

MOTHER INDIA

MAY 1973

Price : Re. 1-25

Posting Date for MOTHER INDIA :

JAN. to OCT. issues : 26th to 28th

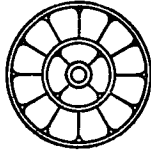
NOV.-DEC. (JOINT) issue : 10th to 12th DEC.

All Rights Reserved. No matter appearing in this journal or part thereof may be reproduced or translated without written permission from the publishers except for short extracts as quotations.

Subscription rates: Annual Rs. 12.00, £ 1.25, \$ 3.00
Single copy Re. 1.25 in India.

All correspondence to be addressed to:
MOTHER INDIA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-2, India.
Editor's Phone: 782

Publishers : Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

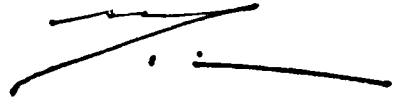


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

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. XXV

No. 5

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
WORDS OF THE MOTHER	... 349
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	<i>The Mother</i> ... 350
TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO	<i>Nirodbaran</i> ... 355
SRI AUROBINDO ON HIMSELF AND HIS YOGA: LETTERS	<i>From Nagin Doshi</i> ... 359
A SECOND VISIT TO THE ASHRAM: AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S RESPONSES AND REFLECTIONS	<i>Edith Schnapper</i> ... 363
THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE FUTURE: A SEARCH APROPOS OF R.C. ZAEHNER'S STUDY IN SRI AUROBINDO AND TEILHARD DE CHARDIN	<i>K. D. Sethna</i> ... 366
PEGASUS AND "THE WHITE HORSE" OF G.K. CHESTERTON	<i>Amal Kiran</i> ... 375
EXPECTATION (Poem)	<i>Maggi</i> ... 383
LOTUS FLAME OR SURYAMAN (Poem)	<i>Romen</i> ... 384
SYMBOLS AND THE QUESTION OF UNITY	<i>Patrizia Norellh-Bachelet</i> ... 386
THOUGHTS	<i>Girdharlal</i> ... 399

CONTENTS

SEVEN LIVES:

A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL	<i>Bina Bragg</i>	... 400
IYENGAR BABA	<i>Promode Kumar Chaterjee</i>	... 407
"LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL"	<i>Narayan Prasad</i>	... 414

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE:

SRI AUROBINDO: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.	<i>Reviewed by K. Seshadri</i>	... 418
THE NEW CREATION (Poems) BY VITHALDAS M. MEHTA	<i>Reviewed by Har Krishan Singh</i>	... 518

STUDENTS' SECTION

EYE EDUCATION:

PERFECTION IN EYESIGHT	<i>Dr. R.S. Agarwal</i>	... 420
------------------------	-------------------------	---------

Editor: K. D. SETHNA

Managing Editor: K. R. PODDAR

Published by: P. COUNOUMA

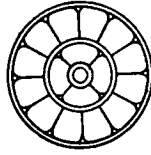
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM, PONDICHERRY-2

Printed by: AMIYO RANJAN GANGULI

at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry-2

PRINTED in INDIA

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers under No: R. N. 8667/63



WORDS OF THE MOTHER

Q. Pourquoi y-a-t-il cette personnalité noire et idiote en moi ? Est-ce que cela se cache en tout le monde ou suis-je un cas spécialement difficile ?

Q. Why is there this black and idiotic personality in me ? Does it hide in everybody or am I a specially difficult case ?

Certainement tu n'es pas le seul. Beaucoup sont ainsi. Seulement ceux qui ont centré tout leur être autour du *contrôle conscient* du psychique peuvent s'en guérir.

Certainly you are not the only one. Many are like that. Those alone who have centred their whole being around the *conscious control* of the psychic can cure themselves of it.

July 1972

In any case, of one thing you must be sure — *your future is in your hands*. You will become the man you *want to be* and the higher your ideal and your aspiration, the higher will be your realisation, but you must keep a firm resolution and never forget your true aim in life.

2.4.1963

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

(This new series of answers by the Mother to questions put by the children of the Ashram appeared for the first time in the Bulletin of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education but in a somewhat incomplete form. We now give, in a new English translation, the full text as it was taped, with here and there a few special additions or modifications made by the Mother herself at the time of its first publication in French in February 1968.)

AUGUST 22, 1956

Sweet Mother, what does Sri Aurobindo call "the heaven of the liberated mind" ?

The heaven of the liberated mind? It is an imaged comparison. When the mind is liberated, it rises to celestial heights. These regions which are higher than the mind Sri Aurobindo compares with the sky above the earth; they are celestial compared with the ordinary mind.

Is that all?

(Silence)

Somebody has asked me a question about trance (what in India is called samadhi), that is to say, when one passes or enters into a state of which no conscious memory remains after one wakes up:

"Is the state of trance or samadhi a sign of progress?"

In ancient times it was considered a very high condition. It was even thought to be the sign of a great realisation, and people wanting to do yoga or sadhana always tried to enter into a state of this kind. All sorts of marvellous things have been said about this state — you may say all that you like about it, for, precisely, you just don't remember! And those who have entered it are unable to say what has happened to them. So, one may say anything one likes.

I could incidentally tell you that in all kinds of so-called spiritual literature I had always read marvellous things about this state of trance or samadhi, and it so happened that I had never had it. So I did not know whether this was a sign of inferiority. And when I came here, one of my first questions to Sri Aurobindo was: "What do you think of samadhi, that state of trance one does not remember? One enters into a condition which seems blissful, but when one comes out of it, one does not know at all

what has happened.” Then he looked at me, saw what I meant and told me, “It is just unconsciousness.” I asked him for an explanation, I said, “What?” He told me, “Yes, you enter into what is called samadhi when you go out of your conscious being and enter a part of your being which is completely unconscious, or rather a domain where you have no corresponding consciousness — you go beyond the field of your consciousness and enter a region where you are no longer conscious. You are in the impersonal state, that is to say, a state in which you are unconscious; and that is why, naturally, you remember nothing, because you were not aware of anything.”¹ So this reassured me and I said, “Well, this has never happened to me.” He replied, “To me neither” (*Laughter*)

And since then, when people speak to me about samadhi, I tell them, “Well, try to develop your inner individuality and you will be able to enter these *very* regions in full consciousness and have the joy of communion with the highest regions without losing all consciousness and returning with a zero instead of an experience.”

So that is my reply to the person who has asked if samadhi or trance is a sign of progress. The sign of progress is when there is no longer any unconsciousness, when one can go up into the same regions without entering into trance.

But there is a confusion in the words.

When you leave a *part* of your being (for example, when you enter quite consciously the vital world), your body, *that*, can enter into trance, but this is not samadhi. It is rather what may be called a lethargic or cataleptic state. When it is at its height, it is a cataleptic state because the part of the being which animates the body has gone out of it, so the body is half dead; that is, its life is so far diminished and it functions almost abolished: the heart slows down and becomes hardly noticeable and the respiration is hardly perceptible. It is this that is the real trance. But you, during all this time, you are fully conscious in the vital world. And even, with a certain discipline which, of course, is neither easy nor without danger, you may so manage things that the minimum force you leave in your body allows it to be *independently* conscious. With an adjustment (as I said, it is not easy), quite a methodic adjustment, one can manage to make the body keep its autonomy of movement, even when one is almost totally exteriorised. And it is thus that in an almost total state of trance one may speak and relate what the exteriorised part of the being sees and does.... For that, one must be sufficiently advanced on the path.

There are spontaneous and involuntary instances of a state which is not quite the same as this, but very similar: these are states of somnambulism, that is to say,

¹ At the time of publication of this talk, the Mother added the following commentary. “There are also some people who enter domains where they are conscious, but between this conscious state and their normal waking consciousness there is a gap: their personality does not exist between the waking state and this deeper state so, during the passage they forget. They cannot bring back the consciousness they had there into the consciousness here, for there is a gap between the two. There is indeed an occult discipline for constructing intermediary fields in order to be able to recall things.”

when you are fast asleep and the vital having gone out of your body, the body obeys automatically the will and action of the part which has gone out, the vital part. Only, as this is not the effect of a willed action and a regulated, progressive education, that state is not desirable, for it may produce disorders in the being. But it is an illustration of what I have just said, of a body which, whilst being three-fourths asleep, may obey the part of the being which has gone out, and which itself is fully awake and quite conscious. That indeed is the real trance.

I have already told you several times, I think, that when one submits oneself to this occult discipline, one may succeed in leaving one's physical body, going out in the vital and moving about quite consciously, acting quite consciously in the vital world; then in leaving one's vital being asleep and going out mentally, acting and living in the mental world quite consciously and with similar relations (for the mental world is in relation with the mental being, as the physical world is in relation with the physical being), and so on, progressively and by a regular discipline. I knew a woman who had trained herself thus, who had quite remarkable personal faculties, who was conscious in all her states of being and she used to be able to go out twelve times from her body, that is to say, from twelve consecutive bodies, until she reached the summit of the individual consciousness, which may be called the threshold of the Formless. She remembered everything and recounted everything in detail. She was an English-woman; I even translated from English a book in which there was the description of all she saw and did in all these domains.

It is evidently the sign of a great mastery of one's being, and the sign of having reached a high degree of conscious development. But it is almost the very opposite of the other experience of going out of one's consciousness to enter a state in which one is no longer conscious; it is, so to say, the very opposite.

(*Silence*)

That brings me to something which is both a recommendation and an advice.

We read in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, and also passages translated recently from *The Life Divine*, in which Sri Aurobindo gives details, explanations and advice to those who do sadhana and try to have experiences which at times are too strong for their state of consciousness, and have quite unfortunate results. On this subject I made a reflective remark, and I have been asked to explain my remark. I said:

"One must always be greater than one's experience."

What I meant is this:

Whatever may be the nature, the strength and wonder of an experience, you must not be dominated by it to such an extent that it governs your entire being and you lose your balance and contact with a reasonable and calm attitude. That is to say, when you enter by whatever means into contact with a force or consciousness which

surpasses yours, instead of being entirely dominated by this consciousness or force, you must always be able to remind yourself that it is only *one* experience among thousands and thousands of others, and that, consequently, it has no absoluteness, it is relative. No matter how beautiful it may be, you can and ought to have better ones: however exceptional it be, there are others still more marvellous; and however high it be, you can always rise still higher in the future. So, instead of losing one's head one places the experience in the chain of development and keeps a healthy physical balance so as not to lose the sense of relativity with ordinary life. In this way, there is no risk.

The means? ...One who knows how to do this will find it always very easy, but for the one who doesn't know it is perhaps a little...a little perplexing.

There is a means.

It is never to lose the idea of the total self-giving to the Grace which is the expression of the Supreme. When one gives oneself up, abandons oneself, relies entirely on that which is above, beyond all creation, and when, instead of seeking any personal advantage from the experience, one makes an offering of it to the divine Grace and knows that it is from This that the experience comes and that it is to This that the result of the experience must be given back, then one is quite safe.

In other words: no ambition, no vanity, no pride. A sincere self-giving, a sincere humility, and one is sheltered from all danger. There you are, that is what I call being greater than one's experience.

Now, has anyone a question?

(*Silence*)

(*There is a cloud of insects*) That brings us down from the heights! (*Laughing*) I think it would be very wise to put out the light and get rid of the insects.... You won't go off to sleep, will you?

There is something I was asked some time ago to which I have not yet replied. It is this. I have written somewhere:

"The absolute of every being is its unique relation with the Divine and its unique manner of expressing the Divine in the manifestation."

This is what is called here in India the truth of the being or the law of the being, the *dharma* of the being: what is the centre and the cause of the individuality.

Everyone carries his truth in himself, a truth which is unique, which is altogether his own and which he must express in his life. Now what is this truth? This is the question put to me:

“*What is this truth of being, and how is it translated into the external physical life ?*”

It is translated in this way: each individual being has a direct and unique relation with the Supreme, the Origin, That which is beyond all creation. It is this unique relation which must be expressed in one's life, through a unique mode of being in relation with the Divine. Consequently, everyone is directly and exclusively in relation with the Divine — the relation one has with the Divine is unique and exclusive; so that you receive from the Divine, when you are in a receptive state, the *totality* of the relation it is *possible* for you to have, and this is neither a sharing nor a part nor a repetition, but exclusively and uniquely *the* relation which each one can have with the Divine. Hence, from the psychological point of view, one is *quite alone* in having this direct relation with the Divine.

One is quite alone with the Supreme.¹

The relation one has with Him will never have a second exactly identical. There are no two which are the same, and therefore *nothing* can be taken away from you to be given to another, *nothing* can be withdrawn from you to be given to another. And if this relation disappeared from the creation, it would really disappear — which is impossible.

And this means that if one lives in the truth of one's being, one is an indispensable part of the creation. Naturally, I don't mean if one lives as one *believes* one must, I am saying if one lives the truth of one's being; if, by a development, one succeeds in entering into contact with the truth of one's being, one is immediately in a unique and exclusive relation with the Divine, which hasn't its equal.

There, then.

And naturally, being the truth of your self, it is that which you must express in your life.

¹ This sentence was added by the Mother on May 13, 1962

TALKS WITH SRI AUROBINDO

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

(These talks are from the notebooks of Dr. Nirodbaran who used to record most of the conversations which Sri Aurobindo had with his attendants and a few others after the accident to his right leg in November, 1938. Besides the recorder, the attendants were: Dr. Mamilal, Dr. Becharlal, Purani, Champaklal, Dr. Satyendra and Mulshankar. As the notes were not seen by Sri Aurobindo, 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.)

JUNE 24, 1940

THE Armistice terms were announced on the radio.

P: I took Dilip to the British Consul. He expressed his sympathy for the British and wished their victory, to which the Consul replied, "It is not like the old times now, just throwing in a huge number of people. The warfare is quite different now, everything is mechanised and highly technical." Then Dilip said, "India also will fight alongside the British if only she is given the opportunity. We have no arms, no ammunitions, no training. How can we help? If the Government made some gesture, then everybody would willingly help. Sarojini Naidu has said that nobody wants Hitler's victory in India. If the British gave some self-government — for instance, Dominion Status — all would help the Allies."

SRI AUROBINDO: Is what she says true? I thought that India was anti-British. Mitran has told the Mother that Madras is pro-Hitler.

S: That must be the bazaar gossip. Mitran can't have the opportunity of mixing with various people. Natesan also expressed some sarcasm at the cost of Britain. I suppose some pleaders may be of that sentiment, but the rest of the public won't side with them.

N: I think most of the young people are anti-British. Only elderly people and leaders are not.

SRI AUROBINDO: The young people have no sense then and don't seem to understand anything.

S: They have no political sense.

SRI AUROBINDO: But in Europe it is the youth who are alive and active.

S: Yes, but we are not entrusted with any responsibility, or opportunity, either, to take part in active life.

P: These armistice terms mean practically the end of France.

SRI AUROBINDO: Oh! I wonder whether it was treachery or cowardice that made them accept these terms. This fool of a Marshal Pétain has sold France.

S: If at least a part of the Navy could be saved!

SRI AUROBINDO: Don't know. Pétain has put in three admirals in his cabinet to prevent that.

S: Yes, they go by rules and traditions and authority. The Navy is not likely to revolt, perhaps.

N: All this talk about 'soldier to soldier' must be a hoax. How can one think it to be true after seeing the acceptance of such terms? How could they accept such a peace?

SRI AUROBINDO: They will accept anything. If they are asked to give Morocco to Spain or Indo-China to Japan they will agree.

N: There is no mention of colonies in the terms.

SRI AUROBINDO: That will come in the final peace terms. It is only an armistice now — unless it is left to Italy to demand it. Their original plan was that Germany would take the North of France and Italy the South, now it comes almost to that and the French Government is interned with no communication with the outside world.

N: If the Navy and the Air Force don't come back?

SRI AUROBINDO: They can't be brought back. Hitler may then say that the armistice terms have been broken and will occupy the whole of France.

P: And how will Hitler subjugate the colonies that don't accept the French Government. — In the Middle East the authorities have said they will fight on. Pétain will have to send the French fleet against them.

SRI AUROBINDO: The Navy won't do; he will have to send land troops.

P: Then he can transport them through the French Navy.

SRI AUROBINDO: That will be too obvious an alliance with Hitler and will make people still more furious. The Mother said that the bazaar people were so frightened that when they heard of England's promise of assistance and of a National Committee in London, they were relieved. You have seen in Saigon how the people crowded round the British embassy and expressed their allegiance to the Allies. But the public only is not enough. The soldiers and the officers must also accept.

N: Now that Laval is appointed a minister it is clear that he was acting from behind.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes; now what will be the plight of the refugees who have taken shelter in France — Czechs, Belgians, Italians and Poles? They will have to be surrendered to Hitler and will undergo severe trials.

N: Some people here still believe that Hitler has no eye on India as he does not want colonies.

SRI AUROBINDO: He is talking of colonies now.

N: I don't see what can prevent him from coming to India if Britain goes down.

And they say that Hitlerism after all may not be much worse than imperialism.

SRI AUROBINDO: Good Lord!

P: Y says that. I told him that under Hitlerism he won't be allowed even to talk of freedom.

SRI AUROBINDO: Not only that, nobody will be allowed to think or speak anything worth while. Of course one can think, but most people are fed by others' thoughts and writings. Very few can think for themselves. Under Italy it will be the same except perhaps a little less thorough suppression. Under Russia too the same. Japan may allow thinking and speaking so long as you don't say anything offensive against the Police and the State.

P: If France is not allowed commerce, the people will be in an awful plight.

SRI AUROBINDO: In winter there is likely to be starvation in all the occupied areas. Without crops and exports how will they survive? There is failure of crops this year, they say. In all the countries occupied by Hitler, the same fate will visit them. Denmark was a prosperous country, its prosperity has gone; so too with Belgium. The Scandinavian countries were some of the most advanced ones in economic progress. They tried to solve the problem of poverty. Now all that has gone. The German invasion has come as a cataclysm. It is on the way to destroy all civilisation.

P: Subscriptions raised here for the war won't be sent to France, they say.

S: What will be the state of French currency if the colonies recognise the Bordeaux Government?

SRI AUROBINDO: Then we will have to lose all our money and the Ashram will have to be dissolved. But if they declare to side with Britain, there won't be any trouble. If Pondicherry recognises the Bordeaux Government the British will at once take possession of it.

S: Again it is given in the paper that the Americans will keep off.

N: Dilip's prophecy will be true then? They don't want to board a sinking ship.

SRI AUROBINDO: They will have their own ship sinking.

N: That will be 10-20 years later.

SRI AUROBINDO: Not so long. Hitler won't wait so long.

N: The *Patrika* says Germany has prepared many flat bottomed boats which will sail from the Scheldt on a calm day and, strongly supported by warships, etc., invade England.

SRI AUROBINDO: Every day won't be calm; and what will they do then? How will they maintain their supplies?

EVENING

According to the radio news the Viceroy would be seeing Gandhi and Jinnah during the week.

S: This Viceroy Linlithgow is a good man.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes.

P: Better than Willingdon at any rate.

N: It was Mrs. Willingdon who was worse.

