired, as Alice Bailey has pointed out when she talks of "mystical perception" in education. It is this tendency to mysticism and/or the desire to know the "unknown reality" that has produced the great explorers, inventors and discoverers of the world. It is not for nothing that we often say that God is on the verge of being discovered today—but in the laboratory rather than the temple, and by the scientist rather than the priest.

NATIONAL WELFARE PROBLEMS AND RESPECT FOR SANCTITY OF ALL LIFE

The presentation of knowledge with a view to developing the intuitive and creative faculties of a child requires considerable thought and experimentation. Another important step is to emphasise the training of the child in welfare activities. Every student should be made to learn to look to the welfare of the people, specially the working classes, all around him. Education in National Welfare Problems can be the best first step towards interest in World Welfare. This should go hand in hand with training meant to create respect for the sanctity of all life, including animal life. The respect for all things that live can be the foundation of human brotherhood.

THE PROBLEM OF MASS AWAKENING IN EDUCATIONALLY BACKWARD COUNTRIES AND THE RECESSION FROM NATIONALISM TO REGIONALISM AND TRIBALISM

Whilst it is easy for many to agree with the changes required everywhere in the curricula of the educational systems, it is not equally easy to see how the differences among the languages and media of instruction all over the world constitute also a problem of the greatest magnitude. We have already referred to the emotional Berlin Walls created by linguistic diversity and the absence of a common language for communication among the world's peoples and for acquiring the world's knowledge quickly, directly, and effectively. Besides, in a big sub-continent like India, where we have 845 languages and dialects and where, due to the country not being a well knit political nation, there is no universally acceptable national language, there is now the further danger of acceptance of regional languages for all purposes including higher

education. This is *bound* to lead to a recession even from the present nationalism and administrative unity created by the English language, towards purely regional loyalties. I am convinced that the weakening of the English medium of education at the higher levels will destroy the quality and character of national leadership and the administrative unity of the country and with this will start, if this has not started already, the process of the break-up of this sub-continent.

No Indian can dare to deny the unhealthy trend towards a narrow regionalism today. Mr. S. K. Banerjee, himself from Bengal, has rightly pointed out in "Minority Report to Official Language Commission" how already Bengali university students are showing "an increasing lack of interest in all-India happenings and in world events. Regionalism and even parochialism are encroaching upon the domains of a broad and enlightened nationalism and a cultured internationalism with slogans of all sorts stifling the sense of actualities". Mr. Selig S. Harrison gives us in his remarkable book, *India—the Most Dangerous Decades*, convincing evidence as to how and why the regional languages of India will necessarily result in "regional pulp cultures rather than cultural achievements universal in their horizons".

During the last 50 years we have come to recognise the need for political internationalism and a world organisation. But whilst we have been able to do this, the number of "nations" or independent countries has also increased. Due to many reasons, this increase has led to a further break-up into groups of narrower allegiance on the basis of religion, or pure regionalism, or even strong tribal feelings. There is a trend both in Asia and Africa to create differences even when there were none before.

THE NEED FOR A DIRECT APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL GOOD FEELING

The tragedies and trends towards a truncated world referred to in the paragraph above raise a fundamental question. Should we continue to hold to the assumption that tribalism, regionalism and nationalism are essential first steps towards internationalism? If nationalism often shows no signs at all of advancing towards a bigger affiliation and, on the other hand, it shows a trend towards fragmentation and regionalism, cannot education be used to teach man to love man—all men—without influences like national flags, jingoism, regionalism, mother-tongues that divide where there was no division before, national dresses, etc.? Have not real lovers of humanity loved humanity directly? Cannot education be used for the direct approach to international good feeling?

THE NEED TO EDUCATE POLITICIANS AND TO FIGHT NATIONAL EGOISM BASED ON CONDEMNATION OF LANGUAGES AND CULTURES AS "FOREIGN"

We need throughout the world a proper vision of unity which only proper education and a common medium can give. We require an acceptable intelligent pattern

of life and a standard of real values that are worth living for. In India, for example, men are prepared to die for freedom of a region or to claim a city from a neighbouring region but there has not been a single instance of somebody taking up a fast to death for the maintenance of the unity of the country to counteract disruptive tendencies. Why is this so when we have claimed to be a nation? During the last many years due to the gradual weakening of the English medium of education (that created both the Congress and administrative unity) we have failed to produce in several regions of the country, like Maharashtra, even national-minded leaders such as we knew in the old days. Is it not true that all these men were products of the English system of education before even education was Indianised?