SRI AUROBINDO: So Linlithgow is better than Lady Willingdon. (*Laughter*)

P: The French officers, members of the Circle, are going to send a wire to De Gaulle in England that they will also fight along with the British.

SRI AUROBINDO: It will have a moral value but if the Governor sent such a declaration, it will have a political value. De Gaulle should declare at once the names of the members of the National Committee. A single person won't command confidence.

S: But the French Colonies have appealed already.

P: Appealing is not enough. They must repudiate the Government. That is more important.

SRI AUROBINDO: Mombrant on hearing the armistice terms said, "It is not armistice, it is treason." The *Patrika* says that Laval and Flandin have engineered the whole thing, Laval being friendly with Italy and Flandin with Germany.

P: Very soon after the war began, there came the news that there was sabotage in France. The shells that were supplied were too big for the cannons; the ammunition and gunpowder wouldn't ignite.

SRI AUROBINDO: That means that it was in the factories that this happened. Work of the communists?

P: Perhaps.

N (*after a while*): The Viceroy's and Gandhi's meeting is Amery's work.

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes. We have to see what comes of it. If they grant what Amery calls dominion independence, there is some chance. Or if they agree to what the Indian leaders decide about the nature and formation of their own Government, subject to some conditions, there is also some chance.

N: In Bengal the Governor has formed a war committee representative of all the parties except the Congress. Shyama Prasad and M. N. Mukherji are there.

SRI AUROBINDO: The Muslim League also?

N: Yes.

SRI AUROBINDO: N. R. Sircar?

N: I didn't see his name. Oh, he is said to be indisposed

SRI AUROBINDO: Really or conveniently? (*Laughter*)

(*To be continued*)

NIRODBARAN

SRI AUROBINDO ON HIMSELF AND HIS YOGA

LETTERS

This Yoga and Other Yogas

It is rather surprising that you should be unable to understand such a simple and familiar statement; for that has been always the whole reason of this Yoga that to follow after the Impersonal only brings inner experience or, at the most, Mukti. Without the action of the integral Divine there is no change of the whole nature. If it were not so, the Mother would not be here and I would not be here if a realisation of the Impersonal were sufficient

15-9-1936

From where did you get this singular attitude towards the old Yogas and Yogis? Is the wisdom of the Vedanta and Tantra a small and trifling thing? Have then the sadhaks of this Ashram attained to self-realisation and are they liberated Jivanmuktas, free from ego and ignorance? If not, why then do you say, "it is not a very difficult stage", or "their goal is not high"?

I have said that this Yoga is "new" because it aims at the integrality of the Divine in this world and not beyond it and at a supramental realisation. But how does that justify a superior contempt for the spiritual realisation which is as much the aim of this Yoga as of any other?

3-4-1936

If anyone, no matter who he be, thinks that this world of ignorance, limitation and suffering is a plane of eternal and infinite Light, Power and Ananda, infallible Will and Power, what can he be but a self-deceiving fool or lunatic? And where then would be the need of bringing down the said Light, Power, etc., from the higher planes, if it was already gambolling about all over this blessed earth and its absurd troop of human-animal beings? But perhaps you are of the opinion of Raman Maharshi ("The Divine is here, how can he descend from anywhere?").

The Divine may be here, but if he has covered here his Light with darkness of Ignorance and his Ananda with suffering, that I would think makes a big difference to the plane and, even if one enters into that sealed Light etc., it makes a difference to the consciousness but very little to the Energy at work in this plane.

3-5-1937

The Supramental Descent

Question. Some people believe that the Supermind has not yet been established in the Mother's body because she is not ready for it. But it seems to me that if the Supermind is not established, it is simply because the Mother has first to prepare the

physical of the sadhaks and of the earth to a certain extent. Am I right?

SRI AUROBINDO: Certainly. If we had lived physically in the Supermind from the beginning nobody would have been able to approach us nor could any sadhana have been done. There could have been no hope of contact between ourselves and the earth and men. Even as it is, Mother has to come down towards the lower consciousness of the sadhaks instead of keeping always in her own, otherwise they begin to say, "how far away, how severe you were; you do not love me, I get no help from you, etc., etc."

The Divine has to veil himself in order to meet the human.

What is being done is meant to prepare the manifestation of the Supermind in the earth consciousness down to Matter itself, so it can't be for the physical of myself or the Mother alone.

If it (the Supermind) comes down into our physical it would mean that it has come down into Matter and so there is no reason why it should not manifest in the sadhaks.

15-9-1935

On Himself and the Mother

I don't know that I have called myself a Superman. But certainly I have risen above the ordinary human mind, otherwise I would not think of trying to bring down the Supermind into the physical.

15-5-1935

Question: What do you express through your poetry?

SRI AUROBINDO: I am expressing spiritual truth or spiritual experience through poetry.

The idea that the Mother or I are spiritually great but ignorant of everything practical seems to be common in the Ashram. It is an error to suppose that to be on a high spiritual plane makes one ignorant or unobservant of the world or of human nature. If I know nothing of the human nature or do not consider it, I am obviously unfit to be anybody's guide in the work of transformation, for nobody can transform human nature if he does not know what human nature is, does not see its workings or even if he sees, does not take them into consideration at all. If I think that the human plane is like the plane or planes of infinite Light, Power, Ananda, infallible Will Force, then I must be either a stark lunatic or a gibbering imbecile or a fool so abysmally idiotic as to be worth keeping in a museum as an exhibit.

30-4-1937

Question: It is said that you and the Mother have been on this earth since the creation started. Kindly enlighten me as to what you both were doing for so many millions of years remaining in disguise. I say "disguise" because it is only in this birth that you have revealed to the world your real nature.

SRI AUROBINDO: Carrying on the evolution.

25-5-1935

Question: Would you kindly explain this point in a little more detail?

SRI AUROBINDO: That would mean writing the whole of human history. I can only say that as there are special descents to carry on the evolution to a farther stage, so also something of the Divine is always there to help through each stage itself in one direction or another.

26-5-1935

On Letters

Question: Is it not true that the letters we receive from you are full of power?

SRI AUROBINDO: Yes, power is put into them.

Question: Before reading your answers to my letters I feel as if I would be unable to read or understand them! What is this activity?

SRI AUROBINDO: A useless activity of the vital mind. You should keep it quiet and receive with a silent mind waiting for light. In the silent mind one can receive an answer even if I write nothing.

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

It is because the mind by itself cannot understand things that are beyond it. It constructs its own idea out of something that it catches or thinks it has caught and puts that idea as the whole meaning of what has been written. Each mind puts its own ideas in place of the Truth.

6-6-1936

Question: You and the Mother are supposed to know what is going on inside us, how we are aspiring and for what, how our nature is reacting to help and guidance. What then is the necessity of our writing?

SRI AUROBINDO: It is necessary for you to be conscious and to put your self-observation before us, it is on that that we can act. A mere action on our observation without any corresponding consciousness in that part of the sadhak would lead to nothing.

7-1-1936

Sadhana

I never point out to anybody his defects unless he gives me the occasion. A sadhak must become conscious and lay himself before the light, see and reject and change. It is not the right method for us to interfere and lecture and point out this and point out that. That is the school-master method — it does not work in the spiritual change.

10-5-1936

If I said only things that human nature finds easy and natural, that would certainly be very comfortable for the disciples, but there would be no room for spiritual aim and endeavour. Spiritual aims and methods are not easy or natural (e.g. as quarelling, sex-indulgence, greed, indolence, acquiescence in all imperfections are easy and natural) and if people become disciples, they are supposed to follow spiritual aims and endeavours, however hard and above ordinary nature and not the things that are easy and natural.

3-5-1937

What you describe is not at all a drawing away of life-energy; it is simply the effect of voidness and stillness caused in the lower parts by the consciousness being located above. It is quite consistent with action, only one must get accustomed to the idea of the possibility of action under these conditions. In a greater state of emptiness I carried on a daily newspaper and made a dozen speeches in the course of three or four days — but I did not manage that in any way; it happened. The Force made the body do the work without any inner activity.

13-5-1936

It ought to be possible to read with the inner consciousness looking on and, as it were, seeing the act of reading. In the condition of absolute inner silence I was making speeches and conducting a newspaper, but all that got itself done without any thought entering my mind or the silence being in the least disturbed or diminished.

27-10-1934

If the sadhana has stopped for a time, then let it stop, remain quiet, ...wait till the physical consciousness is ready. My own sadhana when it was far more advanced than yours used to stop for half a year together. I did not make a fuss about it, but remained quiet till the empty or dull period was over.

8-3-1935

Question: When my consciousness merges in the Self there remains little awareness of the body.

SRI AUROBINDO: That is usual. I was in that way unconscious of the body for many years.

15-10-1934

From NAGIN DOSHI

A SECOND VISIT TO THE ASHRAM

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S RESPONSES AND REFLECTIONS

JUST as it is impossible to step into the same river twice so it is impossible to revisit a place and find it unchanged. Returning to the Ashram after an absence of two years has meant going back to a dearly familiar yet different place. Had the Ashram, the visitor or both changed in the intervening years? The feeling of novelty characterizing much of the first visit had all but disappeared; fresh impressions and responses had taken over and had opened the way to a wider and, at the same time, deeper understanding of the Integral Yoga.

And now looking back from a distance of time and space an overall pattern is gradually taking shape that appears to be expressive of the Ashram's concerted drive to open to the new consciousness and bring it down into, and thus transform, life. The pattern that is emerging is a familiar one, for it is the giant spiral which, originating in a vision of the Mother's, has since become the blueprint of Auroville. Why a spiral?

The spiral is a symbol of dynamic character and far flung implications. It is as old as is man's search for the Divine. In its many variations it has always stood for the Way and the Search, in short for the eternal Quest for God. Its connotations and meanings are manifold and intricate; yet, wherever it appears, it conveys a twofold message, for it stands at once for expansion and contraction, for an outgoing and an indrawing motion. In its Aurovillian version it thus combines within itself the centripetal and the centrifugal motion patterns. At every point of this design there is a thrust away from, and a pull towards, its centre. As such it reveals itself as the symbol *par excellence* of the dynamic union of opposites. Everywhere along its lines of energy there is the immediate interaction of contrary tendencies and it is this that imbues it with its challenging, compelling and dynamic character.

The breakthrough into consciousness of a potent symbol of this type is indicative of an inner development that seeks expression. This applies above all to our own sadhana and thus to our understanding of and our reaction to the Integral Yoga. Could it be that the spiral of Auroville has become the symbol suggestive of the present phase of the Integral Yoga? Indeed, the changes that have taken place both at Pondicherry and Auroville seem to point to the possibility that Sri Aurobindo's image of the two interlaced triangles — another version of the union of opposites — has given birth to the energy pattern of the revolving spiral; or even further, that this image is now revealing itself as symptomatic of the Integral Yoga as such, of the hidden source of energy sustaining it in its almost endless gradations and wide ramification. Far from being a 'mere' symbol, the spiral design here stands for a living, individual as well as communal experience that challenges our Yoga at every moment and in all situations. For both, the indrawing and the outgoing movements, in their immediate interaction,

are vital elements of the sadhana. The centripetal, convergent pull translates itself into an indrawing towards the centre, a tendency to stand back, to become detached or even to withdraw from the world and its activities. It demands increasing equanimity and a growing surrender to the inner call.

To this is opposed the centrifugal, the divergent motion which, originating in the centre, seeks to pour itself into life, and to identify itself with all creation. Much of the Integral Yoga appears to be informed and carried by this two-way thrust away from and towards the centre which gives access to the depths within as well as the heights lying beyond our present human situation. Thus the spiral pattern challenges us to synthesize in ourselves an interplay of forces acting in several directions at once. The ensuing struggle is not only intense but frequently painful and at times frustrating and the temptation, consciously or unconsciously, to abandon this tug-of-war is immense. However, to do so means giving way to a one-sided formation and this runs counter to the very purpose and meaning of the Integral Yoga as such, for the outcome would not be integration but, on the contrary, further division and strife. The reason for this lies in the fact, as stated uncompromisingly by Sri Aurobindo, that the principle of the material life is division and that in its search for unity it only knows two approaches, one is the mere aggregation of separate units, the other an attempted assimilation that involves the predominance over or even destruction of one unit by another. "Both methods repose on death, one as a means, the other as a condition of life."¹

This is a crucial statement, for it means that to abandon the fight for true integration and transcendence even temporarily is synonymous with abandoning the Integral Yoga. What happens is that the play of forces is arrested in favour of a one-sided pursuit and so the Yoga reaches a dead end. This applies, however desirable or genuine in itself that one-sided pursuit may appear to be. One of Sri Aurobindo's axioms here comes into its own. If the play of energies sustaining the Integral Yoga ceases to function because we have become static, what was previously the helper in the sadhana becomes the bar, for it prevents us from moving on.

This appears to apply to the whole gamut of steps of sadhanic experiences on the Stair of Ascent and we have to face the fact that the rule of integration and transcendence is valid throughout. But can this be so even where such mainstays of the Yoga are involved as, for instance, devotion and surrender? Sri Aurobindo has repeatedly pointed out that the one-sided attitude of "I can do nothing, the Divine will do everything for me" without its contrary — active aspiration and self-effort — becomes tamasic and therewith a hindrance to the Yoga. Reversedly, self-effort, however dynamically undertaken, becomes empty and defeats its own object unless supported by and imbued with its opposite, the tendency to open oneself, to yield and to surrender. An added difficulty is that living in a one-sided formation may easily give a feeling of achievement, contentment and even happiness. Herein lie great temptation and

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 226

danger, as is shown by so many religious activities that are undertaken for the purpose of either withdrawal from or the betterment of the world.

Is it only in man that this play and interaction of consciousness-forces can find a synthesis on a higher level of being? Man appears destined to be the cradle for this new mode of existence as well as the field where the battle of the old and the new is fought out. The inrush of negative forces has taken on frightening proportions all over the world; it has become deadly. Yet, just as Savitri's heroic stand against Death revealed the Great Adversary to be none other than the Lord Himself, so must we learn, on our own level, that the Truth, many-faced and many-sided, must be fought for heroically, as the Mother bids, both in ourselves and in the world. The Auroville spiral appears to tell us that our self-opening inwards, the precondition for an inpouring from above, must be matched by an outpouring, a conscious thrust upwards and outwards. This would involve a deliberate effort of our will to break down that encircling wall which prevents us from feeling and knowing ourselves at one with the world. When speaking of the ascent and descent of the Overmind consciousness, Sri Aurobindo makes the point that to this "there must be added a vast horizontal expansion of consciousness into some totality of the Spirit."¹ Such an expansion would implement the Mother's recent message that only by becoming conscious of the whole world can one become conscious of the Divine. Our endeavour there too may lead to increased involvement in people, in the affairs of the world and generally in the way of works; but it would be fallacious to conclude that the two — widening of consciousness and greater emphasis on the way of works — are synonymous terms or that they necessarily stand in the relationship of cause and effect. The former includes the latter but is by no means restricted by or identical with it. Expansion of consciousness is, ultimately, a movement of the Spirit within directed towards identification with Itself in all created things and as such it is unlimited and can take a multitude of different forms.

Standing at the deepest point of the Matrimandir and seeing its four vast pillars rising and towering above was like standing at the centre of a gigantic power station of the Spirit; it was as though the heart of the spiral of Auroville and indeed of the Integral Yoga itself had begun to quicken. Had the wheel of the City of Dawn started to revolve?

EDITH SCHNAPPER

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 844.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE FUTURE

A SEARCH APROPOS OF R. C. ZAEHNER'S STUDY IN SRI AUROBINDO AND TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

5 *(Contd.)*

ZAEHNER'S INTERPRETATION OF TEILHARD, THE QUESTION OF TEILHARD'S PANTHEISM

(g)

(I)

IN tune with de Lubac's enlistment of the early Greek Fathers, as part of Teilhard's spiritual ancestry, a whole book has been written by a Jesuit admirer of both Teilhard and de Lubac.

George A. Maloney's "purpose is to present a vision of Christ in his relation to the world shared across the ages by many Christian theologians for whom Jesus Christ was encountered in and through the material cosmos."¹ As architects of this tradition there are for Maloney not only St. Paul and St. John but also the entire school of religious exegetes belonging to the Eastern Church, from Irenaeus down to Maximus the Confessor. Then Maloney² treats of "Teilhard de Chardin's christological contribution and the development of contemporary Christian secularity". Here we are told about Teilhard: "he has succeeded in recapturing the same vision of the cosmic Christ so dear to earlier Christians."³

The book spreads out a fascinating panorama of religious ideas and aspirations. But its link-up of the early Greek Fathers with Teilhard is open to serious question. Maloney is too much carried away by general resemblances and verbal similarities to serve as a reliable guide in comparison. His unreliability comes to a focus at the threshold of his comparative scrutiny, when he sums up his admirable survey of antiquity before launching on the cosmic Christology of Teilhard. He⁴ tells us: "The work of the Greek Fathers of the first seven centuries of Christian existence was well done. The Church has need of thinkers of the twentieth century who can complete

¹ *The Cosmic Christ from Paul to Teilhard* (Sheed and Ward, New York, 1968), p. 14.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

the teaching of the Fathers in terms that are intelligible to us today. We turn to one such modern teacher, Teilhard de Chardin, as representative of a modern school of Fathers eager to explore the cosmic dimensions of the christology formulated by the Greek Fathers, in ways, at times, so strikingly presaging Teilhardian thought, as when Maximus speaks across twelve centuries of 'Christ...as a centre upon which all lines converge'. On reading this conclusion we immediately recall from our last chapter that, in interpreting St. Paul, Fernand Prat, another Jesuit, has almost exactly the same words as Maximus. Does not Prat speak of Christ making all things "converge towards him, as to their common centre"? And yet can Prat's Paulinism be given a Teilhardian meaning? That his book received Rome's *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* in 1927 for the French edition and in 1945 for the English, is itself a suggestion of its non-Teilhardism and we have, besides, shown positive reasons. Such words as Prat and Maximus use arise naturally from a study of Paul's Epistles but need have no bearing on the content of Teilhardian phraseology.

How can they have any bearing when, like every other utterance of the Greek Fathers, they have behind them a non-Teilhardian vision of "the presence and activity of Christ in the cosmos"¹ — or, as Maloney² elsewhere puts it, "the immanence of Christ in the material world"? All the Fathers were at one with Athanasius who called God the world's "Artificer",³ and with Gregory of Nyssa who wrote of "the instant and simultaneous" making of all things,⁴ and Maximus who described God as "the universal cause who made creatures distinct from one another in the beginning".⁵ Christ's immanence, therefore, must mean to the Greek Fathers such presence and activity in the universe as would be consonant with the being of a God extrinsic to Nature, a Creator of her *ab extra* by an instantaneous act. This immanence is in contrast with the Teilhardian sort. The latter is tied up with Teilhard's view of world-creation as evolutive and with Christ's physical and organic involvement in the universe from the dawn of creation up to the highest evolutive stage possible. The contrast with it should have struck Maloney the moment he was led to admit:⁶ "With their level of scientific knowledge, the Fathers were in no position to see the interrelationships of all material creatures and their mutual dependence." He appears to believe that here is no basic cleavage and that Teilhard had only to carry "the total, unified vision"⁷ of the ancient patristic epoch further in modern scientific terms. A capital mistake, this, — as we shall realise if we let Teilhard expound himself.