Cannot educationists admit that the world of today requires larger loyalties than to a region or tribe or nation, even to start with? We have to avoid getting bogged up in our own petty emotionalism and individual and national egoism. The emotionalism of certain people in Europe and elsewhere has even less justification than we have. Why should the Scottish people, for example, even today remind the English people that they were once independent? The Frenchman is not less proud of his language than the Bengali. However, it is a real tragedy to see how things are shaping here in India. This has been the world's great Oasis of philosophic tolerance of all men and races, and much is expected from us. Any trend of ours tends to be taken up by many of the other countries of Asia and Africa. We must therefore take the lead in education for One World. This cannot be done if our politicians seek popularity by condemning a force for world unity like the English language on the ground that it is "foreign". A politician who does this has to be educated in the fact that most of the things around him, including even a part of the food in his stomach, have to be and are "foreign" in this sense—and that nothing "foreign" is so necessary for us as the English language. Besides, as we have already noted, there are in India no less than 63 "non-Indian languages" among the 845 languages and dialects in this sub-continent. Evidently our education has to start with things like the proper understanding and meaning of the word "foreign". When technology has not only made the world one, but is on the verge of taking us from the Earth to the Moon, the only thing really "foreign" perhaps can be the pilot of a flying saucer landing on earth. For us today what can be foreign when we are only a *small space ship in the vast universe of creation*? Shall we even keep this space-ship intact instead of breaking it up in a billion fragments by our utter narrow-mindedness and lack of real love?

EDUCATION FOR ONE WORLD IS THE ONLY ANSWER

The answer to the last question depends upon proper education. Surely man is an intelligent creature and his education should show him the Truth if he is to survive. Our education has to emphasise the fact that the world ultimately depends on mutual aid and co-operation and not conflict and competition. Today millions of men can and do talk in global terms when a few years ago they would have refused and

did refuse to do so. Whatever the phase of regionalism in India and other countries due to wrong policies in education and mistakes made in politics, the world trend is clear and will assert itself. One World is becoming a fact of existence for we can only have either One World or a Dead World. As has been said by somebody, "The world is now too dangerous for anything but the truth, and too small for anything but brotherhood." More rapidly than we imagine "it is as though mankind, in opening its eyes to what exists beyond our earth, suddenly became self-conscious and aware of its underlying unity" (Jean E. Charon).

P. N. DRIVER

MAGNA MATER

Never was Poe so wise as when he wrote
That overture of far-heard harmonies
To the sonnet *To My Mother*; how sad to note
He did not know You but sought elsewhere his peace.
Because he felt "that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of 'Mother' ",
Hence by that name he called a friend most rare.
But it was a mere mortal he addressed,
Though ranked even higher than the one who bare
His earthly self. If only, as he professed,
He'd striven to look not earthward but beyond,
He would have known of Whom to feel so fond.

K. B. SITARAMAYYA

Students' Section

THE NEW AGE ASSOCIATION

THIRTEENTH SEMINAR

26TH NOVEMBER 1967

THE Thirteenth Seminar of the New Age Association was held on the 26th November 1967 from 8.30 to 10.00 a.m. in the New Hall of the Centre of Education. The subject chosen by the Mother for this Seminar was:

The New Outlook on Education

Four members of the Association—Chanda, Romen, Rose and Swadesh—participated as speakers.

The Seminar began with listening in silence to a short piece of the Mother's recorded music. Then Kishor Gandhi, the Chairman, read out the Mother's special message given for the Seminar in the form of an answer to a question:

Question: *What should be the guiding principles of the new ideal of education?*

The Mother's Answer:

Truth
Harmony
Liberty

After that Kishor Gandhi made the following introductory remarks:

Friends,

Among the many problems agitating the mind of modern man, one of the most perplexing is the problem of education. There is an acute dissatisfaction with the existing educational systems, for their glaring defects have become quite patent. There is a widespread seeking for some new methods, but that seeking is more like groping in the dark than an assured finding of a new way.

We have here the unique privilege not only of being given a new ideal of education by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, but also of collaborating in working out a new method for concretely realising that ideal in our Centre of Education.

It will be our endeavour in this Seminar to present to you in a few speeches the salient features of this new ideal and the new method.

First Manoj will read a passage from Sri Aurobindo's *The Synthesis of Yoga* bearing on the subject. Then four speeches by our members will be given. Finally, I shall read two more passages from Sri Aurobindo.

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After this speech Manoj read out the passage from *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Then the four speakers delivered their speeches. Rose's speech is reproduced below. Some of the other speeches and the passages from Sri Aurobindo will be published in the ensuing issues of *Mother India*.

THE NEW OUTLOOK ON EDUCATION

I

EDUCATION is indispensable and, in fact, inescapable in life. Whether it is from Nature herself, or through daily events and happenings of life, or by conscious will and effort, we receive constant education all through our life, from the cradle to the grave. The whole of terrestrial life and existence provides us with a vast and varied field and opportunity for our education and progress. There is no end to the marvels of creation and, consequently, there is no end to our education.

Education through direct experience is by far the best that can be conceived of. And, in fact, the best light and guide for this purpose lies within oneself. And the real aim of education is nothing but to progressively reveal this inner light and guide, the soul, our psychic being. Since each individual projects a different aspect of the One Reality or Truth, to bring out one's own truth of being and live it in actual life, forming, so to say, a diversified unity is the very essence of true education.

So, the basic problem of life is the problem of education. Only if the education is correctly canalised can the life be truly successful. Needless to say, we do not speak of material success which is transient. What really matters is the success or progress of the soul in life, even though it may appear to be a failure from the material point of view.

Of late, the problem of education seems to have gained priority over all other problems of life. This is significant, because on a true and proper education depends the real worth, the true outflowering of an individual.

Education must be consistent with the aim of life. And the true aim of life is the progressive growth of consciousness in its totality. So, true education must help us to elevate our consciousness on all the levels of our being, and to methodically develop our inner faculties, and bring out the latent potentialities of our being. That is to say, the true aim of education is to new-shape and refine the crude

and raw stuff which our surface being and nature are, and reorientate them in the light of the Spirit so that all our thoughts, feelings and actions may perfectly express the inner divinity, our true personality. So it follows that the aim of integral education which seeks to impart an all-round development of our being is the same as that of the integral yoga.

In every age, the method of education has to be reshaped and recast according to the need of the hour to take another definitive step forward in the evolutionary development.

Ordinarily, people take the term "education" to connote academic education. To acquire the highest university degree or diploma is considered to be the crowning fulfilment of education. Now, academic education has, of course, its value. It is certainly necessary in order to train the mind properly, organise the intellect and develop the thinking capacity. All this, however, pertains to the outer aspect of the being, and that too of a part of the whole being. Academic education prepares at best the outer man or the man of society, whereas the aim of integral education is to shape and bring out the divine in man, the real person.

Behind the outer universe lies the vaster inner worlds with all their sublime profundities and wonderful vistas. The inner holds all the secrets of which the outer is only a faint projection. So, to discover and know the inner worlds, and unveil their mysteries and apply this inner truth and light in practical life should be the whole desideratum of true education.

Since our aim is spiritual fulfilment on a material basis, we shall have to shape our education accordingly. This makes it a necessity for us to become conscious of the different parts of our being for a systematic culture of all of them, and bring out the genius contained in each.

Physical education consists in making our body strong and healthy, supple and agile, beautiful and graceful by methodical exercises.

The education of the vital consists in building up a strong and noble character by controlling our desires and impulses. Aesthetic culture also forms part of the vital education. The fine arts are a great help towards awakening the aesthetic taste, the sense of beauty and harmony within us.

The education of the mind consists, in general, in making our intellect keen and quick, our thoughts coherent and organised. It is important to note that it is the appearance and descent of the principle of Mind in the earth-nature that has helped the evolutionary course to take a revolutionary turn in its progressive growth and manifestation. It is through the element of Mind that the psychic being urges the nature to reflect and concentrate and delve deep within, impels the being to discover the unknown, to approach the inaccessible and to attempt the apparently impossible. It is because of this mental principle that Science and Philosophy, Religion and Culture have gradually flourished in the earthly existence.

Now, we are not to pursue mechanically the education of these three instruments of the soul. It is not a routine work which has to be done. We must approach it in a

different spirit, with a different consciousness, for achieving something deeper and higher. It is to purify and transform our instrumental consciousness and nature so that they may fully express our psychic personality. Our aim in every sphere should be a two-fold perfection,—the perfection from above and the perfection from below. The former refers to spiritual perfection, or the perfection of consciousnesses, whereas the latter refers to human perfection or the perfection of the instruments.