He begins by mentioning "our generation's gradual awakening to consciousness of a movement which is cosmic in breadth and organicity: a movement which, whether we welcome it or not, is drawing us, through the relentless building up in

¹ *Ibid*, p. 178.

² *Ibid*, p. 100

³ *Ibid*, p. 263

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 270

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 277.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁷ *Ibid.*

our minds of a common *Weltanschauung*, towards some 'ultra-human' lying ahead in time".¹ At the back of this *Weltanschauung* Teilhard traces our age's scientific perception that "nothing exists...except as a function of a vast and single combined process" of forming complex unified structures, "in the course of which can be distinguished the phases of a gradual and irreversible 'interiorization' (development of consciousness) of what we call (without knowing what it is) matter".² First there are simple particles of apparently unconscious "Pre-life". Next, "with the emergence of life... we have beings that are simply conscious". And now we human beings are not only "reflective" but growing "co-reflective" by an increasing association until we shall have one planetised consciousness. We can discern in the future the infallible appearance "of a peak of unification at the higher term of cosmic ferment".³ This peak is, of course, Teilhard's famous "Omega Point" on which the cosmos converges in its evolution. From our scientific sense of Omega "arises the general maladjustment we see on all sides in the old moulds in which either morality or religion is contained".⁴

Then Teilhard⁵ comes out with his crucial statement:

"We still hear it said that the fact that we now see the universe not as a cosmos but henceforth as a cosmogenesis in no way affects the idea we used to be able to form of the Author of all things. 'As though it makes any difference to God,' is a common objection, 'whether he creates *instantaneously* or *evolutively*.'

"I shall not try to discuss the notion (or pseudo-notion) of 'instantaneous creation', nor dwell on the reasons which make me suspect the presence of an ontological contradiction latent in this association of the two words.

"On the other hand I must emphasize with all the power at my command the following cardinal point:

"While, in the case of a static world, the creator (the efficient cause) is still, on any theory, *structurally* independent of his work, and in consequence, without any definable basis to his immanence — in the case of a world which is by nature evolute, the contrary is true: God is not conceivable (either structurally or organically) except in so far as he coincides with (as a sort of 'formal' cause), but without being lost in, the centre of convergence of cosmogenesis. I say, advisedly, either structurally or organically: because if God did not appear to us now at this supreme and exact point at which we see that nature is finally held together, our capacity to love would inevitably gravitate not towards him but — (a situation, we could not possibly accept) towards some other 'God'.

"Ever since Aristotle there have been almost continual attempts to construct 'models' of God on the lines of an outside Prime Mover, acting *a retro*.⁶ Since the

¹ *Christianity and Evolution* (Collins, London, 1971), p 238.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid*, p 239.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 239-42

⁶ 'Starting from the beginning'

emergence in our consciousness of the 'sense of evolution' it has become physically impossible for us to conceive or worship anything but an organic Prime Mover God, *ab ante*.¹

"In future only a God who is functionally and totally 'Omega' can satisfy us...

"Where, then, shall we find such a God? And who will at last give evolution *its own* God? ...

"As a result...of life's very recent passing through a new critical point in the course of its development, no older religious form or formulation can any longer (either factually or logically) satisfy to the full our need and capacity for worship... So true is this that a religion of the future (definable as a 'religion of evolution') cannot fail to appear before long: a new mysticism of evolution, the germ of which (as happens when anything is born) must be recognizable somewhere in our environment, *here and now*....

"Christ has never ceased since his first coming to re-emerge from every crisis of history with more immediacy, more urgency and greater penetrative power than ever before.

"If then he is to be able to offer himself once again to our new world as the 'new God' for whom we are looking, what does he still lack?

"Two things, to my mind, and two only.

"The first is this: that in a universe in which we can no longer seriously entertain the idea that thought is an exclusively terrestrial phenomenon, Christ must no longer be constitutionally restricted in his operation to a mere 'redemption' of our planet.

"And the second: that in a universe in which we can now see that everything is co-reflective along a single axis, Christ must no longer be offered to our worship (in consequence of a subtle and pernicious confusion between 'super-natural' and 'extra-natural') as a peak distinct from and a rival to that to which the biologically continued slope of anthropogenesis is leading us."

Finally, Teilhard speaks of the "fundamental identity" of "the two Omegas..., the Omegas of experience and of faith."²

Clearly, we can mark the incompatibility between the old immanence and the new. The old, because God created a static cosmos from the outside as its Artificer or efficient cause, was something without a proper basis, something vague which was not organically linked either to the creation or to the Creator. The new coincides with the evolutive process and will find its full evolutive expression in the ultra-human totalisation of mankind in a vast unanimity towards which life seems to be heading. The Christ who is thus immanent is certainly not "lost" in the cosmogenesis: he is never completely immersed in the creation but has his independent, free, self-fulfilled aspect as the transcendent Divine. But he is, with equal certainty, no mere presence and activity in the world: he is the world's all-permeating in-dweller or soul, the cosmic

¹ 'Drawing us ahead.'

² *Ibid.*, pp 242-43.

Self of selves, such as pantheism has visioned and worshipped. In Teilhard's own phrase, this Christ, the Omega of faith, is fundamentally identical with the physical-biological Omega of experience. The genuine essence of pantheism is thus synthesised with the genuine essence of Christianity. Not just a furthering of the Patristic Christology in new terms is here. We have a concept different *toto coelo* — and, being poles apart from the cosmic Christology of the Greek Fathers, it is also at basic variance with even St. Paul's.

What obscures this fact is, ironically enough, Teilhard's own eagerness to find common points between his notions and theirs. In one place he¹ proposes to pass beyond the Latin Fathers who "overdeveloped the rabbinical and legalistic side of St. Paul". He considers the Church of his time as "unmindful of a nobler tradition" and as modern scientific pressure obliging us "to return to a form of Christianity which is more organic and takes more account of physics". One can guess that he has persuaded himself that the original Pauline doctrine, as well as the expression of it by the Greek Fathers, had a side conformable to a physics-founded religion of evolution. In the very context which we have quoted from him to pit him against the stand of the Greek Fathers on God and the created world, he² recalls St. Paul: "For Christ would not still be the Consummator so passionately described by St. Paul if he did not take on precisely the attributes of the astonishing cosmic pole already potentially (if not as yet explicitly) demanded by our new knowledge of the world: the pole at whose peak the progress of evolution must finally converge." But a parity between the Pauline Christ and the Teilhardian is impossible so long as St. Paul believed, as Teilhard³ says he did, "in one week of creation and a past of 4,000 years". Teilhard⁴ has himself noted in the Apostle "the ideas of a first-century Jew", "those outdated formulations". Again: "For St. Paul, we must remember, the world was only a week old when Adam sinned".⁵ Unquestionably, Teilhard accepted that St. Paul's background had been a static non-evolutive cosmos instantaneously created. Hence whatever immanence either the Apostle or his early Eastern commentators might imply for Christ could never be — for all the "dynamic" or "existential" colour of their mysticism — the kind of cosmicity Teilhard would designate "physical and organic". His self-obscuration sprang from his fervent wish to have a legitimate place in the Catholic Church whose minister he was, and even more from his deep devotion to the historical Jesus as pictured by St. Paul and St. John with a stress on Christ's being he in whom and by whom and for whom all things had been created. Seized by that great formula of Colossians 1. 15, he let himself slur over the fact that the cosmicity, for which both the Pauline-Johannine scripture and the writing of the Greek Fathers showed such zest, was yet no more than the general cosmicity insepa-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

² *Ibid.*, p. 242.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

rable from any Being taken to be supremely divine and posited as a transcendent creator and preserver of the cosmos.

For, what indeed does that Pauline formula signify? Prat¹ explains: "The Son is the efficient cause, the exemplary cause, and the final cause of all beings." Prat observes that the Greek grammatical tense—the perfect—used by St. Paul, in saying of the Son what is translated as "all things are by him", subsumes under the category of Christ's creative activity—that is, his efficient causality—two concepts. The case is unlike as in St. John 1.3 where the aorist tense is employed and the reference thereby is solely to "the first production of created beings". St. Paul does not only indicate this first production: he "also designates the present relation of creatures to the Son as to their Creator. They have been created by him, and 'they consist in him' [Colossians 1.17].... He it is who preserves their existence, cohesion and harmony". Readers of Teilhard will at once notice that Prat has pressed into service a phrase repeatedly at the tip of Teilhard's pen: "*In quo omnia constant*", which is rendered in his context as "In whom all things hold together".² Thus the holding together of things, on which Teilhard, overlooking the distinction between the aorist and the perfect, would found part of the physical and organic relationship of Christ to the cosmos is, in Paul, a part of Christ's role as efficient cause. And as the efficient cause the Pauline Christ can be no more than the extrinsic Artificer of the world—a world of continuing existence as an artifact. Such a limitation Teilhard could never impose upon his Christ who is the God of evolution, an intrinsic divine principle.

As the exemplary cause, the Christ of St. Paul, in spite of the word "in", does not contain the world literally. Prat³ is quite explicit here and he rests his interpretation on the Greek patristic tradition itself as to how the world was created in Christ: "Many of the Fathers, following St. Hippolytus and Origen, suppose that it is in his quality as a divine exemplar, as the home of ideas and universal archetype." Although we must carefully avoid ascribing to the Pauline concept of Christ "Platonic and Philonian speculations in the *intelligible world*", the Cosmos "was in him and could be in him only in an intelligible way, as in its model or exemplar". Such an exclusive gloss would hardly be acceptable to Teilhard: his Christ is not confined to being "a home of ideas". Besides constituting the "universal archetype", he is one with the movement of evolution.

This additional mode of relationship to the world lends a new nuance to Christ in the role of "final cause"; for the Omega Point as the world's finality makes Christ in that role identical not only with the supra-cosmic Son of God and with his historical incarnation but also with the physical-biological force that culminates in Omega Point. And this identification in turn brings in the issue of a fourth kind of cause, which has

¹ *The Theology of Saint Paul*, translated from the French Edition by John L. Stodd (Brown, Oates and Washbourne, London & Dublin, 1945), Vol. I, p. 291.

² E.g., *Christianity and Evolution*, pp. 190-91, with fn. 6

³ *Op cit*, p. 292.

been mentioned by Teilhard in the passage about the old immanence which was "without any definable basis" and the new which is based on God's coinciding, structurally and organically, with the centre of convergence of cosmogenesis.

Here Teilhard uses the expression: "as a sort of 'formal' cause." Prat too speaks of this cause but only in the phrase: "exemplary or formal cause."¹ The two usages have entirely different senses. Prat's sense is somewhat analogous to that of Plato's "forms" existing in the ideal realm beyond the universe, whereas Teilhard's refers to the universe where God is "functionally and totally 'Omega' ". The whole Teilhardian situation and the need to introduce a formal cause along with the final is well brought out by Donald B. Gray in discussing Teilhard's attitude to God as the efficient cause in the traditional connotation. Gray ² gives a quotation from Teilhard³ on how the universal Christ functions: "The characteristic attribute of the Universal Element, as it appears to us realized in the figure of Christ, is to be not a quasi-matter, a plastic element, an agent of absorption, but a quasi-Soul, a plasmatic element, a determining force." Then Gray writes:

"The cosmic Christ is the soul, the physical or organic centre of the evolutionary movement *in toto*, but most particularly of humanity in process of socialization. Because evolution for Teilhard is primarily a movement of unification, and unification is a work which belongs properly to the soul or spirit, it follows logically that in attempting to determine the relationship which obtains between God and the world, Teilhard quite naturally thinks of this relationship in terms of formal, or rather quasi-formal, causality (the causality appropriate to the soul) rather than in terms of efficient causality. A causal relationship of a quasi-formal kind establishes an organic relationship between God in Christ and the world, whereas a causal relationship of an efficient kind seems to Teilhard to establish a relationship which is altogether too extrinsic and hence inadequate to describe the organic kind of unity which Teilhard envisions as being the goal of mankind's thrust towards socialization. Furthermore, inasmuch as evolution for Teilhard is the form assumed for us by God's creative activity, God's creative activity is understood in terms of quasi-formal rather than efficient causality. From being the artisan of a static universe, God becomes in the framework of Teilhard's system the soul of creation as an ongoing process of unification. Or, to put the matter more accurately, *Christ* becomes in the framework of Teilhard's system the soul of creation, the quasi-formal cause of unity....

"In an essay written in 1918, Teilhard expresses in a particularly clear way his animus against the category of efficient causality:

"The term *efficient causality* when applied to *creation* quite accurately affirms the distinction which separates the Creator from his work (i e. it serves to deny pantheism); however it tells us virtually nothing about the nature of the process which

¹ *Ibid*, p. 292

² *The One and the Many Teilhard de Chardin's Vision of Unity* (Burns & Oates, London, 1969), pp. 119, 120-21.

³ *Writings in Time of War* (Collins, London, 1968), p. 299.

links *participated being* to *uncreated Being*; — on the contrary, it introduces between the two an *exteriority* which is surely exaggerated.¹

“If the notion of efficient causality adequately safeguards the contingency of the universe and the transcendence of God and accurately describes God’s creative action considered as an isolated act in the remote past establishing a fundamentally static universe, it is incapable of giving expression to God’s involvement and immanence in a creation conceived of as an ongoing process. If the notion of final causality adequately underlines the fact that God is the goal and hence magnetic pole of the movement of creation, it also fails to illuminate satisfactorily the actual modality of God’s creative activity within the ongoing process. What is needed is a notion which goes beyond creative action (linked as it is to efficient causality). What is needed is a notion like creative union, for God creates by uniting, not extrinsically but immanently. The proper mode of God’s creative action is quasi-formal, for he is the soul (or quasi-soul) of evolution, since the essential function of the soul is to unite.

“The reason why Teilhard insists on the fact that God acts upon the creation in a *quasi-formal* mode of causality, as a *sort* of soul, is not difficult to discern, for if he did not, his position would fall into pantheism. The term ‘quasi’ is used by Teilhard, then, to safeguard the transcendence of God vis-à-vis his creation; but it is also used to safeguard the integrity of the creation itself as well. To underline this latter fact Teilhard coined the expression ‘*l’union différencie*,’ which in its broadest acceptation may be translated as ‘union differentiates,’ but which is more aptly translated as ‘union personalizes’ in the context of its more usual reference to the relationship between God and mankind. God’s quasi-formal relationship to mankind not only does not destroy personhood, but actually enhances it and brings it to fulfilment. Such is the intent of the formula ‘*l’union différencie*.’”

Some issues of capital moment get clarified in Gray’s account. We shall leave for a later occasion a probe into the true drive of “*l’union différencie*” in connection with pantheism. At present we shall consider only the various causalities in that connection. Teilhard draws away from efficient causality because it makes pantheism of whatever shade impossible. Whether some type of such causality, which would not be exclusive, is part of Teilhardism is not clear. But inasmuch as Teilhard posits God’s transcendence it may be counted as a part. Perhaps that is the drift of a note by Gray:¹ “De Solages ..argues that efficient causality does play a role in Teilhard’s thought, thus assuring that his Omega functions also as an Alpha.” But Teilhard’s Alpha can never allow, between God and the world in the act of creation, “an exteriority which is...exaggerated”. And, because an entire exclusion of pantheist interiority goes against Teilhard’s insight of the world-process, he accepts formal causality as the central truth. However, he believes that an out-and-out pantheism would jeopardise divine transcendence on the one hand and human personality on the

¹ *Ibid*, p 265

other. So his favoured causality is qualified as quasi-formal. The quasi-ness renders him at the same time a pantheist and a Christian. But if in one respect there is, as we have noted more than once, an identity between the Cosmic Christ and the peak of cosmogenesis, then cosmogenesis gradually unfolds the Cosmic Christ and is in essence Christogenesis. This proves that, for all the preservation of God's transcendence and man's personhood, an authentic pantheism is implicit in Teilhard's Christology. It is idle to fight shy of its presence, even if the shape of its presence is rather unusual by being open-ended, so to speak, and even though Teilhard's Roman Catholicism leads him again and again to hedge. To put Teilhard, in spite of his authentic pantheism, in a straight line with St. Paul and the Greek Fathers is a profound error.

Maloney is very valuable on the early Christian tradition but he fails to come to grips with the true Teilhard.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

PEGASUS AND "THE WHITE HORSE" OF G. K. CHESTERTON

(G.K.C. said in characteristic vein: "Bowing down in blind credulity, as is my custom, before mere authority and the tradition of the elders, superstitiously swallowing a story I could not test at the time by experiment or private judgment, I am firmly of the opinion that I was born on the 29th May, 1874, on Campden Hill, Kensington." In celebration of that fortunate day this year, we offer our readers an appraisal of his most substantial poetic work *The Ballad of the White Horse*.)

I

It is often thought that to call G.K. Chesterton a poet is to mistake for the high and authentic light of inspiration mere rhetorical shades masquerading as poetic significances. But the fact is that in G.K.C. there is a genuine poet buried under the clever journalist. His mass of militant controversies has obscured the silver bow of poetic power which he brought in his multifarious armoury; the too frequent thunder of his excursions on a ponderous-bodied though nimble-footed charger of prose style has led us to forget that on occasion he rides out on a more Pegasus-like hoof-stroke. In short, we fail to recognise that he has fought his way, though with many falls, into the kingdom of poetry with his *Ballad of the White Horse*.

As a vehicle for narration, the ballad-form can be stirring and ringing, or else sweet, in a popular way; but to sustain in it a story which keeps a tense edge of magical or splendid suggestion is a proof of rare genius. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* is faultless save for its tame moral conclusion inserted on the advice of Wordsworth and regretted by the author ever after. It is a wonder he did not drop the peccant stanzas: they are absolutely detachable and their absence would leave not the slightest scar on the poetic tissue. Chesterton's poem is not so perfect as a whole. It is good for seven-eighths of the way, but the last section is a disappointment, because there nothing striking is said except in a couple of brief moments: picturesque journalese is the utmost we have, a piquancy of phrase without any turn of true poetic surprise. Even the admirable seven-eighths is not as uniformly transfigured as Coleridge's work, yet there is sufficient to show what a fine poet Chesterton might have been if the inspired part of him had found more play in his work and learnt to sustain itself. That promise is a surer claim to immortality than being the most indefatigable corner of pun and paradox in one's generation.

Though Chesterton's paradoxes make his ideas "kick", they are, in general, not really impressive: we get tired of the game and suspicious whether it is not a device to point up intellectual platitudes. When, on the other hand, his ideas begin to glow

with an inner originality because some eye of his imagination has opened, some permanent chord in us is touched and we perceive whatever truth there is, partial though it be, in what he thinks, at least the heart of vision in the man is conveyed to us and that heart is always a fine mystery, irrespective of its echo or its indifference to our own. Chesterton's humour, audacious and energetic, which accompanies his paradoxes or rather prepares their witty point, has a more genuine freshness than they, but he possesses also a rarer exuberance — an imaginative fantasy as audacious and energetic, with an additional tinge of revealing splendour. The sterling virtues come in a pure and recurrent boldness of deep-sighted speech in the *White Horse*, deep-sighted by either a vivid adequacy or a significant exaggeration.