The spiritual perfection will follow the discovery of the psychic being which one really is. The psychic being holds within it the key to all the secrets of the inner realm. Hence our outlook on education should be to bring the psychic being in front so that thereafter it can infallibly lead us to the perception and receptivity of true knowledge, inner beauty, love and harmony concealed in the silent depth of the being. So, true education should tend towards self-discovery and self-expression. This, naturally, is not at all an easy task. And if only one succeeds in this, one will automatically possess the key to the discovery of further secrets. What is essentially needed is personal will and effort besides a total surrender and openness to the Divine Mother. The Grace of the Mother can alone help us to achieve this difficult task.

Generally, mental or intellectual development is taken to be the limit attainable by man. But this, of course, cannot be the truth. Because there is no reason why evolutionary Nature should abruptly stop at this imperfect development of her instrument. The evolutionary spiral will certainly go on unrolling itself ever forward and, bursting the bounds of mind, will unfold the principle of supermind in the earthly manifestation. Man will be surpassed by superman just as the animal has been surpassed by man. The age of reason and intellect is sure to be gradually replaced by the age of the Spirit.

In fact, even in our acquisition of the outer or the factual knowledge, we have reached a critical stage when we can advance no further without supra-rational knowledge. Science itself has arrived at a point where it is bewildered in its search for the real source or origin of the mysteries of the outer world. Science has perforce been led to believe that some secret Energy or Power must be the ultimate cause and source of Nature's marvels.

So, from any point of view, it is time now to direct our attention on education towards inner culture, for the discovery of our true self, and its expression in actual life in and through the instrumental nature. Till now, the educational method was directed towards preparing the mental being. It is time now that this method should be reshaped to mould the superman, the spiritual being.

This new outlook on education will be particularly helpful for those who have an inner urge or aspiration to exceed their present level of consciousness and grow ever higher, deeper and wider in consciousness.

Education cannot be imposed on anyone; nobody can be forced to learn. One must learn—anything in any field of life—out of a joyous willingness. Then only it becomes truly dynamic, progressive and interesting.

So now, what should be the procedure? In ancient times, the Guru himself was also the teacher and guardian of his disciples; and so he could inwardly help his student-disciples by his own example and through his own spiritual influence. Here also, we have the unique opportunity of having the Divine Mother Herself to guide us in whatever problem we may come across. And it goes without saying, the teachers of our Centre of Education are availing themselves of this great opportunity, and receiving from the Mother abundant instructions, help and guidance regarding the proper method of education.

The Mother is in favour of free progress method. The children should be allowed complete freedom for a spontaneous inner growth and development. In fact, only in perfect freedom can any true progress be made. The Mother does not at all prefer the usual method of examination. She says that the teachers should come in psychological contact with the students, and give individual attention to each student. Naturally, all the students do not have the same mental development or inner preparedness. She also says that the classes should be made interesting and living and not mechanical.

Since we are not to ignore or neglect the outer life and existence, we should study all the subjects in accordance with our aptitude or bent of mind, but with a new outlook from the point of view of consciousness, with a different attitude of mind. It is truly for the sake of learning more and more, and not for passing examinations and acquiring diplomas, that we must look forward to true education.

Now comes the question of the teachers. They must endeavour to prove themselves to be the proper instrument and channel of the Mother to convey to the children the exact guidance needed for each, so that they may grow up spontaneously in their own line and develop their own genius. It is the duty of the teacher to awaken in the students the right impetus to be conscious of their own law or truth of being and express that in their actual life whether it is through study or work or any cultural activity. Now, real knowledge cannot be imparted to anybody. True knowledge is a thing innate in oneself and reveals itself by progressive self-unfoldment. The teacher is there just to help in rightly leading the students so that they do not digress from the right path.

Thus, a great responsibility devolves on the teachers themselves. Since they are to help the students, they too should sincerely try to elevate their own consciousness in order to properly direct the students.

The Mother greatly stresses the need of mental silence for proper education. She says that if the teacher is true and sincere, he will be able, in ten minutes of attentive silence, to bring down from the domain of intuition a consciousness which will spread in his whole class. And then the work together with its results will be truly interesting. The teacher himself will also progress at the same time. She says that those who have genuine aspiration can get, in their inner silence, the necessary answer from a Consciousness absolutely living and active. And they can perform in six months the work of six years.

She further says that all our pretension and ambition, our defects and weaknesses should be totally eliminated and replaced by a flaming aspiration for purity when we shall seek only the Supreme Consciousness as our sole objective in life; then there will be no need of schools or teachers or students or any other paraphernalia; life as a whole will seek to transform itself; that is the ideal.

The Mother has mentioned that the supramental education is the future mode of education meant for the divine humanity. This method or type of education will be of a completely different order, just the reverse of the present method.

At present we educate or train all the parts of our being, and gradually rise higher and higher in consciousness; there is a movement of ascent from below, whereas in the supramental education, the Force or Consciousness will take up within its fold and transform one by one all the states of our being starting from above and gradually descending downward culminating in the transformation of the physical itself.

Then, apart from the individual aspect, education must be considered in its collective aspect too. The individual does not belong to himself alone, he is a part of the collectivity. Though, of course, if each individual helps himself, the result will automatically cover the collectivity also; still the collectivity is a unit by itself; there is a group soul, as also mass psychology. So, collective or mass education is absolutely necessary to develop homogeneity in a group. Education of the collectivity helps to inculcate a spirit of fellow-feeling and understanding among the individuals themselves. Then, there is the need of national education to awaken the national consciousness and the spirit of patriotism in the countrymen. And there is as well a need of international education to develop a sense of oneness and unity among the whole of mankind, to bring about world unity. This helps to kindle in us a sense of universality with the creation as a whole. True education will carry us even further by transcending the bounds of universality to experience the joy of the Infinite and the supreme Unity.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother clearly visualised that it is only by the direct descent of the Supramental Truth-Consciousness on earth that the condition of terrestrial life and existence can be transformed, the harmony and unity established.

And it is in accordance with the will of Sri Aurobindo that the Mother opened the "Sri Aurobindo International University Centre", later renamed the "Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education" which is to prepare the élite of humanity to receive and manifest the new light so as finally to form the divine race upon earth. Every student and teacher of the Centre of Education should remember this great destiny before them. And now that the supramental Light and Power and Consciousness has already descended and has been actively at work here, they should unitedly strive to be the fit instrument and vanguard through whom the Mother can canalise and materialise the Divine Will which is to divinise Matter and spiritualise humanity.

OPENING DAY OF THE SCHOOL FOR PERFECT EYESIGHT : SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION

For the preservation of good eyesight of the students and teachers Dr. R. S. Agarwal submitted a plan of eye education to the Mother. She replied:

"The plan is good and has my blessings."

Later on the Mother sent a Message for the opening day, May 5, of the School for Perfect Eyesight. Udar read it out at the commencement of the meeting at the New Hall:

"The more the mind is quiet, the more the sight is good. Blessings."

Udar also said a few words about his own experience with the system. He had worn glasses for 30 years, from his 10th to his 40th year, until he started the treatment; now his eyes are practically normal.

Then Kireet Joshi read out the Plan of Eye Education:

- 1. Annual eye testing.*
- 2. Revival of the scheme of eye education (5 min. practice on the eye chart and fine print reading).*
- 3. Teachers ought to know something about eye education and mental relaxation.*
- 4. The subject of eye education and mental relaxation may be made compulsory in one or more classes.*
- 5. A teacher may be appointed to look after the scheme of eye education and to help some bad cases.*

Finally, Dr. Agarwal made the following speech.

Friends,

Celebration of 5th May, the opening day of the School for Perfect Eyesight, is an expression of the Divine Mother's love for suffering humanity. After ten years' spiritual seclusion my coming to the active field of work with a greater vigour and understanding is the proof that She makes us young towards perfection. The quick cure of so many cases who were almost blind, in one eye or both eyes, is a concrete picture of the manifestation of Her love. I had not such good health before, I had not such a strong will for healing before, I had not such a powerful love for humanity before, I had not such a good feeling of oneness with all of you before, so to me it is a very clear fact that it is Her love which is manifesting through the course of events and through our relationship.