The former is to be found on almost any page. He says of Mark the man from Italy, one of Alfred's allies against the Danes, that he came from

the glittering towns
Where hot white details show,

catching the exact effect of the Italian atmosphere. Or take the two lines,

The smoke of evening food and ease
Rose like a blue tree in the trees,

as a suggestion of Wessex farms glimpsed at a distance. The note of exaggeration has in poetry a triple face. An object is seen to be a magnified version of something minute, something commonplace and unpretentious, as Homer describes the elders on the walls of Troy as sitting and chattering like grasshoppers, in order to convey acutely the fact of their thin screeching voices and their lean legs. Or an object is compared to something physically big and imposing with a view to express an inner magnanimity, importance of status, unusual feat of self-transcendence, as in any of the old epic similes — a hero like a falling poplar, like a tower in a waste land, like a forest on fire. Or else an object is conceived under an aspect ordinarily quite incongruous with it and so a pregnant strain is created which may be defined as the miraculous interpretation of one sense in terms proper to another, an instance being Kalidasa's imagining the snowy mountain Kailasa to be the laughter of the god Shiva. Often the three forms of exaggeration grade off into one another and it is difficult to distinguish them: most of Chesterton's splendid effects are such, but he has individual examples of each kind, too. Thus, the raggedness of the army led by Colan the man with the Celtic strain in him, another ally of Alfred's, is pictured by a synecdoche:

Grey as cobwebs hung
The banners of the Usk.

The words about Wessex enjoying an isolated condition of order and safety are a similar stroke of inspired homeliness — verging somewhat on the third type of exaggeration as well:

And Wessex lay in a patch of peace
Like a dog in a patch of sun.

A grandiose simile suits Chesterton's genius very well, for he loves to sketch with a sweeping brightness and in huge proportions; his soul lives in a state of elemental wonder in which loud colours and gigantic images are almost a part of everyday experience. But he does not lack in tender touches: the loud and the gigantic are really framed in those wide open windows, the eyes of his childlike heart. And the stanzas about Eldred, "the Franklin by the sea", the third companion found by Alfred for his forlorn hope, reflect this twofold psychology of Chesterton, making a skilful play of contrasting magnificence and simplicity:

As the tall white devil of the Plague
Moves out of Asian skies,
With his foot on a waste of cities
And his head in a cloud of flies;

Or purple and peacock skies grow dim
With the moving locust-tower;
Or tawny sand-winds tall and dry,
Like hell's red banners beat and fly,
When death comes out of Araby,
Was Eldred in his hour.

But while he moved like a massacre
He murmured as in sleep,
And his words were all of low hedges
And little fields and sheep.

Even as he strode like a pestilence,
That strides from Rhine to Rome,
He thought how tall his beans might be
If ever he went home.

Exaggeration in the third variety, the gripping an image that is incongruous with an occasion and the plucking from it a sudden aptness, is beautifully illustrated by lines about the voice of the Virgin Mary as heard by Alfred when, grief-stricken with his repeated failures against the Danes, he sees at the beginning of the story a vision of her:

And a voice came human but high up,
 Like a cottage climbed among
 The clouds.

Perhaps more truly felicitous a surprise are several examples Chesterton provides of a mixed exaggeration, the three types interblended. Here is one — the closing metaphor about the illumined pages in a mediaeval copy of the Bible:

It was wrought in the monk's slow manner,
 From silver and sanguine shell,
 Where the scenes are little and terrible
 Keyholes of heaven and hell.

But surely the most impressive lines Chesterton ever wrote are among those describing in this manner the general state of chaotic indecision after the fall of Rome, the portentous change known to history as the Dark Ages, a wild phantasmagoria of invasion from the savage parts of Europe and from the unknown East — both the Roman power and the Roman peace broken by the iron heel and the brazen cry of hordes from the earth's remote corners. He catches in effects at once majestic and weird the suggestion those times carried as of a universal dissolution:

For the end of the world was long ago —
 And all we dwell to-day
 As children of some second birth,
 Like a strange people left on earth
 After a judgment day.

For the end of the world was long ago,
 When the ends of the world waxed free,
 When Rome was sunk in a waste of slaves,
 And the sun drowned in the sea.

When Ceasar's sun fell out of the sky
 And whoso hearkened right
 Could only hear the plunging
 Of the nations in the night.

When the ends of the earth came marching in
 To torch and cresset gleam,
 And the roads of the world that lead to Rome
 Were filled with faces that moved like foam,
 Like faces in a dream.

The stanza about "Caesar's sun" is almost worthy, I think, of Aeschylus, for the imaginative tension reached there in a style that just falls short of the true epic.

Here the falling short is in consequence more of the ballad-form than the poet's inspiration. It is necessary to point out this distinction both in justice to Chesterton's genius and for fear lest his admirers should rank him beyond his deserts. For, his idea and diction may be epic and yet his rhythm be found wanting. There is a certain strongly calm self-mastery in the true epic, which the jog-trot ballad-rhythm tends to disintegrate. As Matthew Arnold with his usual fine ear perceived, only a deep lyric impulse — that is, an impulse which introduces a poignant, wistful or delicate flow — can charm away the ballad-jerk, while the ample sweeping stress of the epic mood striving rather to coincide with than to smooth out that jerk is broken up by it even when not narrowed down by a pause in sense at the end of each short line. This, apart from quality of genius, should deter us from committing the mistake of comparing with Homer's battle-pieces any episode in Chesterton's account of the battle of Ethandune fought between King Alfred and the Danes within sight of that mound of rock called the White Horse which gives the poem its name. But if the ballad is incapable of the large yet contained sweep of strength, the mighty and harmonious self-possession, without which no epic style can exist, it can still display compass and power and imaginative passion. Its movement tends to be narrow because the lines are mostly end-stopped, but there is nothing in the measure itself to keep a poet from stretching out his sense beyond the line, so that the expressive unit would be not eight or six syllables but a longer average, the variations on that average poetically answering change of mood, shift of scene, the necessity to clear-cut or grade off a picture or an idea. And this is precisely what Chapman often does. It may surprise some to hear that Chapman wrote ballad-poetry, but, as he never distributes a word between the fourth foot and the fifth, the fourteen couplets as handled by him divide naturally into lines of eight syllables alternating regularly with those of six — the form Wordsworth took for his *Lucy Gray*; only, in the Elizabethan's work the first lines do not rhyme with the third and so his frequent prolongation of the sense up to the fourteenth syllable is not interrupted by any marked sound-clinch at the eighth. Hence it has compass enough: what Chapman lacks is the epic grand style of narration, because, even when he is without tortured and extravagant conceits, his power is rough rather than harmonious. His muscular vigour, his strong nervous rhythm, have not the serene lift by which Homer's elemental enthusiasm expressed itself, the godlike elegance in which Virgil's dignified pensiveness found voice, the soaring yet mountain-secure intensity to which Dante shaped his compulsive vision, the smiling certainty of vast wing-stroke which upbears Milton through all the revelatory detours of his mind. Chapman at his best rushes, dazzles, distracts: he has compass without full harmonious sweep, brilliance without elevated control, imaginative passion without an assured ease of forceful sight. Take any of his peaks: for instance.

When the unmeasured firmament bursts to disclose her light.

Idea and language could not be finer or more forceful, but have they a harmonious strength of rhythm? Or consider a line like

The splendour of the burning ships might satiate his eyes.

It is most vivid, impressive, puissant, but the last touch of effortless elevation is not there such as Milton could give for pages almost. To quote Chapman at any length is at once to prove the weakness bound up with his vigour:

As in a stormy day
In thick-set woods a ravenous fire wraps in his fierce repair
The shaken trees and by the roots doth toss them into air;
Even so beneath Atrides' sword flew up Troy's flying heels,
Their horse drew empty chariots, and sought their thundering wheels
Some fresh directors through the field, where least the pursuit drives.
Thick fell the Trojans, much more sweet to vultures than their wives.

For the tone and rhythm of the true epic style, free from gesticulating loudness, listen to this:

Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt — yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath.

Chapman's general inferiority is due on the one hand to his not being a genius of the supreme kind and on the other to his ballad metre which constantly intrudes its jog-trot even when nobility and the grand style are throwing on him the bright shadow of their pinions.¹

G.K.C.'s manner is akin to Chapman's with regard to audacity, an explosive power, either curious or clear, which can give a high and excellent level of poetry though not its *ne plus ultra*. In spite of his using many anapaests the essential manner and movement are unmistakable: write out his couplets as single lines or his quatrains as couplets and you have often the Chapman fourteeners:

¹ In writing this whole paragraph I am indebted to several illuminating suggestions made by Sri Aurobindo.

And Wessex lay in a patch of peace like a dog in a patch of sun...

Where the scenes are little and terrible key-holes of heaven and hell...

As the tall white devil of the Plague moves out of Asian skies,
His foot in a waste of cities and his head in a cloud of flies...

When Caesar's sun fell out of the sky, and whoso hearkened right
Could only hear the plunging of the nations in the night.

Even when the stanzas are longer and the fourteeners are divided by intervening eight or less feet, there is as skilful a play of rise and fall, ripple and eddy, within the persistent plunge, as the jerkiness of the ballad-measure would allow, and bold imaginative streaks shine out amid fibres of a coarser stuff. The lines already quoted about the moving locust-tower and the tawny sand-winds are a striking example. Elsewhere too Chesterton makes effective music:

Whirling the one sword in his hand,
A great wheel in the sun,
He sent it splendid through the sky,
Flying before the shaft could fly —
It smote Earl Harold over the eye,
And blood began to run.

Colan stood weaponless, while Earl Harold with a ghastly smile of defiance stumbled dead.

Then Alfred, prince of England,
And all the Christian earls,
Unhooked their swords and held them up
Each offered to Colan like a cup
Of chrysolite and pearls.

And the King said, "Do you take my sword
Who have done this deed of fire,
For this is the manner of Christian men,
Whether of steel or priestly pen,
That they cast their hearts out of their ken
To get their heart's desire."

True poetry has a breadth and depth of voice, besides mere length. Through most of these lines the first two are as good as absent. I submit, however, that, at three places in the above, Chesterton finely executes three fourteener progressions:

Whirling the one sword in his hand, a great wheel in the sun...

Each offered to Colan like a cup of chrysolite and pearls...

That they cast their hearts out of their ken to get their heart's desire...

The whirled sword is described with an admirable breadth of voice, a quality of magnificence and rhythmic volume. The middle quotation is the weakest, seeming at first mere length of voice filled with a decorative sentiment. Indeed the opening trio of feet is poor, but the concluding phrase saves the line by a depth of voice, for depth means a simple, subtle or else powerful suggestion of some beautiful or poignant thought and feeling. And here there is an exquisite subtlety: the half-rusty blades offered by Alfred's tatterdemalion troops were meant to express the feeling that Colan's act was great and heroic enough to deserve a royal reward, a precious and plenary recognition, cups of chrysolite and pearls. Alfred's closing words in that little speech to Colan give a powerful depth, but breadth too accompanies it. All the three lines together give a pretty adequate average of the virtues which carry *The Ballad of the White Horse*, despite many clumsy or flat moments, to a place in poetic literature — forceful figurative sight, beautifully suggested thought or feeling, sense of the inward significance of life's happenings.

(To be continued)

AMAL KIRAN

EXPECTATION

WAITING out the day we lay ourselves waste
We watch the sky for a sign
The sea for a sail
The land for the oncoming dust spiral
The volcano for the querulous flame
The tree for the leaf to fall
We anxiously wait for another season
Another day
which may never come at all
We lay ourselves waste

We seek meaning in the puff of smoke
And the smoke laughs and explodes
(We dare not laugh with the smoke
Why was it blue and not grey?
Why did it not stay?
Why did it burst into nothing?
A wind, foreboding nothing we hope?)

We lay ourselves waste
We do not see
the greatness of the sky uprolled
Over the glassy stillness of the lake
The brown earth baked in its lonely brooding
The mountain's still side down which lava flows like music
The fortitude of the quiet tree
not waiting for anything
but allowing the chattering bird
to nest in it
as we do not allow peace
in the branches of our being.

MAGGI

LOTUS-FLAME
OR
SURYAMAN

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

BOOK I: THE ORIGIN *(Contd.)*
CANTO I: THE HOLOCAUST *(Contd.)*

BEHIND unseen were the first impact-throbs
Of gods and their aeonic ravishing game
Below the golden gates of absolute fire
And the creative suns with eyes of calm
And the wonder-expanse wed to amazing peaks,
The far oceanic gaze of the infinite.
The self-lost seed in its burning self-outpour,
The god-prologue to things and forms and the worlds,
Bestirred the cosmic daemons, the flares of joy
Carousing in the realms of ecstatic dreams
And amaranth vistas jewelled with sapphire smiles,
The winds and songs and myriad waves of the Gods.
The voluptuous peace, the aureate thrills of light,
The naked lull in a crowded loneliness.
Below it woke the sudden supernal sparks,
The electric beats, the quick intuitive beams,
The storming tides sweeping the altitudes,
The blue sabre-jets of the turbulent Unknown.
And worlds and worlds arose behind its path,
The large-eyed domains leaping to wondrous thought,
The trumpet-cry of fresh rediscovered gleams.
Below all life was strangled, inert and mute
Save the vortex of the spheres whirling in drowse
Across the eyeless meaningless immensities
Of space and skies denser than starkest gloom.
In the distant nebulous pin-point of earth
Which froze to become a chill unpeopled globe
With volcano-laugh and lava's majestic strides,
The Lotus-Flame of God shot down unfelt,

A consciousness but unaware of its source,
 A drowse obscure in the folds of nature's ways,
 A mystery of God in the global stance.
 Silence was all except the tides and foams,
 And jutting crags and a weird rocky mass,
 The dumb silhouettes against an angry sky
 And stark lashes of quick and perilous storms,
 The drunk landscape without one nature-smile,
 The fling and glory of fields and brooks and trees.
 He was a dormant seed midst slumbering things,
 A stone in stone, a gas in belching gas,
 A struggling atom striving towards a form —
 In him the first nebula's unconscious thirst.
 Something unreal yearned to be a dream,
 Too vague to house the distant Idea's throb
 To strike roots in the protean solitude.
 Matter was here meaningless, empty, lost
 In the maze of fluid inconsequential shapes,
 In the dumb catacomb of buried life.
 The whisper of a far existence came
 Thrilling the blank desert and nomad skies
 With an ungrasped beauty that was fugitive here,
 Too amazing free to find a long-lost home
 Or rouse a vagrant beat in matter's crust.
 Then a slumber overcame the tardy earth
 And life fell back once more to incoherent sleep
 Leaving no trace in the awaking vastnesses.
 A denser hush, a formidable nought
 Enwrapped like a shroud the dreaming space of the globe,
 A still-born yearning lost in the caverned drowse.
 The lightning-winged heaven became a void
 Negating its fiery multitudinous hues,
 Divorcing the suns that warmed its night-chilled limbs
 And matter's lull overcame the scheme of earth.
 All sank again to its original somnolence.

(To be continued)

SYMBOLS AND THE QUESTION OF UNITY

III

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

THE Truth-Consciousness is everywhere present in the universe as an ordering self-knowledge by which the One manifests the harmonies of its infinite potential multiplicity. Without this ordering self-knowledge the manifestation would be merely a shifting chaos, precisely because the potentiality is infinite which by itself might lead only to a play of uncontrolled unbounded Chance. If there were only infinite potentiality without any law of guiding truth and harmonious self-vision, without any predetermining Idea in the very seed of things cast out for evolution, the world could be nothing but a teeming, amorphous, confused uncertainty. But the knowledge that creates, because what it creates or releases are forms and powers of itself and not things other than itself, possesses in its own being the vision of the truth and law that governs each potentiality, and along with that an intrinsic awareness of its relation to other potentialities and the harmonies that are possible between them; it holds all this prefigured in the general determining harmony which the whole rhythmic Idea of a universe must contain in its very birth and self-conception and which must therefore inevitably work out by the interplay of its constituents. It is the source and keeper of the Law in the world, for that law is nothing arbitrary — it is the expression of a self-nature which is determined by the compelling truth of the real idea that each thing is in its inception. *Therefore from the beginning the whole development is predetermined in its self-knowledge and at every moment in its self-working. It is what it must be by its own original inherent Truth, it moves to what it must be at the next, still by its own original inherent Truth; it will be at the end that which was contained and intended in its seed*¹

The Life Divine, Chapter XV, "The Supreme Truth-Consciousness"

SRI AUROBINDO

WE are brought to the final phase in our study which will allow us to perceive the workings of cosmic harmonies in the lives of actual leaders of the spiritual movement. With the aid of a few diagrams and their super-imposition the force with which the Supreme is manifesting on Earth and to what extent He is openly revealing His plan can be shown.

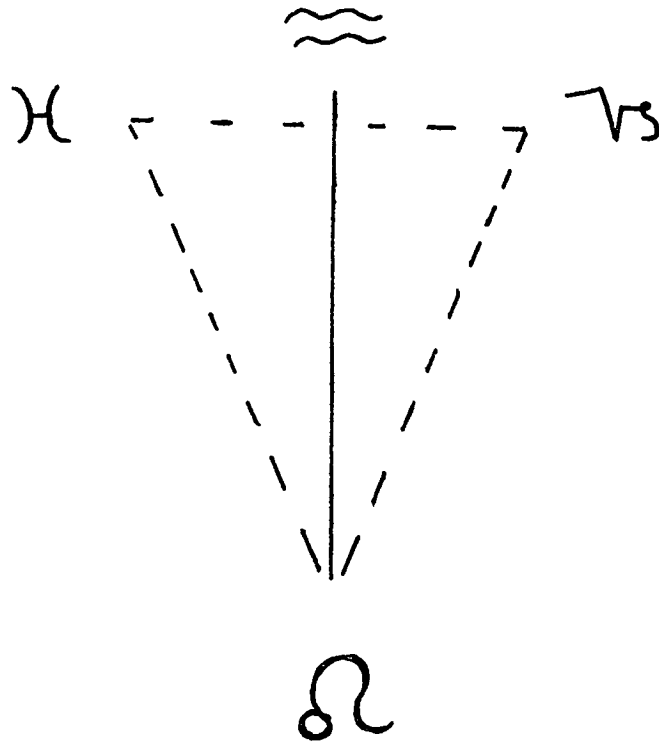
The higher up on the spiritual ladder a man is, the more easily legible is his destiny. A highly realised being moves in harmony with the cosmic laws to such an extent that not only can one perceive his individual destiny through a study of his horoscope for example, but one can perceive the destiny of vast masses of humanity through him. Aspects in his chart which in the ordinary man pertain to purely personal matters and are very far removed from the central link, though they also can ultimately be traced to the same Origin, are clearly seen to indicate great changes for the unfoldment of the entire evolution. He is consciously one with the Creator and thus the Creator expresses Himself through each minute action of his life with clarity, precision and perfect harmony. His very body is one with the Divine Body. Needless

¹ Italics, by P.N.-B.

to say, an Avatar or Incarnation fulfils this to the maximum degree. The higher he goes, the larger the numbers he carries with him, and these steps can be seen and revealed in the harmony of the spheres. The closer a man is to God, the better will God's universe mirror itself in him.

It was mentioned that through a name and its numerical equivalent the numbers 1, 5 and 9 were seen to contain a key of the Manifestation. At a certain point this became partially clear; these numbers refer to the Zodiac, the 1st, 5th and 9th signs Aries, Leo and Sagittarius, the Trinity of Fire or Spirit. Then with the knowledge of the Zodiac split into quarters and the backward spiral motion through the signs, it was seen that these numbers all converged in the quarter humanity is now passing through. The essential point in this discovery was that it upheld another long-standing astrological truth showing, in the diagram, the importance in relationship between the signs therein contained.

Sri Aurobindo's Sun sign, Leo, is seen to be upholding the 3 signs of the 9th Manifestation, Pisces, Aquarius and Capricorn. This particular relation between the signs is sometimes called the "Yod" aspect, or the "Finger of God", and is said to have an occult meaning, never adequately explained. Thus the Fire sign, Leo, is the root of sustenance of the Fire Trinity that makes its appearance during the 9th Manifestation. Only in this relation between the signs are *all* the elements and *all* the energy



flows contained, and for this reason it is unique and of prime importance in the deciphering of the Manifestations of mankind¹ We see in the Durga Legend, she

¹ See "The Eternal Word", *Mother India*, August 15, 1973, where this relationship between the signs is discussed

being the upper three signs, or Satchidananda, that she rides a lion, the very Lion that upholds the quarter. If we turn to the 8th Manifestation in the diagram of the Manifestations (*Mother India*, April 24, 1973, page 317) we find the Eagle playing the role the Lion actually plays, and in that Manifestation there was Krishna who is said to be an Incarnation of Vishnu whose *vāhana* is, in fact, an eagle. The 10th Manifestation will bring the Incarnation of one whose *vāhana* is a Bull — therefore Shiva, the dissolver or destroyer.

In reality time is a relative phenomenon perceived because of the three movements the Earth makes around the Sun. With an expansion of consciousness we can see that the entire globe is ever and always as if suspended in an ocean of timelessness, but as the Earth spins we cognise in slits and slices, so to speak. Thus for 12 hours we know light and for 12 hours we know darkness, yet in reality it is only our fragmented vision that makes this separation and impedes our realisation of that which is occurring on the other side of the globe. We consider real only what we perceive from our slice of the Earth, but we can round out our vision and by so doing come to understand that only the Now exists, eternally.

The root of the idea of Illusion lies in this: Time (*Kala*) is *Maya*, Illusion, and this is the Supreme Sacrifice, on which the whole of creation begins. The Divine Mother binds and keeps us in darkness by creating the illusion of Time. Yet, we can escape from this illusion only by going through Her. *Maya* is the force of Illusion and Ignorance, but at the same time it is she who leads us to the light. The Illusion of Time is necessary for the Play, for the fulfilment of Nature's plan, for the Manifestation. We can say the answer to the 4th dimension lies in *time* because by going beyond our vision of slits and slices we come to the Eternal Now, whose symbol is the circle.

When we study the Zodiac we are studying the Great Clock, but really it is the true Timepiece. When a horoscope is cast we immediately plunge into a higher sphere though most astrologers remain ignorant of what they are actually doing. We place ourselves at the *centre of the circle*. This is why from ancient times the Earth was placed in the centre in astrology; when the Knowledge was lost later generations took this to indicate that the ancients did not have a correct concept of the universe, but it was for this reason: to go beyond Time ... "and there shall be Time no longer."¹ The only way this can be done is by "centering". They knew "the centre of the circle of God"² was to be found and realised within. It is not the Earth but Man who is the centre, because of the divine spark he carries within — directionless, motionless, measureless, timeless. In order to know the Zodiac it is essential to have the capacity to plunge into the other dimension: without this one can never know

¹ *Revelations of St. John*, X 6.

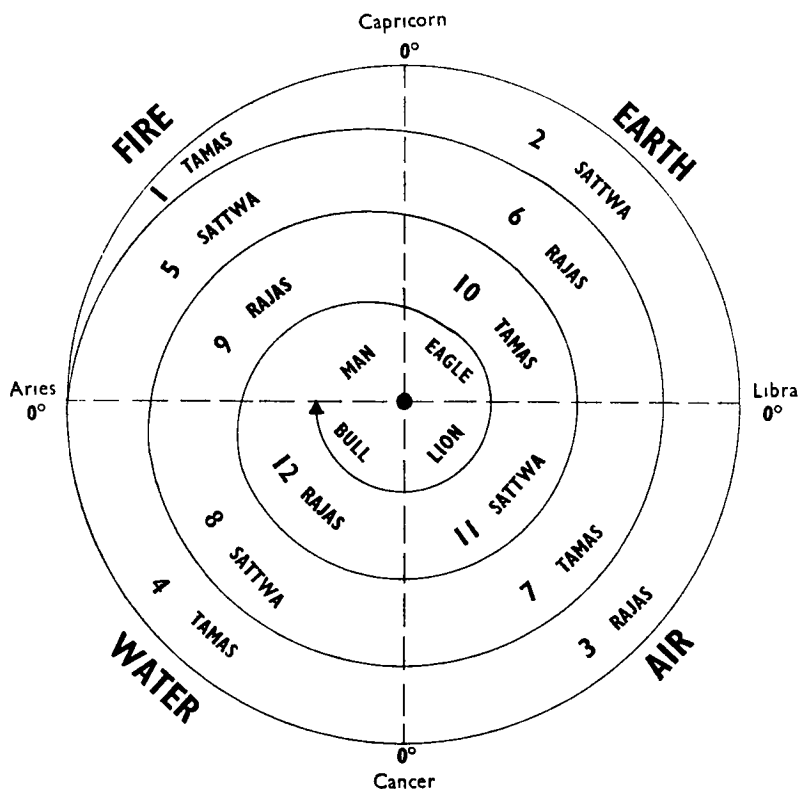
² *Savitri*, Book XI.

the great Timepiece because this Timepiece speaks of the whole and the parts *simultaneously*.

All of these movements and measurements of the Earth around the Sun are ultimately to be translated into *seconds* as the figures of the Yugas prove, and it is then that we find the 9 and its multiples; hence we say the 9 absorbs all numbers, she is the wheel itself, the entire circle. More obvious divisions are the 6 and 3, but the 9 is the master key.

The Great Sacrifice of the Divine Mother is that she has chosen to allow man to know her dark side, she has hidden her light so that the Will of the Supreme, which is her will, could be fulfilled, she has allowed mankind to believe she was illusion, only so that when the time came she could reveal to him the greater splendour of God. The Zodiac in the movement of the Precession begins at O⁰ Aries, a Fire sign, but it then immediately swings through Pisces which signifies the Sacrifice, and it is on this note that the greater movement of Manifestation begins. This then is the 1st Manifestation of the Trinity of Fire, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother, who willfully clothes herself in the veils of illusion to do the pleasure of the Lord. The sign of sacrifice is also the sign of Divine Love, for it is in truth this very love that makes her sacrifice possible. Tremendous love for creation, her very being, is the sustaining power. In effect, what the Divine Mother does is nothing more than offer herself to the Supreme who is her Lover, and this drama is the essential key to the 9th Manifestation.

In the Puranas the key to the Zodiac is contained. It seems difficult to conceive that the fullest understanding of these scriptures can come about unless there is this knowledge. Thus, we have the Puranas numbered 18. This classification is to be found in them all, though the lists may differ, some including what others exclude. Nonetheless, they all confirm the amount to be 18 regardless of the order in which they were written. Within this structure we have a further division of 3 groups of 6, what are considered *Rajasic*, *Sattwic* and *Tamasic* Puranas, also connected to the Zodiac, for Rajas is Creation or Cardinal force, Sattwa is Preservation or Fixed force and Tamas is Destruction or Mutable. These groupings intrinsically reveal the nature of the Puranas. To help the reader understand somewhat better, a diagram is presented, the same as that of the Manifestations (*Mother India*, April 24, 1973, page 317), but in this one the spiral is drawn inside to give a clearer idea of the sacrifice of the Divine Mother and the compelling force that draws her and all creation to the Centre, ultimately ending in a total union and absorption. The four Cardinal points are indicated because they are the pillars of creation and, by the Elements to which they belong, they indicate the subsequent Trinity manifesting. Thus O⁰ Aries is Fire and is followed by the Fire Trinity, O⁰ Capricorn is Earth and the Earth Trinity follows, O⁰ Libra opens into the Air Trinity and O⁰ Cancer is Water concluding the Round with the Trine of that Element.



RAJAS = Creation (Brahma) = Cardinal
SATTWA = Preservation (Vishnu) = Fixed
TAMAS = Destruction (Shiva) = Mutable

With the 1st Manifestation we start enumerating the quarters as Creation, Preservation and Destruction, but in the reverse order as the Precession moves. Thus the 1st is Destruction, and this is the Fire Sacrifice, that whole period corresponding to the 1st sign Aries, Cosmic Dawn, recalled in the Fire Sacrifice of the Vedas. Much can be said of this; however, let us move on in the spiral to the 3 Manifestations we have discussed in greater detail in this treatment, the 7th, 8th and 9th. We can see that the 7th corresponded to the guna of Tamas, or *Destruction*, and in fact that period marked the dissolution of a civilisation though some knowledge was retained in the Sphinx and Pyramids. It can be understood why it was necessary to capture the knowledge in such vast and monumental forms, able to withstand the possible cataclysmic forces of Nature and made of materials that would only become more solid as the Ages rolled on. The knowledge contained therein was of the past, however, or what had been achieved up to that point and did not *openly* indicate the future and the

greater Advent. It is only when we come to the 8th Manifestation that we find the knowledge of the future equally transcribed because we enter the guna of Sattwa or the true period of *Preservation* and among the renowned scriptures that appear are the Puranas. It is the *Markandeya Purana* that holds the information we are particularly interested in.

“I have elsewhere stated that I considered the Rajasic Puranas to lean to the Shakta division of the Hindus, the worshippers of Shakti, or the female principle; founding this opinion on the character of the legends which some of them contain, such as the Durga Mahatmya, a celebrated legend on which the worship of Durga or Kali is especially founded, which is the principle episode of the Markandeya.” This is taken from the Preface to Wilson’s *Vishnu Purana*. Further on, in discussing the contents of the Markandeya he states: “The present Vaivaswata Manvantara is very briefly passed over; *but the next, the first of the future manvantaras, contains the long episodal narrative of the actions of the Goddess Durga,*¹ which is the special boast of this Purana, and is the textbook of the worshippers of Kali, Chandi or Durga in Bengal.” Since the Puranas were recorded in the 8th Manifestation it is only logical that Durga’s advent should form a part of what was then seen as the future manvantara, our present epoch. The force, or guna, of the 9th Manifestation is Rajas, or Creation, as can be seen from the diagram, thus putting this Purana which speaks of Durga in the category to which it belongs. A very interesting fact is also made clear by this diagram. The sign of the whole Manifestation is the 9th, Sagittarius, whose pictograph is the Man-Horse, the centaur. Kalki is said to come on a horse, he restores order and establishes the Satya Yuga (the Golden Age of Capricorn, 2,000 years hence and bringing the 6,480 years of the present Manifestation to a close). He is said to come with two other persons and the Tantras recognise him as Durga’s consort when the male avatars are given female counterparts. From this it appears quite evident that Kalki’s coming has already been, for it is only during the Aquarian Age that the Avatar of the Manifestation can appear. And he must close the previous Age and usher in the new; thus he must have been born in the Age of Pisces and lived through the period when the evolution moved into the Aquarian Age.

In the 10th Manifestation, Shiva, the Dissolver, appears, and we have the full force of *Destruction*, the guna of Tamas, and the Saiva Puranas fall into this category. But the sphinx symbol shows the Eagle to replace the Scorpion and thus immortality should be the general condition of evolution at that time, by the grace of the Divine Mother and her work during the 9th Manifestation.

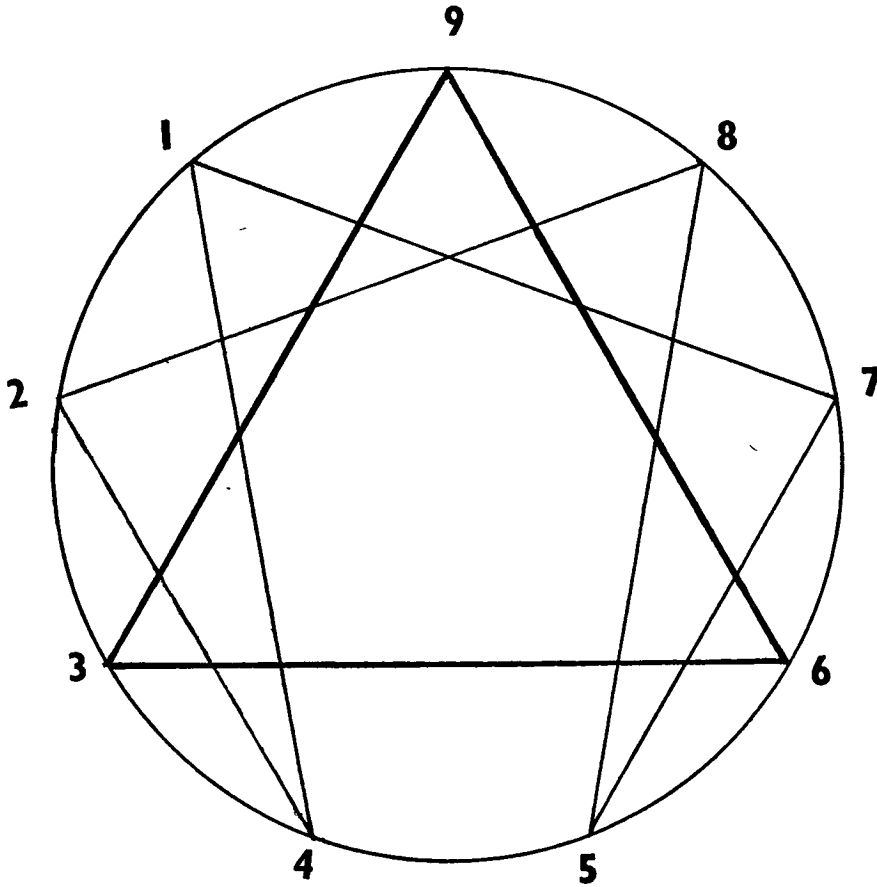
In these ancient works a wealth of Knowledge is contained. To give another example: there are the scriptures pertaining to architecture and giving precise indications for the construction of the Hindu Temple and statues of the gods and goddesses. The specifications, down to the most minute detail of the Vedic altars, contain full and valuable information of the cosmos, as well as the most profound

¹ Italics by P N -B

knowledge of symbols and numbers regarding the macrocosmos in relation to the microcosmos. The measurements for the statues of the Gods are given in these old treatises, the *Navatala* (Nine palms), dividing the human body into 9 parts, representing the most perfect proportion of the Gods as reflected in man, the divine-man. This measurement of the Gods is the same as the "sectio aurea" of the Greeks; Vitruvius, the Roman architect, passed on this knowledge of the figure of man thus represented and this in turn was transcribed by Leonardo in his drawing of the Man in the Circle and Square we have had so much occasion to refer to in this treatment; again it can be seen how these civilisations were intimately linked, the Knowledge was One. Leonardo's symbol is most profound; it showed that in future times man would be occupied with the *circling of the square*, as opposed to the squaring of the circle that so intrigued the renowned geometers of Greek times.

In order to make the following phase in our study more comprehensive it is necessary to explain the Trinity as represented by numbers 1, 2 and 3 we shall consider the *Supreme Triad*. This Triad when cast into the play of Evolution becomes 3, 6 and 9, because the Triad though ever One manifests separately and hence each one contains a further trinity. Thus 1×3 is 3, 2×3 is 6 and 3×3 is 9 and therefore it can be seen how the 3 is made up of the digit *One*, the 6 is made up of the digit *Two*, and the 9 is made of the digit *Three*. In the scale of creation we can further see how these and all numbers fall into the same division. Starting with One of the Triad we add always three digits: $1+2+3=6$, $4+5+6=15=6$, $7+8+9=24=6$, $10+11+12=33=6$, and so on into infinity. Then we start with Two: $2+3+4=9$, $5+6+7=18=9$, $8+9+10=27=9$, and so on. Finally we take Three: $3+4+5=12=3$, $6+7+8=21=3$, $9+10+11=30=3$. On the basis of the Triad, therefore, all numbers dissolve into the 3, 6 and 9, and of these latter the 9 again absorbs them all. With this understanding it is possible to study another diagram, one of extreme beauty, mystery and incalculable value in the question of unity. It is the *enneagram* here reproduced, a circle divided into 9 equal parts.¹ It is based on the musical scale and is formed in the following manner: an equilateral triangle (the Trinity) is placed in the circle, whose angles become 9, 6 and 3. From here we take the fraction 1/7th of the scale and convert it to a unit: 0.142857, itself a multiple of 9, which gives us the indication for the remaining lines of the symbol. That is, by following the order of the numbers so obtained, 1 to 4, 2 to 8, and so on, we obtain the enneagram. We see that the triangle remains apart from the other lines and does not enter into the play as they do. This symbol is a very beautiful picture of the scale of creation, for even here we are able to perceive how the Supreme Trinity takes part and enters creation, remaining always "untouched", as it were. It is a direct intervention or descent and when the Incarnations manifest they fit into this design.

¹ The reader is referred to P D. Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous*, in which this diagram is discussed



In this diagram we see how creation is upheld by this Trinity, and many more factors. It is exceptional and on it one could hold discourse for hours. As it has its basis in the sphere and is divided into 9 parts, we know it directly speaks of the Divine Mother. We can also see how this diagram is related to the 9th Manifestation and the numbers 1, 5 and 9. If we take the Zodiac of 12 signs and superimpose it on this symbol with 0° Aries at the 9 point (the 9 being the 0 also in the enneagram) we find that the Trinity of Fire corresponds precisely to the 9, 6 and 3 triangle. So the 1, 5 and 9 becomes the 3, 6 and 9 when the Divine Trinity enters into Manifestation, or when the circle is divided into 9 instead of 12 parts. Now let us proceed with the diagram and observe how it is a living object and can be seen to be active in our very times.

We start with the numerological 9 year, 1872, when Sri Aurobindo was born, and place it at the 9 point to which it corresponds. From there we continue through in sequence: 1873 is 1, 1874 is 2 and so on until we reach 1878 — 6, the year of the Mother's birth, she in fact being born six days, six months, six years after Sri Aurobindo, each item calculated separately. We continue the revolution and when we have finished we realise that every single year of importance (except one, discussed

further on) regarding the work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother will fall on the points 9, 6 and 3, up to our present times: 1908 (9), 1914 (6), 1920 (3), 1926 (9) 1938 (3), 1947 (3), 1950 (6), 1956 (3), 1968 (6), 1971 (9), to give just some examples. If we carry the process out fully it can be noted that as we move on in the years there is a decided acceleration. No further comment on this is needed, it speaks for itself — the precision, the beauty, the clarity with which the cosmic harmonies are now revealed. We cannot call this coincidence, imagination or illusion. In these superb designs the Lord speaks to man and shows how he arranges the great changes on Earth and how he sends his beloved Ones to carry out the Work.