Under the modern conditions man's mind and eyes are under a strain and perfect eyesight is rare. The foundation of this strain lies in wrong habits of thought. We are told that to do anything well requires effort. We make an effort to see well, we make an effort to acquire knowledge well. But it is as natural for the eye to see without effort as it is for the mind to acquire knowledge without effort. The normal eye never makes

an effort to see but as soon as it makes an effort it ceases to be normal. Many a time I have demonstrated this fact to the persons coming to the Eye Clinic. Hence any effort to see or to acquire knowledge will defeat the end in view. You may force a few facts into a child's mind by various kinds of compulsion, but you can't make it learn anything. The facts remain, if they remain at all, as dead lumber in the brain; and because they were not acquired naturally and not assimilated, they destroy the natural impulse of the mind towards the acquisition of knowledge. Then by the time the child leaves the school or college, it not only knows nothing but is, in the majority of cases, no longer capable of learning. Therefore, to learn to see without effort, to acquire knowledge without effort, is a wonderful art. How does a child learn his mother tongue without effort? This is an example. Education of the eye and mind with joy and interest in the atmosphere of freedom yields wonderful results, as I have realised by experimenting on myself and on my two sons. Fortunately things are rapidly changing everywhere by the Mother's grace, and a time will come when the Spirit will execute all the working.

When the mind is relaxed and quiet, the process of concentration to see or to acquire knowledge is greatly improved. Palming is one of the methods to make the mind relaxed and quiet. By Palming I mean: to close the eyes and cover them with the palms, avoiding any pressure on the eyeballs, then to recall the memory of black. The result will be perfect darkness before the eyes while palming. After successful palming, when you look at the eye chart or the reading test type, you experience much better vision.

Many children of the Centre of Education suffering from pain or headache or defective vision have been cured by palming and the right use of the eyes. When the children see well, they read well and progress well. Sewing or fine stitching helps the eyes. While sewing, shift the sight with the movement of the needle. Just see, how I do it.

Reading under bright electric light is harmful because the glare reflected from the paper causes strain on the eyes and mind. Light just sufficient to read is good for the eyes. Then, while reading, hold the book within twelve inches. Blink gently at each line. Reading small print at a close distance is good for the eyes. The reason is that the eye in reading small type does not try to see a large area at a time. Moreover, fine print cannot be read in dim light and close to the eyes unless the eyes are relaxed. In some cases pain of the eyeballs is instantly cured by reading fine print in candle light.

There should be an eye chart on the wall of each classroom to prevent and cure defective eyesight. The children should be told to read it after palming, with gentle blinking. If each teacher, before he starts teaching, tells the students to do palming for a short time, splendid results will be obtained.

If the Plan of Eye Education which I have submitted to the Divine Mother can be introduced with a good will on the part of the teachers, the menace of defective eyesight will be rooted out from our Centre of Education. For that it is necessary that

our teachers should have some training in eye education. If there is a good response I shall take up the class of the teachers on Sundays and through a short course complete the work.

From the next session we intend to introduce the medical course in Ophthalmic Science based on Bates' Nature Cure and synthesising Allopathy, Ayurveda, Homeopathy with it. For this course we want adventurous students. Then the spiritual doctor of the future will prove to be a physician *par excellence*, integrating all the systems of medicine harmoniously. His methods of treatment will be simple and harmless and will bring quick recovery. His very presence will radiate peace and healing force. He will create means which will bring health and happiness to suffering humanity as he himself will be hale and hearty, free from decay and old age. On such a physician of tomorrow my eyes are concentrated. And this aspiration will be fulfilled at Auroville. I invite all the doctors of the Ashram to collaborate in this new adventure.

I request all the teachers, the Registrar, the Director of Education to take up the Plan of Eye Education in right earnest. The success depends on our sincere collaboration.

Now at the end I express my thanks to all of you for coming here to grace the occasion, and I express my infinite gratitude to the Divine Mother through a song in English, French and simple Sanskrit:

English

Mother Divine,
Sun-Glory of Heaven,
Sea of Ananda,
I offer myself to Thee.

French

Mère Divine,
Soleil grand de Ciel,
Océan de la Félicité,
Je m'offre à Toi.

Sanskrit

नमामि मातरम्, नमामि मातरम्
शोभितं सूर्यसमानम्
परिपूर्णम् आनन्दं शरीरे,
समर्पयामि तव कमलचरणे ॥

INAUGURAL ADDRESS FOR THE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP OF GRADUATE TEACHERS, PONDICHERRY, 21 MARCH, 1968

The following is a digest of the speech made by Norman C. Dowsett.

DR. RYAN, Dr. Srivastava, Colleagues, we are all here as colleagues, for it is very necessary to both teachers and educators to come together to reorientate our various ideas and ideals on education. I am happy to have been invited to inaugurate this meeting of teachers and I am honoured to represent a Centre of Learning—The Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education—of which I have been a member for the past 23 years and which has contributed so much to the practical experiment in educational research for as many years.