We shall continue with a few reflections on the matter of horoscopes. The subject is a vast study and in order to properly understand its beauty and values a concentrated effort is needed and not one that can be transmitted on paper. In fact the Truth it contains comes only through a direct perception and by means of continuous meditation and reflection on the symbols, a sort of spontaneous living with these designs that have reached us from antiquity and contain all that need be known of the Art. It cannot be a planned effort, for then nothing comes. Quietly living with them, we find they begin to speak to us.

Astrology is a study in Unity and when touching it one cannot help but be plunged into a vast, wide and — let us say — cosmic dimension. One is immediately lifted out of the petty and narrow limits imposed by the conditioned mind and untrained eye, and carried off into the harmony of the spheres, only because these harmonies reveal themselves to be accurately connected to even our most intimate actions on Earth. It is the Art that opens the doors to all others. Astrology is the mother of all occult sciences and all scriptures, and it is only through a unified vision that its true voice speaks.

Only a few instances in certain horoscopes will be pointed out, those that do not require a vast technical knowledge to comprehend, for the reader to see that what was indicated by all the legends, symbols, numbers and diagrams heretofore mentioned also find their correspondence in the actual horoscope of Sri Aurobindo, for example, and Auroville. Here again we find the 9 and its multiples, in such a manner as cannot be found at any place on Earth today to our knowledge, because we are speaking of the centre of the 9th Manifestation.

When Sri Aurobindo left his body (December 5, 1950) his horoscope presented the following picture: the Sun and Moon had both “progressed” (a term used to signify certain revolutions that occur determined by the day, year, hour and minute of birth) to 9° of the sign Scorpio, precisely the sign of death, degeneration and regeneration. He expired on a numerological 5 day ($5 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 9 + 5 + 0 = 23 = 5$)¹ at 1:26 (9) A.M., and finally withdrew 90 or so hours later, on a numerological 9 day. An “odd” note is that the last and only photographs taken of him in advanced age in April of 1950 give us once more the key, for in one there is a clock behind

¹ His number by birth.

Sri Aurobindo which reads 9:18! Nine is the address of the building where he passed the major portion of his life and where his remains lie. On February 29, 1956, the Day of the Supramental Manifestation, the Sun was 9° in Pisces.

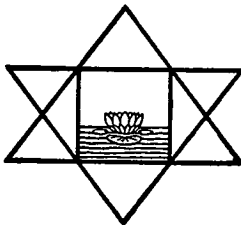
The horoscope of Auroville is equally significant and fascinating. Its foundation day is 28.2.1968 (9) and in its chart we find 18° Taurus rising, therefore it too, like Sri Aurobindo's chart, has the Cardinal Cross of the Sphinx as its base, as well as a multiple of 9. The ruling planet is Venus and she is magnificently placed in the 9th⁰ of Aquarius, the sign of our Age, exactly on the Mid-Heaven, meaning that Venus, the planet of harmony, beauty, union and love, was *directly* overhead at the precise moment of inauguration, the highest point in the sky, therefore determining the strongest influence. It must be specified that had the time of inauguration been but 4 minutes later, the 18° Taurus rising and the 9° Mid-Heaven would not have been possible. The city is built on the 12th latitude, exactly 18° away from the latitude on which the pyramids and Sphinx are built.¹ It is curious to note that there is one important date which falls out of the rhythm of the enneagram we have studied and that is 1910, the year Sri Aurobindo arrived in Pondicherry. It would seem that perhaps the location was not the definite one. To the centre of Auroville from Pondicherry centre there are 9 miles by road, 9 kilometres direct distance. The first plot of land for Auroville cost 12,000 rupees, 9 of which were first advanced, then 3.

We can go on and on with our examples, our discoveries, each proving what has been previously found — nothing disproving the initial revelations. Verily it can be said, one moves from Truth to greater Truth and no longer from apparent ignorance and superstition to lesser truth to Truth. In fact, what is superstition? We can see from this treatment that many legends, from which certain superstitious beliefs have resulted, hold the full kernel of Truth. Superstition is only born of man's ignorance, his "un-unified" vision and inability to grasp the message that is as apparent as the rising Sun and setting Moon.

All that we have viewed in this treatment can be synthesised in one symbol, there are others also, but for our purposes we shall conclude with one:

Here is Sri Aurobindo's "chakra".²

It is true it consists of two triangles springing from the hexagon which gives rise to the symbol of the Mother, making them in effect one, but let us look with another vision and we shall find that which is hidden to the appearances and which becomes obvious when one learns to "see." The two connected triangles form 8 smaller ones, and with the middle square we have 9 parts. So, Sri Aurobindo's symbol brings us the message of the 9th Manifestation. Being of 9



¹ The reader is referred to the *Revelations of St. John*

² This is the *official* symbol.

parts it contains within the hidden forms of the triangles the circle of the Divine Mother. Let us focus our attention on the centre, the Square, where the key to the Manifestation is enclosed. It is made up of four angles of 90° , equalling the 360° of the circle and therefore making it closer to the circle than the triangle, which equals only 180° , half the full manifestation. The triangle is, in fact, a partial representation; it is the supreme Intervention — yet only in creation, in matter, *in the square* we are able to experience the fullness of the Lord. The triangle has its fullest value only when it descends into creation and reveals itself there, when the stuff of creation becomes full of the light of the Trinity it bears within. It is for this reason that Christ, the “son of God” of the Trinity, bears his “cross”, without which his Incarnation would have been meaningless.

In Sri Aurobindo’s symbol the square is the 9th element, representative of the 9th Manifestation, which he has called the Supramental Manifestation, and has precisely related to the form of a square. Inside this 9th portion is a design: there are 7 waves, the 7 waves of the 7th Manifestation which contains Leo, his Sun sign, and which upholds the Trinity of Sacchidananda: Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. On these waters a lotus rests, — not an ordinary lotus but one bearing 9 upper petals, 6 intermediate ones and poised on 3 lower ones: the Fire Trinity of Spirit.

On November 26, 1972 the Mother made a statement regarding man’s unwillingness to change. She said that if he was not willing he would be destroyed. Exactly 9 days later a cyclone hit Pondicherry and the South of India, on a numerological 9 day, December 5, 1972, the very day Sri Aurobindo had left his body. The cyclone was a symbol not necessarily of the destruction that may await humanity, but of the force and imperative, irresistible thrust of the Power pressing to manifest and that will tolerate no obstructions and hindering obstacles in its path. The cyclone in itself is a symbol of the evolutionary force in manifestation, a Uranian force at present of steady, contained, determined pressure for change. The cyclone whizzes around and uproots everything in its path, but in its centre there is perfect stillness and peace. This is its meaning as a symbol; we can participate in the revolutionary change, but knowing the centre we have the protection of the very force we embody.

Freedom is often placed as the goal of our times, on all levels, even as the goal of spiritual disciplines. But the higher we go, the closer we come to the harmony and perfection of the Sphere, the more we understand that in those realms the ideal of freedom does not exist. This concept is of the lesser dimensions, born of the duality of mind, its separateness, the bondage of ego. In the sphere of the Sun there are the perfect and regulated laws of Unity; the ideal of freedom, on whatever level, from social to political to moral to spiritual, dissolves in the realisation of Unity. This is the Goal, this is the realisation of the 9th Manifestation, the realisation of the Sphere, of the 4th dimension, the entire possession of the vehicle by the divine Power — and only on this basis can human unity be achieved.

We must put aside our mental concepts and our fears, our old ideals and fragmented vision, for the more we preach freedom, the closer the ties of bondage are drawn

It is the ignorant man who speaks of freeing himself from the bondage of cosmic laws and rhythms. God does not dwell on the matter. If He is harmony then perforce He must be Law. There is no possibility of perfection and harmony without the existence of precise, let us say, mathematical structures. The ignorant desperately cling to that which they feel will liberate them from the Laws. In the pursuit of pleasure they seek liberation, only to find themselves evermore bound because they are so far removed from the Perfection; their sins are born because of their distance from the Absolute Harmony. The closer we move to the centre, the more our lives are regulated, disciplined, and the greater our harmony, our peace and our capacity to love. Particularly important is the fact that the more man understands the more he realises he cannot arrange, he cannot decide, from his limited existence he cannot organise these cosmic harmonies, no matter how versed in these matters he believes himself to be. This is man's vanity. He has no power, only the opportunity to "see", be the witness and instrument, and to be conscious. The Divine Mother arranges and we allow ourselves to be arranged, always with less obstructions, placing less obstacles in her path. The action is spontaneous, an action in non-action, being without premeditation.

Thus in the final analysis astrology and its related symbols are a product of those realms where harmony reigns, where Laws govern and regulate, and Unity is. It is not of the mind and cannot be comprehended by the mind, which is divided and fragmentary in its very make-up, which proposes to make a science of the Omnipotent and Omnipresent, and only by so doing to approach the Truth. This is not a science, for science as we know it is a partial vision; in the realm of Unity we touch the Divine, beyond all sciences. The plane from which astrology springs is far above the mental, and we may therefore expect that in Sri Aurobindo and his Co-worker the laws of higher planes should manifest openly in the most intense form on Earth today. We are not at a point in evolution in which faith and belief prevail. We are beyond that; we are in the *dynamic* Age of an outward manifestation of the divine inherent seed and all-prevailing consciousness. So the work of Sri Aurobindo must be "provable" within the structures of the cosmic laws and harmonies he himself speaks of, surpassing and rendering out-dated the question of mere faith.

How can the Supreme speak to man if not through the workings of the universe which is His body? First he speaks in wide sweeping measures, the waves of vast evolutionary patterns that determine the greater ebb and flow of the Manifest and embrace the whole of the Cosmos in its colossal mechanics. Then, deeper into and farther through these patterns His scrutinous eye and giant hand move until He touches the miniature expressions of His all-prevailing Being. In man, the microcosmos, He concentrates His gaze and touch. In man, even in his present un-unified form and discordant, unhappy state, the Supreme centres the beauty and perfection of Himself. The seed of divinity is the root of man; the Divine is as perennially present in the beast and brute as in the saint and seer — the one, however, being ignorant of this Spark, he therefore veils his own inherent light, himself obscuring the flame of

eternal brilliance that is the fuel of his existence, while the sage, who knows the Sources, renders it visible to all.

Yet astrology itself in its true value is not apparent to the un-unified eye. Only today in this Age of Unity, when the pressure for right knowledge is so strong upon humanity, is its true message and essence in a position to be revealed and comprehended. Until now, throughout the Ages of the Great Circle, this truth was kept hidden, though always present in its complete form. Unity was always there, the circle with the point, the sphere divided into 9 and 12 — as has always been our Sun, from the beginning of the Manifestation. But ignorance masked its beauty, yet containing in its design the very news of its unfolding in the Age of Aquarius. The Art was not a slow development, an edifice formed by a laborious construction throughout the Ages, one seer adding one bit, another adding another. It was a divine revelation, received integrally in its form of Unity, from a plane where the One is the Whole and the Whole the One, where unity is not separate from the multiplicity, where each unique element is seen in its perfect location as a simultaneous part of the totality, a harmony and perfection beyond all grasp of the separative mind. Yet since it was timeless and eternal, even the Ignorance found its sustenance in its forms, and though humanity was unconscious of its true message and of the plane from whence it sprang, nonetheless it nurtured the Art, preserved it intact for future Ages, and fed upon it in a fragmentary fashion; for aeons it has been the meat of darkness and obscurity—itsself, however, prophesying to humanity the news of its own subjugation and the temporary reign of the anti-light forces. Therefore, in its structure it was born whole, remained ever so, revealed its dark years as well as its light, always unchanging, always united, an eternal symbol that patiently waits for man to himself shed the veils and see the light that ever has been. It is man's duty to *see*. God is the Eternal Reality and in the Zodiac we have a mirror of his unified being and timeless Truth. This symbol stands and has stood from time immemorial in its form of Oneness, and it awaits the unfoldment of the very truth it contains, patiently knowing its worth, its perfection, its journey and ultimate goal, knowing that nothing can change this course, that no power can hold back its advance, for all powers are within its very structure — all powers, those dark as well as bright, make up the varied and multiple faces of its divine form. It moves toward its goal with calm and majestic certainty, knowing that for man the time has come to see.

In this treatment only a minute part of that Truth which is manifest has been put forth, for the Age is but in its beginning and the journey for us, from the point in which we have become conscious witnesses and active participants in this cosmic symphony of unity and multiplicity, has only just begun. The force of the Age is dynamic, and therefore in the name of Truth we are compelled to action by the very Truth we carry within, for even our errors and falsehoods will be imperatively used as a means of calling forth the Fire and flooding creation with the light of the Supreme. In spite of ourselves, the light which we kindle and which is our source will manifest. The Divine Mother will impose her call of love and irresistible lure on the totality of her creation,

gathering full knowledge and taking entire possession of each part of her infinite being. In this union is the answer, and in the Sun lies the knowledge of the way of Truth, of Unity, and the power of Love.

PATRIZIA NORELLI-BACHELET

THOUGHTS

Should my relation with God come in the way of my relation with men and things?

No

Your relations with men and things then would rather be the purest and the richest, yielding bliss and bliss alone.

Don't you see that God that accepts you accepts all men and all things also?

*
**

"How kind is our God!"

"Yes He is.

But then

He is kind to our enemies also."

"No, I do not mean such kindness."

"Then

Your conception of God is only a misconception of God

And your praise of God is only a praise of your own blessed ego.

Indeed He is kind. But in a sense quite different from your own sense of what kindness means."

GIRDHARLAL

SEVEN LIVES

A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

CHAPTER IV *(Contd.)*

PART 3

IT was a summer afternoon and Aureus had just come in from the fields and washed when Amalthea decided to speak to him. As they settled down on the straw together after the noontime meal, a more than normally powerful emanation of silence flowed from her and settled massively within the room. It held Aureus immobile in its grasp as he sat beside her, and an unearthly sense of expectancy hovered about his heart. What was about to break upon them and into the rhythmic harmony of their daily lives? He did not know but he felt the impending change in the marrow of his bones, and with trepidation he awaited the moment when his mother would speak.

At last, from the depths of her own silence, her words began to well, and he listened in his heart, immersed in their flow.

“My son, twenty years we have lived now on the hospitality of this soil, this age, and this shared memory of ours. You have grown from a child to full manhood, and your strength and sureness have become as that of the eagles that soar and swoop beneath the sun, and that adorn the standards of Caesar’s victorious armies. No more can I teach you, no more can you learn from this human vestment and so we shall depart. We may simply abandon the memory even at this very moment, as we broke in upon it a score of years ago while walking along the road to Ligerium. But as its natural termination is due to come only tomorrow, we will live through it, and once again you as well as myself will die as other mortals do. Perhaps this is a dangerous choice that I make, and perhaps again it is worth the risk, for through such a passing you may learn much that would otherwise never come your way again —”

He broke in now with undisguised dismay, “But, mother, for you it is sheer peril —”

“No, child. I can bear for once to be the object of the Dark Lord’s mockery, for greater wonders are in store for us than the vision of his sombre face. And, besides, so great in me is the power of my silence that even in these earthly realms I have learned to cast it about me like a thousand veils. How can he touch me then?”

“Beloved mother, remember well his wiles. All the earth’s charm and beauty are steeped in them. He lurks in every pulsing vein and breath of life. He boasts that all moves at his whim, charlatan and cynic that he is. And in my nightmares and dark

crevices of being he comes upon me with his hideous laugh and his taunts: 'Look here upon the lover of your mother!' until I am ready to tear my own body shred by shred to expel him from its every hiding place."

She took his head upon her shoulder and her tears ran between the strands of his golden hair. "My son, why do you take my problems upon yourself when it is I who must guide and lead — not burden and torture?" she whispered.

But he was not to be daunted. "Burden and torture? Mother — I prostrate myself at your feet that you may never repeat those words. My days of infancy and boyhood are past — now it is I who must carry you, my most precious love, in *my* arms when the deeps and abysses are to be crossed. Have you not given me a man's strength for this, that I may be fit to do a warrior's work?"

She smiled through her tears and stroked his head. Then with a touch of mischief she said, "Ah, so even less do I have to fear with my warrior son by my side. Together we shall face the Dark Lord, and together bear the ordeal of his visitation."

Resigned but not reassured, he drew away from her, all his radiance drained from his face, his joy stilled, his eyes haunted, and his body chilled. About him settled the paralysed aura of one condemned, and immediately Amalthea seated beside him knew that once again his humanity had taken him in its wizard's grip. She knew too that without a powerful counter-spell the effect could trail him to his grave and many patient years of work be undone in a day. Drawing herself together, she prepared to meet the unseen foe that sent fear before it as its advance force, and brought mortality after it as its overlord... "Dear, accursed humanity," she mused to herself, "the Divine One's prodigal creation that can only be saved from itself time and again by the magic of the purest divine light!"

With the indulgent smile of a mother that knows her offspring to be still a child, Amalthea looked at her son and radiated forth an overpowering tranquillity that instantly penetrated his mind and wiped it clear of every image. The same tranquillity then chased every dark and mischievous demon of fear from the room, making the mishappen goblin shapes twist and writhe in agony as they fled helter-skelter from the illumining brilliance of her emanation. Finally it established in the room a peace so tangible that all the objects in the house including the two human bodies seemed but shapes carved out of its mass, while the air appeared as immovable as the solid matter, and acquired in addition the faint rose tint of sunrise.

So effective and irreversible was Amalthea's spell that no scope for the darkness to reappear remained — except, of course, for the access that would have to be left open for the life memory to follow its predetermined course. The rest of the day the two spent almost without words but immersed in a state of internal contentment that required no expression. They performed all the rest of the daily chores as though it were any other day, and then according to their habit lay down to sleep shortly after sundown.

At night on noiseless wings the killer came, swift emissary of the Lord of Death, for it was the appointed time, and passed his hands of disease over the two sleeping

bodies. In her dream, Amalthea saw the dread form come, do his work and depart, while she lay utterly still and withdrawn from her physical form that submitted to the pestilential touch. Thus she saved her immaterial being from the contamination as also that of her son who slept through the visitation as soundly as though he had been the infant of a lifetime ago.

The next morning with the fever of the disease raging within their systems, neither was fit to rise. Only Aureus rolled from his own bed of straw to lie next to his mother, and then the oblivion began — the slow fading out of physical consciousness — first into sleep and finally to coma. When their nearest neighbours came they were already far gone though not yet dead. Nor could they ever be made aware of how many others fell during the epidemic that struck whole families down as a sickle does a field of grain.

All Amalthea knew was that once again a white mist swept down and immersed her, and that she would have drifted in it had she not held herself immobile with the intensity of her own concentration. Similarly would her son have been lost, floating away as upon the waves of the sea, had she not exerted a keen magnetic force to hold him to her. Even so she could not see him in the vaporous whiteness; all she could sense was that he was indeed there, still unconscious, but safe and undisturbed. Then at a specific moment that she had awaited through her indrawn immobility, she felt something rebound upon her like a taut, elastic chord that had been cut, and she knew that her last tie with her physical body had been finally severed. Simultaneously, before she could stop it, an irresistible sense of aloneness broke in upon her like an engulfing wave. A vast pain and nostalgia sought to overcome her heart with a crying in desolation like that of an abandoned waif for the body and ambience of life that had been and had now ceased to exist. But Silent Daughter's concentration had not been for nothing, preparation and safeguard that it was for just such an invasion as this. At the very kernel of her soul the spark of immortal knowledge and immortal being burned untouched like a blinding spot of diamond light. All about her the darkness suddenly increased into that of a turbulent, impending tempest, and she contracted all of her consciousness back into its central light in order to weather the storm unaffected. The loneliness and pain which had sought to enthrall her a moment before felt itself cast loose, and caught in its own desperation, drifted aimlessly about the core of light like a cloud of tired moths around a flame. Then the voice began, coming dismembered out of the darkness, not grand and regal as it had once been, not mocking and derisive as Aureus had heard it, but distraught and strangely ill at ease for so great a power. Gone too were the lover's wiles and stratagems to leave only the disjointed blandishments of a petty, almost pitiable spirit.

"Where in the name of gloom have I wandered?" the voice queried. "I know she must be here somewhere. But the darkness is so great, and I can see no living form — all moves and shifts about me in a play of ghosts. All cries about me in sound vibrations unattached to the creatures that send them forth. It seems I must be struck blind within my own element — do you hear, Darkness? I, that was once deemed a

great lord am reduced to this woeful thing that none can recognise... without majesty or mind or vision. What sorcery is this that has come upon me so that even my voice that could crumble the worlds comes out as a bleat and whimper? Yet my sight does not totally elude me. I see something ahead, a light. Of course, I know it is she, but locked in that point of brilliance so that I can neither know nor see her. And how in any event would I present myself? As this reed-voiced wraith no greater than a petty jinn? No, I cannot bear it. But what is this transforming spell and what its source that robs me of all force and dignity? Is it you, my fair witch, whom I once thought as innocent as a butterfly newly sprung from its chrysalis? Much magic have you acquired behind my trusting back. What teacher have you bribed with your beauty that he has lavished upon you the accursed fruit of his knowledge? Surely such a one cannot escape me for long — none being beyond the reach of my power. Tell me then his name that I may face him with my visage of a reality none can turn aside. Tell me out of mercy, for I am still your lover, and lamentable as any other swain, however valorous, reduced to begging by a haughty mistress.”

Feeling herself invincible in her light's concentration, Silent Daughter condescended to reply. “Foolish god, when will your vanity cease? Given a trust and duty by the Great One, you make of it your own black boast and pretend to own the lives and souls of men. How easily the words ‘accursed’ and ‘bribed’ flow from your tongue when speaking of one you term my teacher. How glibly like an earthly pimp you speak of exchanging beauty for material favour. Truly, all thoughts that lead to decay and death find refuge in your being and your black cynicism is the travesty of all life and purity. Go then and show your face before the Great One and vanquish him with your power of death. For he alone is my teacher and his alone the credit for the ‘accursed fruits’ of my new knowledge. You are right only to observe that I was innocent when I came to my task — indeed as innocent as the butterfly, for like the butterfly I had slept and germinated long in my chrysalis. But unlike the lovely insect I was not born to live only a day, and my chrysalis effected its germination in the heat of the Great One's lap. To this moment that heat lives in my body like a sun, and its magic filters through my quiet limbs.

“Now depart, foul form, for you have done your appointed work and are no longer needed here. Go vaunt your braggart claims in the depths that spawned you and your pestilential brood. Don there your crown and regal mantle and strut about to make your senseless show, unless, of course, you first plan to demolish the Great One on his throne of light as punishment for the exercise of a little harmless sorcery. Here at least before me, you shall be granted no better status than that of a passing shade, which perhaps you find a trifle uncomfortable? Yes, so I had imagined. On your way then, wretched shadow!” An overpowering vibration of sound carried forward Silent Daughter's words and the air about her shook as though with a great explosion. The wraith-beings that had gathered, curled and crumpled while the form of Death shrank still further and started to retreat, accompanied by an ignominious whistle of a voice, “No, please, mercy for an old man — see how aged and infirm I am, my legs give way

beneath me and my hands shake with palsy — no, no — mercy!”

But Silent Daughter did not waver from her concentration and at last the pathetic image was gone. The accompanying tempest too with its shadowy forms was disappearing and all that remained were their receding wisps of vapour in the surrounding sky-space. Free and sovereign again in her godly form, she looked down and far beneath her, found that her son still slept in his human body. The Dark One's emissaries that would break Aureus's last bonds with his physical substance were yet awaiting their moment as it had already been set and recorded in Earth Nature's all-encompassing time-table. They stood a short distance away from him making no sound or movement, nor casting any reflection of gloom before them, for today — strangely — their sombre master had neglected to infuse them with his pride and pretension. They had merely come as the impersonal technicians that they actually were, and waited to perform their duty with grey detachment.

Seeing this, a sublime satisfaction filled Silent Daughter. Her spell had worked and now the rest would be easy. Nevertheless, at the exact moment when the emissaries of Death moved forward, she reached down and placed a finger on each of her child's eyes that he may not awaken till she could draw him to her side. Then gently she lifted up the being torn loose from the body's moorings by death's messengers, and raised it gradually, painlessly to the inner spaces where all menace ceased. Nor was it any longer the body of a child that she held between her arms, but the golden body of a youth upon the threshold of the manhood into which he had developed through the effort of his just-completed life. Silent Daughter's satisfaction turned into a deep pleasure and sense of gratification, as she knelt down and helped his body into a reclining position, for so gentle had been his passing that he had not yet awakened. She then placed his head on her lap and ran her hand time and again over his brow. At last the eyelids of the sleeping one began to flutter, and the long coma of consciousness came to an end. His eyes opened still dull from death, and almost immediately meteors of light from the enveloping atmosphere plunged into their intolerable vacuum and restored them to their native, immortal brilliance.

Looking up and finding his mother's face, the Golden One was perplexed.

“How-long have I slept, and where have my dreams taken me? Years have I traversed, and miles have I walked in my oblivion...”

“No oblivion, my child — but a reality that we lived together. That little peasant villa of your dream, the orchard, the fields, the town and the sea coast — all we have experienced and known as a living reality. Or how else would you have grown to this nascent manhood? Before the experience you speak of as a dream, you were but the merest child.”

He gazed at her for a protracted moment as the realization penetrated, and then asked, “But is it really possible that there can be any reality other than this, any further existence that is anything save a chimera?”

She stroked his forehead. “The truth is that when one goes from one plane to another or one life to another, the last appears shadowy and chimerical, though it is

nothing of the sort and each has its own, valid reality. But you are still not yourself, my child, or you would not ask such questions. The drugging torpor of your sleep still lingers within you and you still think like the human you so recently were. Now look directly into the sun that shines above your head and let the remnants of your humanness peel off and fall from you like dried bark. Your godly parent seeks your attention and your eyes' token of the love you bear him."

Without a further word he turned his open eyes to the splendour of the sun, and instead of their burning in their sockets, they lost themselves in the vast depths of the light. At last a translucent form of himself rose out of his forehead and ascended through space toward the heavenly luminosity. A naked figure through which the light passed without obstruction, the emanation reached the sun's perimeter of brilliance, flew inwards to the core and could be seen to kneel there with a consummate grace, and offer obeisance. At that moment an ineffable countenance emerged from the sun's blinding centre, and an outpouring of an indescribable divine passion embraced the bowed form, encompassing it with its million-armed particles of love and ecstasy, caressing and adoring it as only the Great One could adore and caress his children.

Then slowly, ever so slowly, the emanation rose from its kneeling posture and sank back — drifting down through the celestial spaces — to the forehead out of which it had arisen, and became re-absorbed.

The Golden One became even stiller than before now, and seemed about to return to sleep, but Silent Daughter raised him with a soft touch, and, as pliant and supple as a blade of grass, he rose without the slightest resistance. A curious plasticity had taken hold of him in which he lost all sense of personal direction or control, but became almost like a fluid substance in his mother's hands. Pleased with the totality of his receptiveness, she spoke to him again briefly: "You are now at a stage of crucial formation when you are ready to become a fool or a seer; a God or a Titan. Every possibility lies before you, but the true choice is only one, and I will lead you to it without delay, for it shall form the basis of all you will ever be, all you will ever think or feel, all you will ever know as your profoundest self. But this time I cannot accompany you in your earthly sojourn. I will only be able to visit you in your earth-dreams and earth-visions. Your earthly guide and teacher shall be another — a brother as dear to me as any I have ever known, and a great master of that knowledge that is given only to the pure. In the life you will now relive he shall be as the Divine One's arm constantly about your shoulder. But enough — we will first encounter him here, before you slip forward in time's memory and don your next human body."

She moved on guiding him with a nudge here, or a light touch there, and he flowed in front of her like a cloud in the wind with no hardness or precise definition of form. The sun poured through his silhouette and the gusts played with the outlines of his shape. Even his hair streamed behind him like a pennant of fine smoke while the light and colour of space danced through his eyes as he looked in front of him.

It seemed that they travelled a great distance in this way though there were no

means to judge the amount of time or space they covered on their journey. Only this could be observed—that occasionally they skirted great areas of life and being, each with its own aura and atmosphere, its own creations, its own sun and sky and developed form and existence. Yet not once did Silent Daughter halt or digress into any one of the worlds they passed, but pressed onward to some further goal. At last the two began to rise as though into a finer and finer air, till they reached a place where the atmosphere had the tint of the blue of ice. There for a moment, Silent Daughter steadied her child with an outstretched arm and both stood still, while before them with an awesome, miraculous majesty, the sky itself seemed to part as though with the tearing of the lightest, most invisible veil of clouds, to reveal a panorama of snowy mountain ranges so dazzling and so immaculate in their whiteness, that the soul caught its breath to look upon it.

Without a word, Silent Daughter began to move forward again with her son, nearer and nearer to the glacial ravines, the two floating over the terrain like a pair of wind sprites.

(To be continued)

BINA BRAGG

SRI AUROBINDO STUDY SEMINARS

TAPOGIRI, Ramgarh (Nainital) U.P.

Summer Session, 1973 June 2 to 6 (five days)

Additional Session at Nainital on 17th and 18th June

(under the auspices of Sri Aurobindo Society)

Subject

TRUTH, THE SEEKING FOR TRUTH, THE WILL TO LIVE BY TRUTH

IYENGAR BABA

I WAS then a guest in Keshavanandaji's Ashram at Radhabag, Brindavan. One day came an odd-looking stranger; by the cut of his jib and his awkward bearing one would consider him to be an eccentric. He wore only a piece of cloth round the loins and over it, though it was midsummer, a thick blanket which he would sometimes open and carry on the shoulder. He bore himself as though he did not give a hoot for anything around him.

It was evening when he came and sat down where Keshavanandaji was sitting with his followers. Fun was going on round Satyananda, a young disciple of about six years. Keshavanandaji asked him before the small gathering, "Satyananda, where is your home?" The boy lowered his gaze till it rested on the questioner's feet, and then replied, "There at the feet of the guru."

We were listening to his words with great relish when in came that phenomenon like a bull in a china shop. No namaskar, no courtesy, nothing. He immediately sat down on the floor and went on looking at one side.

Keshavanandaji enquired, "Swamiji, when did you come?"

The intruder replied, "What's that to you? First at least get me something to eat!"

Both spoke in Hindi. Keshavaji sent somebody to bring refreshments.

The chat that had been going on came to a halt, all started looking into one another's face.

The intruder grasped this tense situation and in order to dissipate it said, "Go on with your talk, why are you all silent?"

Keshavanandaji, in turn, entreated him, "Swamiji, will you please tell us something — for example, about salvation?"

Swamiji flared up. "What?" he shouted, "Salvation? I'll talk of salvation to these cheats? Which of them cares for it? How could I talk of salvation before people who are besotted by money and infatuated by women? Who would hear about it, who would strive for it? It's all pretence, hypocrisy, that's all. Shut up now — no more of it!"

Keshavananda smiled a little and wisecracked, "Swamiji, everybody is not of the same type in this world..."

The stranger, inflamed, cried, "All-all-all these blokes are frauds, all these dwellers in religious communities, the poorly dressed sadhus — absolutely false, impostors. They would do anything for money. I say, no more of it, keep quiet — enjoy this leisure."

Meanwhile sweetmeats were brought on a dish off which he lifted one and started eating.

Observing his powerful personality I could not help feeling a reverence for him

and being attracted to him; I rather felt he could never be an ordinary man, one of the riff-raff. For instance, as long as he gazed on at the sky, so long nobody dared to breathe a sound. I kept looking at his face. Keshavaji was speechless. As a matter of fact, his presence was so overpowering that we all remained dumb.

After a while he mouthed another sweet, his gaze still fixed on the sky. Having eaten, he wiped his hand on his blanket. Then he stood up, slowly walked into the neighbouring garden and disappeared.

Once he went out of sight everybody's tongue got untied. Keshavanandaji said, "Smoking too much of *hashish*, he has gone barmy! Now and then he lands here; he belongs to the south, here he boards with a creditor from Bikaner.

Then someone said, "I think he is a spy, he goes about like that on some government service."

"He is mad indeed," another chipped in, "or else how could he have let out that balderdash!"

The stranger, however, returned after some time and sat down. My intuition said that he would not sit for long. So I decided I should follow him the moment he would leave. Therefore I casually got up as though it was time for me to go, and slowly went and stood near a pillar, a bit far from the group, waiting. Their conversation was of no importance, it was rather vapid. The stranger talked with none, he only resumed staring into space.

Keshavananda was again the first to enquire, "Swamiji, where will you go now?"

He replied, "Why, do you feel disturbed if I stay here? Can't you go on with your talk?"

"Well, we have nothing so secret that we can't discuss before you," Keshavaji apologised.

"All right, all right," Swamiji seemed to comply, "I'll go now — but give me two annas." Promptly someone rose and brought him the coins, by which time I had already come to the gate that I might be able to follow him.

At last he came, hurriedly, crossed the gate and halted on the road to look back at me. Then to my utter surprise, he asked me in fluent English, "You are a Bengali, aren't you? You have started your journey from Calcutta — isn't that so?" Pleased with my affirmative reply he invited me to go along with him. That is exactly what I had been waiting for.

As I walked with him I experienced a sense of freedom and joy as I had never done before in that place.

Various thoughts raced through my mind:

"He does not walk, he flies! He is about fifty; bald about the middle of his head, he has a mixture of white and black hair on its sides and back, stubbled just like his beard. The eyes are terribly bright and give a piercing look. Persons unfamiliar with him will not be able to stand it."

After a while he put his hand on my shoulder and his tongue ran on, but be it for his hurried articulation or for my ignorance of the topic, I could not follow what he

said. All that I could understand was that he spoke in English. I should mention here one thing: until he placed his hand on my shoulder I could not keep pace with his stride. Perhaps it was on sensing this that he had come closer to me and made that friendly gesture. After that I could easily walk with him.

First we came to the bank of the Jamuna, then we entered again into the town by one road and, shortly, we struck upon another road down which we walked towards the temple of Gopinath.

“Do you smoke *hashish*?” he asked. I said, “No.” Nearby was a shop of *hashish*; he stopped, gave me a few coins and asked me to buy some. When I returned with the intoxicant he told me to keep it with me. We resumed walking.

Then we stopped before a thatched hut and he called out, “Shantaji!” A very young sadhu of about fifteen came out. He told the boy in Hindi, “Maal hai!” — that is, there is something to smoke. The lad replied, “Zarur!” meaning he would certainly prepare it. My queerly dressed companion signed, and I passed on the “maal” to the youth and felt relieved. We then sat down.

“How shall I call you?” I asked. He answered, “My name is Parthasahaya Iyengar. My home is near Madras.”

“Say, why do you rail so loudly against the sadhus? They have renounced family life and all to worship God —”

He cut me short in utter disgust: “You are a kid, you know nothing; they have renounced nothing at all — nor do they worship God. All that they do is to exploit the householders for their own selfish ends. They are rogues.”

This whetted my desire to argue: “All are totally bad! There, what a sweeping statement you make. In Nature, in God’s kingdom, contrasts are — “Again he broke in: “There’s the rub. That word ‘God’ creates all the confusion. Besides, what is the big idea of undergoing excruciating austerities for that with which man has nothing to do?”

Whew! is the fellow mad? — There is no relation between man and God? Is it all sentiment and vain emotion?

“Can’t then man know God?” I charged him.

“No, no, no,” he shouted, “man cannot even conceive of God. It’s impossible. No man can know God. If God is known by man then it is a magnified man — don’t talk about God — speak of something else.”

Myself: “If there is no faith in God’s existence then there will be a catastrophe.”

Promptly he said, “The human society will go to the dogs, eh? Let it go. Is man’s present condition in any way better? Are dishonesty, deceit, imposture and lasciviousness in the name of religion anyhow better than stealth, dacoity and murder? A hypocritical life I will never advocate.”

Myself: “Mr. Iyengar, you are exaggerating. You are a sadhu yourself, do you expect me to believe that you have not seen a single sadhu true to his name?”

Iyengar: “Yes, I have seen one; that one person whom I would call a sincere renunciant, a genuine guru.”

In a flurry of anxiety to see this extraordinary person whom even this spitfire of a man admired I enquired, "Sir, who is he? where does he live? Kindly tell me, I will see him —"

"There on the bank of the Jamuna," he said pointing to the riverside, "his name is Jagadish Baba." Then he added, "One peculiarity about him is that he lives incognito, so he is not always available when you look for him.

At this point he received the hubble-bubble. He leaned forward almost touching his chest on the ground and was soon absorbed in smoking.

Smoking over, I solicited, "Now let's go to Jagadish Baba."

"It's already evening, I doubt if he will be available. Keep it for tomorrow. Let us go somewhere else today." So saying he stood up, and as I rose to my feet thinking that he was going to take me to some other sadhu, he remarked: "It seems you have badly fallen for the sadhus. Young man [I was then — in 1911 — 26], why go mad over those bogus, renegade, aberrant men? There are plenty of noble things to do in life. If you follow in the footsteps of those idlers from this age, then I see only a bleak future for you! You will become a worthless, indolent fellow yourself, as the people of that type most often are — they are absolute cutthroats and live upon the hard-earned money of the householders, and they are always concerned about their own comfort. The poor householders get nothing in return. Has this gone well into your head?"

Knowing that it was vain to argue with such a dour, obdurate and powerful man, I remained cool. Then, I suppose, divining my thought, he spoke, patting lightly my shoulder: "Look here, when I was your age, I was not so good and clever as you. I had a bad character; like a fool I ran after pleasure. It's only ten or twelve years since I have undergone a conversion. I can now recognise a true sadhu."

Seeing me still mum he went on to say, "Come, today I shall take you elsewhere." He again placed his hand on my shoulder and made rapid strides saying, "Are you listening?" "Of course!" I exclaimed.

Iyengar: "Look here, do you want to see some wonderful powers, by which powerful persons can be recognised?"

I quoted the saying of Sri Ramakrishna — "Those who go about displaying occult powers can never meet God."

Iyengar: "Again you are talking of meeting God? Didn't I tell you there cannot be any contact between man and God? It's all fiction of some people's brains. Go on creating 'something' vast in your imagination, and if there is some sincere effort on your side you will also see what people would call 'God', you would talk with it, and in fact your latent powers will blossom forth to make you powerful before men. Whatever you will desire to enjoy you will have. Indeed, you may be looked upon as God Himself by the people."

I was dumbfounded. What on earth did he mean? I could not make out anything of this strange man, even after such a long time. He seemed to be hidden behind a cloud of hoax and mystery.

We arrived in front of a huge double-storeyed marble building when he told me, "Those who live here are my hosts."

"In other words your disciples, but how?"

Observing my mixed feeling of curiosity and surprise, he explained, "They are eager to serve me, and hear the words of the scriptures. What is more, they want to take me to their place in Rajasthan."

"Oho, then you are also like one of these sadhus, you are exploiting these householders yourself, aren't you?" I blurted out.

"No, no," he objected, "I don't need them, it is they who want me. I don't care a straw for them."

This mansion belonged to a creditor of Bikaner. He lived here with his wife and daughter, he had no son.

Outside the mansion was a servant to whom my friend barked Hindi, "Eh, you, show us in."

The servant looked once at him and once at me, then mumbled that his master was not in.

Then a most beautiful young lady came running down the stairs, greeted Mr. Iyengar with folded hands and invited him to come upstairs.

We climbed up and stood on the threshold of a hall which was furnished with everything that a family could ask for. There were three white, clean beds at the three corners of the floor, and another on one side, a low, beautifully decorated cot, covered with a coloured sheet.

The girl brought a mug of water with which she washed my companion's feet; when, quite candidly, she came to wash mine, taking me for a sadhu, I, unwilling to take advantage of her candidness, politely refused.

Washing my feet by myself, I entered the hall. It surprised me to see that in the meantime the great Mr. Iyengar had laid himself flat on the decorated cot, as though he were completely knocked down.

Now came the housewife, her hands, neck, breast and head completely covered with gold ornaments. She was middle-aged. The moment she got up after prostrating herself before Iyengar, he stretched his legs towards her. Straightway she sat down on the cot at his feet, to massage his legs. Shortly the girl brought some refreshments in two saucers and kept them before two seats on the floor.

Iyengar told me, "This house is very dear to me, I live here in clover; whenever I come to Brindavan I put up here, these people just won't let me lodge elsewhere."

Then to the girl he bade, "I won't eat, take the food away; if he wants, give it to him."

I too refused at first but finally I had to give way to her entreaties and ate something.

By and by it darkened, a lamp was lit in the room; but Iyengar Baba was still relaxing and there was simply no question of going away. I was at my patience' end. The more I looked at him, the more disgusted I felt. Sitting by Iyengar, the girl was

gently rubbing his bald pate. He showed no intention of relinquishing this comfort and leaving.

“What to do now?” I brooded. “We should have visited Jagadish Baba — what is there to see here — female beauty of Bikaner?” While I sat thinking in this vein, that man coughed, the sort of cough induced by phlegm.

I looked up towards him and — what did I see? This was not the body of Parthasahaya Iyengar! Here was a luminous figure of exquisite grace, seated cross-legged in lotus posture, gazing at the lamp!

His body was adorned with gold ornaments and his garment was a silk cloth with a golden hem and, cascading down from the left shoulder, another beautiful sheet of a finer texture. A vision of felicity, indeed!

The mother and daughter stood before him with folded hands and prayerful visages, gazing winklessly at him. What was also wondrous, that figure remained so statuesquely motionless that it seemed to be carved out of marble.

Is this an optical illusion or maybe a hallucination? I was perplexed, wonder-struck.

Even till a moment earlier I had been seeing this man — half mad, middle-aged and spitiery; yet I had not shunned his company in contempt. And now he was unrecognizable. He had transfigured himself. Was he then a demi-god?

As I thus weighed my thoughts, the visionary figure nodded at me with a gracious smile, meaning, “Come here.”

I went and stood at his bedside. He stretched his long arms to embrace me and pressed me close to his chest. From head to foot my body started convulsing, then I lost all consciousness.

When I regained consciousness I saw before me a sadhu, middle-aged, of a bright complexion, the forehead marked with sandal paste; for garment he had only a piece of cloth round the loins. To his right burned an oil lamp of clay. I was squatting, Parthasahaya was standing by me. When I tried to think out who this sadhu was, Parthasahaya whispered, “This is Jagadish Baba. Bow down to him now and let us go. Come again tomorrow, you don’t have to come with me any more.” After having prostrated myself before Jagadish Baba, I rose up.

Just outside Baba’s cottage we found a grove. We crossed it and arrived at the bank of the Jamuna, after leaving behind huge trees standing at long intervals. Partha Iyengar walked with his hand on my shoulder. Arriving near Keshi Ghat he said, “Come now, let us return from where we went out.” As he spoke he folded me in his arms. Again I felt groggy, and immediately lost all awareness.

When I came round, I found myself squatting on the floor of that hall inside the house of the creditor from Bikaner; Iyengar Baba was lying on bed enjoying the massage of the mother and daughter. When I fully came to myself after he had coughed a second time, I looked up at him. He was staring at me with glowing eyes, a strange, ironical smile playing on his lips.

Hardly had I stood up when he spoke, “Now you may take your leave, go to

Jagdish Baba tomorrow morning — the path to his cottage runs straight over the Keshi Ghat, along the bank of the Jamuna. All right? Will you remember?”

After touching my head to his feet I pulled myself up and assured him, “Yes, I shall certainly remember.”

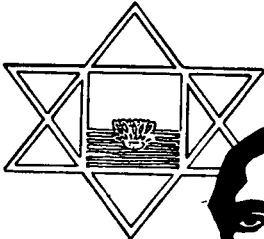

He smiled a little and said, perhaps with his tongue in his cheek, “Now you consider me adorable, don’t you?”

PROMOD KUMAR CHATTERJEE

(Translated by Gurudas Banerjee from the original Bengali.)

The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development and it is the young who must create it.

— Sri Aurobindo

Space donated by
KOOVERJI DEVSHI & CO., PVT. LTD.

**FIREX LEADS TO SAFETY
SAFETY LEADS TO PROSPERITY**

“LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL”

(Continued from the issue of April 24, 1973)

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION EXPERIMENTS IN NEW EDUCATION

If we are not to remain in the field of theory psychic education must find a place in the manifold scheme of life. We have to turn reading, writing, thinking, daily studies, literary work, research work into instruments of service. Dance, drama, music, sports, games, all movements, all activities must be carried out as an offering. Then only can education assume spiritual dimensions.

There is a great secret behind the logic of offering. It is the simplest way to pull oneself out of the sphere of darkness into the domain of light. It is by self-giving that one can open to the working of the higher force. The more we offer, the greater the intervention of the higher Power. Perfection will come when all our acts are pervaded by His Light, His Power.

This issue finds support in Sri Aurobindo's own words:

“All our thoughts, impulses, feelings, actions have to be referred to him for his sanction...to be offered to him...so that he may more and more descend into us and be present in them all and pervade them with his will and power.”¹

Look at the way the teachers offered their work of teaching to the Mother. Here are some instances:

“This afternoon I took up classes E. 2 and 3. Most of the lesson was taken up with dictating the A.B.C. of SADHANA which you sent yesterday. They were all delighted with it; maybe because it was something new. I intend to get them to try something similar themselves. As you know, Mother, the new books have arrived; I read them today the little play *Rumpelstiltskin*'. I thought of using fifteen minutes of each lesson for this play so that they might act it at the end of the year.”

“The enthusiasm these children have shown in their homework is remarkable. I asked them to make a list of all the names of sea-birds they could find.”

“I am afraid they must have worried Premanand in the library. It was a veritable treasure hunt for names. And today they brought numerous books on birds for my inspection. However, I feel they have learnt much, not only of English but of ornithology also, in this search for names of birds.”

In 1952 when a batch of twenty students from Annamalai University visited the Ashram the Mother gave to each of them a copy of the *Hymn to Durga* at the time of their departure.

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 562.

From his very early childhood one of them had been of a religious temperament. On more than one occasion he had had the experience of the temple idol coming to life.

In his community the tradition is that whenever the family Guru is about to leave his body, he chooses somebody to take his place. The boy's parents eagerly awaited the day the choice might fall upon their son, that they might put the child in his care for training. And the boy longed for this with all his heart, but his destiny lay elsewhere. His turn never came and he had his M.Sc., from Bombay.

Going to London for higher studies his seeking heart appealed to the Mother for a boon: “Whenever I plunge into meditation may I feel your presence!” A wonderful boon indeed! The time was fixed: 6 p.m. Sitting in the heart of London he would invariably go into meditation at the appointed time even when there was a snowfall. It was this, he felt, that saved him in many a trial and danger. The saving point was the feeling — “If I commit anything wrong, how can I approach the Mother during the meditation?”

He is fortunate in having a life-companion who, though highly educated, is not worldly-minded. One day he put to her a strange question:

“If you are blessed with a son what would you like him to be?”

She looked at him with a thoughtful eye and said in a solemn tone: “I shall offer him to the Divine.”

Was it decreed that the boy would choose the Ashram as his permanent abode?

To whatever school the boy was sent he fell ill. So his mother asked his father who was still in England what he would like her to do with the child.

“Put him in the Ashram school,” was his decisive answer.

The Mother accepted the boy, but would not indicate which Boarding he was to go to. It so happened that sometime later the boy's mother also sought permission to stay permanently in the Ashram.

Some friends of the boy's father visited the Ashram and said to the boy, “You belong to a highly cultured family. Some members are in the I.A.S. Won't you like to be one of them?”

“Fie on the I.A.S.! I shall be at the service of the Mother in Auroville” was his quick reply.

When the boy's parents repeated this to me, I asked, “But what about the boy? Is he doing well here?”

“Oh, yes! We are quite happy. There is all-round progress in him. He is a lover of books and has a philosophical bent. He writes so well. His teachers are very pleased with him.”

For the first time he went to the Mother on March 5, 1965 when he was two and a half years old. He didn't fall at the feet of the Mother but kept on gazing at Her and the Mother too kept on looking at him. When the boy's mother tried to bend his head the Mother dissuaded her saying, “Don't force him.” The psychic potency of the boy is quite evident. He seems to be living in his own world, often lost in books. The

Mother has said something very good about him.

All of us carry the feeling that something is lacking in us and something is wanting to fill the vacuum but we are not conscious of either of them. If we become conscious and remain alert, dark forces will not easily enmesh us in their snares.

The moment one grows conscious one is shocked to find that obscurities and absurdities to which one had never given any thought start unfolding. When one acquires a discriminating faculty, things and situations begin to change and one with them. One begins to see the action of the forces in himself and in others. If one happens to be abused, he does not lose his temper but takes it as an opportunity to test his own power of endurance. This is how the change in nature begins.

“Be conscious” and “offer”: these are the two master-keys given by the Mother to get rid of those lower elements which keep us ever in fetters.

When torn, for instance, by the powers of lust and greed; be conscious — pause and ponder where the wrong is and what the immediate result of indulgence might be. When this is done half the strength of the evil forces is gone.

If some undesirable element has already got into your consciousness, offer it to the psychic fire.

“A psychic fire within must be lit into which all is thrown with the Divine Name upon it.”¹

When there is a rush of thoughts, “Be alert and watchful.” This will serve as a brake. If we make this a part of our mental education, it will give us a taste of concentration. If, to this, “will-power” is added, says the Mother, “you will be a genius and nothing will resist you.” Thus *śikṣā* (education) will no longer remain divorced from the inner life. This is a new philosophy which the public mind has not understood.

Most difficult of all is the surrender of pride. ‘Offering’ will bring an opening to the working of the Mother’s Force. One can feel it working in any part of the body. It is this that in time will effect a change of consciousness, a change of nature. It is a long process. It means a tearing of all we are. Only at this price life can become an offering.

The Mother did not want the Ashram Centre of Education to be a place of preparation for examinations but a *yajñasālā*, a place of dedication to the Divine.

To use her stirring words:

“That was the very first basis in forming the Ashram, that the work done must be an offering to the Divine.”

By constant efforts we can reach a state of consciousness in which whatever we do, whatever we feel, all our movements, are an act of offering to the Supreme.²

Let us cast off the ego’s eclipse of the soul and then the psychic being will shine as the moon in the sky. Psychic education imposes no severe austerities. One has only

¹ Sri Aurobindo *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 149.

² Adapted from the Mother’s writings.

to be on fire to obtain mastery over oneself. Hence no labour should be spared that releases the spiritual forces in the child. It is psychic education that can break through a new level of consciousness and bring the joy of heaven on earth.

To make a mark in life one has to scale many heights and to reach the summit obtain many “spiritual degrees”.

Psychic education will bring *jyoti* (Light) into life. If Yogic capability (*yogabal*) is added to educational ability (*vidyābal*), just imagine how great our achievements will be.

Today we may be in darkness but we dream of a day when those who come after us will be in light. Light will be in their eyes, light will be in their mind, light will be in their heart. It is light that will guide their steps. The very meaning of their life will be dedication. Such are the souls who will give new leadership. Is there not a grandeur in this view of life? But the question of questions is: will this dream be fulfilled?

As evolution has moved
 From instinct to intellect,
 Will not intellect
 Yield place to intuition?
 O, children of the golden days!
 Be you the vehicles of the descending Light!
 Be you the forerunners of a New Age!

How fast the world is changing! What was the state of affairs in the pre-scientific age? With what wonder a man of the eighteenth century would look at our world! Would it not appear to him quite a new world?

If science has brought this change within less than two centuries, is it not possible to conceive that spiritual science, when rooted in man’s consciousness, will give birth to a New India, a New World?

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Sri Aurobindo: *The story of his life.* Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, price, Rs. 7.

PREPARED apparently for children, this brief and lucid biography of Sri Aurobindo, a centenary publication from the Ashram, is remarkable in many respects — authentic and substantial in material, vivid and fluent as narrative, comprehensive, insightful and illuminating in its interpretation of prominent landmarks in Sri Aurobindo's life and of leading concepts in his thought. Indeed, it is more than an account of biographical particulars, events and incidents. It is obviously oriented towards a profoundly beneficial impact on the reader's mind and heart. It does touch on the whole course of Sri Aurobindo's earthly life — starting from the budding patriot's early childhood, moving on to the more dynamic period of the inspired revolutionary, stirred by his "three madresses", transforming action into yoga and guided throughout by the Divine from within, leading to the consummating phase of the call from Pondicherry and the Mother's advent, including the vision of Auroville. Yet, the pith and substance of the whole work seems to lie in the two concluding chapters more than in any other, for it is these that provide flashes of unfathomed depths in the yoga of Sri Aurobindo's life.

K. SESHADRI

The Hindu, February 11, 1973, Weekly Magazine, p. V.

The New Creation (*Poems*) By *Vithaldas M. Mehta*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-2. Published by Babulal Kantilal Mehta, 147, Fairfax Road, London, No. 8. Pages 82. Price Rs. 2.

The New Creation sings of the many moods and experiences of the spiritual truths that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have vouchsafed to Humanity for its higher growth and greater progress. It sings of the creative action of the Spirit and the Love Divine that they have dynamically released for the transfiguration of life and the uplifting of man to his maximum spiritual heights. It sings of the Mother's working in the human heart and on the forces of the earth for ushering in a new life and a new world.

Expressing his feeling of deep gratitude towards the Divine Mother for listening to the poems which he occasionally recited before her, the poet says, "Once I was reading 'Savitri', the great immortal epic by Sri Aurobindo. Suddenly, I heard a voice within which spoke distinctly, 'Cease reading. Take a pen and a piece of paper. Start writing as I dictate' ". Since then he has been writing poetry and has continued to write for years.

The present volume contains all sonnets except one. It has been written in the manner of the neo-symbolists who have derived their inspiration from the poetry of Sri Aurobindo. The inspiration is genuine and the poet has tried to express it with sincerity, but the perspiration that should go to sustain the inspiration seems to be somewhat-lacking. A little more home-work would have saved the otherwise fair and cohesive verse from a number of errors of metre, rhythm and rhyme. We wish the poet a more uniform success in his future ventures.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

SOME NEW PUBLICATIONS :

1. **Mind and Vision** — A handbook for the cure of imperfect sight without glasses, with numerous illustrations. New edition — Rs. 16/-
2. **Yoga of Perfect Sight** — A guide to develop perfect eyesight by methods conducive to spiritual vision — Rs. 12/-
3. **Secrets of Indian Medicine** — A guide to a practical synthesis of different systems for eye troubles — new enlarged edition — Rs. 12/- De luxe. Rs. 16/-
4. **Care of Eyes** — A nutshell brochure for the preservation of good eyesight — Rs. 2.50

Available from: PONDICHERY-2 1. School for Perfect Eyesight

2. Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency 3. Publication Department

Students' Section

PERFECTION IN EYESIGHT

It is a fact that glasses help many to relieve their discomforts of the head and eyes and enable many to see well at a distance and near by, and their use in several cases is imperative. But this is also true that glasses do not check further deterioration in eyesight and the sight power-number goes on increasing. Often glasses become an added torture to increase the pain and suffering and loss of eyesight. The problem of fast deterioration in eyesight and the increase of blind people amongst the educated class has become quite serious at the present time in spite of all possible medical aid and we should feel ashamed for this helplessness.

The process of seeing is mostly done in the brain; our vision is the mind's interpretation of the retinal images. Relaxation of mind helps to see well while mental strain causes defective vision. The old writers on Ophthalmology did not consider that the mental strain could play an important part in the formation of errors of refraction and other diseases of the eye; hence they isolated the eyes while determining the cause and treatment of visual defects and retinal disorders. This has led to our failure.

This incurability of visual defects is based on the theory that the eye changes its focus for vision at different distances by altering the curvature of the lens. Dr. W. H. Bates, an American scientist and ophthalmologist, when he found himself unable to prevent myopia and other errors of refraction, felt that there must be something wrong in the presumption of this theory. So he performed many experiments to determine the facts about accommodation and errors of refraction. He has made many remarkable discoveries:

1. In accommodation the eye adjusts its focus like a camera by a change in the length of the organ, and this alteration is brought about by the action of external eye muscles called Oblique muscles.
2. Myopia is not caused by reading but by a strain to see distant objects. Strain to see at the near point causes hypermetropia.
3. Reading fine print is extremely beneficial.
4. By eye education and mental relaxation almost all cases of defective vision can be cured partially or completely.
5. Myopia can be easily prevented in school by reading the Snellen Eye Testing Chart daily with gentle blinking and palming.

DR. R. S. AGARWAL
School for Perfect Eyesight, Pondicherry