In speeches such as this it is inevitable that theory should predominate over practice but I would like to balance both aspects by making a few suggestions which I feel to be relevant to the educational evolution now taking place all over the world. These suggestions I think are especially important to India today. First of all Dr. Ryan has mentioned the very real difficulty with the rigidity of syllabi. This is something which demands the attention of teachers and educationists everywhere. Of course, I have been in the happy position to be allowed the freedom to experiment for many years along many lines, a freedom which is not usually given to educators bound by traditional methods of working. Nevertheless I believe it is with you teachers of today that the responsibility lies to innovate new methods of approach to the problems found in present-day forms of education. The teachers are the true researchers in education for only they truly know the problems of students and teachers that are to be resolved in the changing climate of student awareness. What are the primary needs in education today? They are the needs of the student. You will have noticed that there is a new consciousness in today's children, especially the very little children. They are not in the same conscious state as we were fifty years ago. A new awareness is apparent in the children of today and we have to measure up to this need in terms of a higher conscious growth in ourselves.

As teachers of today the responsibility lies with you to answer the urgent needs of today's children. The student agitations all over the world no doubt reflect the need in negative terms but we have to replace this with a positive answer. What actually do the students want? They need to know the Truth. They need the requirements of the future. They need to know where they are going and why. You may say that these are philosophical questions. They are, because the education of the future has to be based on higher and wider concepts than those which served us in the past. Today's student will no longer put up with the pseudo-education of past inadequacies

and the old shibboleths of traditional cant. These are questions that have to be seriously thought about in the pursuit of your search for better methods of teaching and means of assessment. We have to educate children for the whole being not only to pass an examination for the time being. That is to say we must build education from within, to 'educate' that which is latent in the child, find that which he can best express of his true being for each human being has something perfect to manifest and it is the teacher's job to find it and guide the child to the highest and widest which he can discover within himself.

If we are to impart knowledge we should ourselves know what true knowledge is. Sri Aurobindo says of knowledge: "The knowledge which the senses and intellectual reasoning from data of the senses can bring us, is not true knowledge; it is a science of appearances. And even appearances cannot be properly known unless we know first the Reality of which they are the images." This is a truth which even the children of today are beginning to realise in the light of the rising consciousness and the widening spread of education.

The education of tomorrow will be the education of the whole man and there will be no end to such an education. Beginning with pre-natal education, we will make ready a strong foundation for a healthy physical education which can ensure a proper base for a vital education upon which a balanced mental education can be framed and through which the psychic being, the soul, will find its true climate and soil of flowering into the spiritual education to which it aspires.

Any education worthy of the name must produce a self-sufficiency, a mastery, an inner confidence that will equip the student for life. The student must be oriented to the problems of existence so that he goes on learning, you must induce in him a love for learning so that this love remains with him to the end of his life, if there is such a thing as an end.

How are we to equate these ideals with the present day methods of assessment and examination? Well, examinations as such have to go sooner or later. Perhaps a more effective method of assessment would be for the student to acquire credits in all subjects from his various teachers throughout the year, a cross-section average struck to assess his ability to deal with the work given by the teachers of the various subjects and projects. After all, it is only the teacher who has been intimately in contact with the student, who can truly assess what work the student has achieved. Producing credits for the year's work would seem much more satisfactory than some marked-up examination result which might be good for one type of child and not at all good for another type who might well have the stomach-ache on that day of examination.

You will obtain full satisfaction from your careers, a true fulfilment will be yours only if you know that you have contributed the best of which you are capable—the best you are able to give to the future foundation of a higher and wider concept of education. On this premise you bear the responsibility for the future success of the nation,

Western progress bears witness to the material advances man has made in science and technology but this science and technology can only lead to the extermination of the human race unless it is balanced by strong moral and spiritual values and this truer aspect of life can only come from the people of India. It is from you and your students that the world will turn to recapture the spirituality which was always your birthright. India is to lead the world of future education because it will be an education based on inner values and not outer progress alone. In that we shall realise that nothing can be taught. We can only take the child along with us in our search for Knowledge, Love, Truth and Beauty and final Bliss.

Thank you, Namaskar.

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

NEWSLETTER

No 5

MAY 1968

1. Gapology

This department has been collecting and collating data on all subjects which we teach to enable teachers and students of this institution to have the most up-to-date information possible on their subject. This information is especially necessary for science and technology teachers and students. Our big handicap, however, owing to the lack of sophisticated equipment, is how to use the information in practical experiment. Nevertheless our professor of Higher Course physics has been successful in getting the students to make a holograph view where they can see images in three dimensions through this new optical technique.

For the past year or so a number of research labs have been trying to extend the optical technique of holography, or photography by wave front reconstruction, to the realm of sound waves. The Research Laboratories of the Douglas Aircraft Co. have had some measure of success where the object to be "photographed" was placed between a high-frequency sound source and a scanning microphone, which was moved in a plane at right angles to the object and the sound source. The sound energy picked up by the scanning microphone was converted to light energy by connecting the microphone to a cathode-ray tube. The hologram, or interference pattern, produced on the tube by the disturbed sound wave from the object was then photographed. When the resulting photographic transparency was "developed" by shining coherent laser light through it, a three dimensional image of the object was produced.

This will give some idea of the present situation which obtains in many colleges and universities which are aware of the growing impetus of scientific and technological advances which come to them as increasing data and information but with which students can have only a minimum of practical contact because the teacher or equipment or both are not available to them. This state of the lack of teachers and material needs against the knowledge of scientific and technological advances will increase as physics research and space technology race into the future unless a completely new and revolutionary attitude is taken by heads of states immediately to deal with this problem. Unless it is dealt with and dealt with effectively, the gap will widen to such an extent as to promote, first, complete economic chaos brought about by the lack of properly trained personnel with the knowledge to deal with the cybernetic age and, secondly, world-wide repercussions as a result so that only then would it be seen that each country has an economic effect upon another and

is therefore not only responsible to its own national interests but to the international climate as a whole.

I think it is fully conceded that today economics enters every field of life whether it be cultural, political, social or educational. There was a time when diplomacy alone could create 'balances of powers' and force could intimidate nations by mere show of numbers of armed men. But now economic pressures seem to be more effective, and 'manpower'—the skilled and specialised 'manpower'—even more prized as the most essential commodity in the market of developing nations today. If this is so, why do not governments give even more immediate priority to the business of educating their subjects to the urgency of present day requirements?

2. Educational Research

If one asks a teacher what he thinks about educational research one is apt to get a very straight answer—he doesn't.

The reason for this lack of enthusiasm among today's teachers is twofold. First, among the conventionally minded, research is only thought of in terms of post graduate work and has nothing in common with the ordinary teacher; secondly, the ordinary teacher is rarely consulted on how research could solve his problems in the classroom.

If, on the other hand, one asks the research worker, one may very well get the answer: teachers either know little or nothing about educational research and what they do know they do not find very impressive or of practical value.

The harassed teacher wants research that helps in a practical way.

It is fairly obvious that much of the research carried out by universities in this field is motivated by some unrelated dream of administrators or politicians, and as long as an impressively bound thesis or report is produced to show the visiting Minister (who, of course, never reads it) everybody is happy.

Nevertheless, outside of this pretense, there is a very wide field of practical value which research has to offer the teacher of tomorrow.

Research somehow has to forge a proper kind of link between parent and teacher. The teacher must be supplied with a true background of the child's history and home environment which would contribute to solving many social problems which teachers have to cope with in many abstract forms of comprehension and discipline.

Other practical problems which research has to deal with are problems of the teacher such as: How can rooms be adapted to make them less rigid and inflexible? What are the most effective uses known one can make of audio-visual aids? What advice can research give for the best use of such equipment? What advice can research give on the most effective methods of 'team-teaching' techniques in chemistry, remedial mathematics, the evaluation of oral visual methods? How long in the primary and secondary school should a certain language be dealt with?

Too often is educational research related to syllabus content and not to the subjects of everyday life. And more often still is research concerned with statistical data rather than educating that which is a possible latent creativity in the student,

Finally teachers cry that they are working in the dark. We never really know if our methods are successful or not. We have no *real* basis on which to assess our work other than a very problematical examination ratio.

Teachers want research to enter the everyday classroom subject. After all the teacher's main job is to educate the uneducated—can the researcher help him to do this?

3. *Thought of the Month*

Man's greatness is not in what he is, but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed place and secret workshop of a living labour in which supermanhood is being made ready by a divine Craftsman.

SRI AUROBINDO, *The Hour of God*, p.61.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT
