

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

FEBRUARY 21, 1975

THE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

Price : Rs. 1-75

LIFE-MEMBERSHIP RATES

Inland : Rs. 250

Overseas : £ 28 (Sea-mail), £ 73.50 (Air-mail)
: \$ 70 (Sea-mail), \$ 210 (Air-mail)

Posting Date for MOTHER INDIA :

26th to 28th of the preceding month.

Annual Subscription : Inland—Rs. 18. Overseas—£ 2, \$ 5.

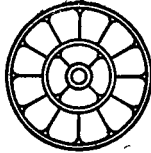
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All correspondence to be addressed to:

MOTHER INDIA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-605002, India.

Editor's Phone: 782

Publishers : Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

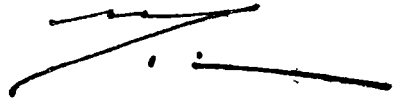


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute.

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



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MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XXVII

No. 2

"Great is Truth and it shall prevail."

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Editor: K. D. SETHNA

Managing Editor: K. R. PODDAR

Published by: P. COUNUMA

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM TRUST, PONDICHERRY-605002

Printed by: AMIYO RANJAN GANGULI

at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry-605002

PRINTED IN INDIA

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

THE MOTHER ON HERSELF

SOME WORDS TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE IN THE EARLY 1950's

EVEN before I was born my body was prepared by Mahasaraswati. Yes, while I was in the womb of my mother. Before that, Mahasaraswati prepared the womb itself. My body she prepared from all the elements of the various aspects of the Supreme Mother, assembling the parts and putting them together.

From the age of five I was conscious that I did not belong to this world, that I did not have a human consciousness. My sadhana began at that age.

It was in 1914 that the identification with the Universal Mother took place, the identification of the physical consciousness with her. Of course, I knew before this that I was the Mother, but the complete identification took place only in 1914.

THE MOTHER ON HER OWN BODY'S MISSION*

I AM here because my body has been given for the first attempts at transformation. Sri Aurobindo said it to me. Well, I am doing it.

THE MOTHER ON HER TWELVE ASPECTS

Existence, Consciousness, Bliss,
Light, Life, Power,
Prosperity, Usefulness, Progress,
Youth, Harmony and Perfection.

THE MOTHER ON THE INNER DIVINE

A PRONOUNCEMENT IN THE MIDDLE 1960's

You have to cling only to the Divine within. I have seen much in the world and always I found everything transitory. But when I met Sri Aurobindo, I said to myself, "Ah, this is stable at last!" (*Pause*) What a knock on the nose I received when Sri Aurobindo left his body. Of course, he is right here within me (*the Mother put her hand on her chest*), I can speak to him. He is close. But (*spreading out her palms to both sides*) he is not in the physical. One must cling to the Divine within. All these other things — harmony in the collective and so on — they are all right, but it is to the Divine within that you have to cling.

* Translated from *Gazette Aurovilienne*, Vol. II, No. 1. p. 39.

SRI AUROBINDO ON UNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE

It is not by your mind that you can hope to understand the Divine and its nature but by the growth of a true and divine consciousness within you. If the Divine were to unveil and reveal itself in all its glory, the mind might feel a Power, a Presence, but it would not understand its action or its nature. It is in the measure of your own realisation and by the birth and growth of that greater consciousness in yourself that you will see the Divine and understand its action even behind its terrestrial disguises.

November 24, 1929

SRI AUROBINDO ON THE KALI YUGA

(According to tradition, the Kali Yuga started on Friday, February 18, 3102 B.C.)

THE Kali Yuga (as the present age is called in Hindu tradition) is not in reality a deterioration but a detrition of the outward forms and props of spirituality in order to prepare a deep spiritual intensity within the heart.

(From Man — Slave or Free?)

SRI AUROBINDO ON THE ONE THING NEEDED

THE one thing that is most needed for this sadhana is peace, calm, especially in the vital — a peace which depends not on circumstances or surroundings but on the inner contact with a higher consciousness which is the consciousness of the Divine, of the Mother. Those who have not that or do not aspire to get it can come here and live in the Ashram for ten or twenty years and yet be as restless and full of struggle as ever — those who open their mind and vital to the Mother's strength and peace get it even in the hardest and most unpleasant work and the worst circumstances.

October 1933

THE EARTHLY PARADISE

A TALK BY THE MOTHER

(This is a new translation of some questions and answers from *Pensées et Aphorismes* de Sri Aurobindo, traduits et commentés par la Mère, 2nd ed. 1974, Tome 1: *Jñāna*, No. 58, p. 165.)

THE animal, before he is corrupted, has not yet eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the god has abandoned it for the tree of eternal life; man stands between the upper heaven and the lower nature.

SRI AUROBINDO, *Thoughts and Aphorisms*

Q: Is it true that there was once an earthly paradise? Why was man driven out from it?

M. (Mother replied orally to this question)

From the historical point of view (I am not speaking of the psychological point of view but of the historical one) if I go on the basis of my memories (only I cannot prove it; we cannot prove anything, and I do not think there is a truly historical proof — I mean anything preserved, or anyway, it has not yet been found), but according to my memories there was certainly a time in the history of the earth when there existed a sort of earthly paradise, in the sense that life was perfectly harmonious and perfectly natural; that is to say, the mental manifestation was in tune, was *still* in perfect tune, with the upward movement of Nature, and in total harmony without perversion and without deformation. It was the first stage of the manifestation of mind in material forms.

How long did that last? It is difficult to say. But that life was, for man, like a kind of joyful expansion of the animal life. My remembrance is of a life in which the body was perfectly adapted to its natural environment and the climate to the needs of the body, the body to the needs of the climate. Life was entirely spontaneous and natural in the way a more luminous and conscious animal life would be; but it had absolutely nothing of the complexities and deformations which the mind in the course of its development brought in later on. The memory of that life I have. I had it, and I relived it when I became conscious of the life of the earth in its entirety. But I cannot say how long that lasted, nor over what area it extended — I do not know. I remember only the condition, the state of material Nature and of the human form and the human consciousness at that time, and that kind of harmony with all the other elements upon the earth; the harmony with animal life, and such a great harmony with plant life! There was a sort of spontaneous knowledge of the use of the things of Nature, of the qualities of the plants, of the fruits and of all that vegetable Nature could give; and no aggression, no fear, no oppositions or friction, and no perversion at all. Mind was pure, simple, luminous, uncomplicated.

And it was only with the process of evolution, the forward march of evolution, when the mind began to develop in itself, *for* itself, that all the complications, all the deformations began. So that the story of Genesis, which seems so childish, does contain a truth. In the old traditions like that of Genesis each letter¹ was the sign for a certain knowledge; it was a resumé in images of the traditional knowledge of that time. But beyond that, even the symbolic story had a reality in the sense that really there had been a period of life on earth — the first manifestation in human forms of mentalised matter — which was still in complete harmony with all that came before, and it was only later ...

And the symbol of the tree of knowledge — it is that kind of knowledge which is no longer divine, isn't it — this material knowledge which comes from the sense of division and which began to spoil everything. How long did this period last? For my memory is also as if of an almost immortal life. It seems that it might be by a kind of evolutionary accident that there intervened the necessity for forms to disintegrate in order to progress. So I cannot say how long that lasted. And where? According to certain impressions (but they are only impressions), it would seem that it might be in the region of ... I don't know exactly if it is on this side of Ceylon and India or on that side. (*Mother points to the Indian Ocean, either to the west of Ceylon and India, or to the east between Ceylon and Java.*) But certainly it was a place which no longer exists, which was probably swallowed up by the sea. The vision of that place and the consciousness of that life and its forms are very clear to me, but exact material details I cannot give. (To tell the truth, when I relived those times, I did not feel any curiosity to see these details — one is in another state of mind, isn't one? one is not curious about these material details; everything becomes psychological data.) And it was... it was something so simple, luminous, harmonious, beyond all these preoccupations that we have — precisely beyond all these preoccupations with time and place. It was a spontaneous life, extremely beautiful, and so close to Nature! — like a natural blossoming of the animal life. And there were no oppositions or contradictions or anything — everything went on in the best way in the world.

(Silence)

I have repeatedly experienced, in different circumstances, several times, a similar memory (it was not exactly the same scene and the same images, because it was not something that I *saw* — it was *a life* which I experienced). For quite some time, by day or night, in a certain kind of trance, I used to find again a life which I had lived; and I had the full consciousness that it was the first flowering of the human form on the earth — the first human forms which were able to embody the Divine Being. It was that; the first time that I had been able to manifest myself in an earthly form, in a particular form, in an individual form (not a general life, but an individual form). That is to say, the first time that a link was made between the Being above and the

¹ [Mother speaks of the Hebrew letters.]

being below, aided by the mentalisation of the material substance. I have lived this several times, but always in a similar setting and with an entirely similar feeling — of *such* a joyous, uncomplicated simplicity, without problems, without all these questions. There was nothing, absolutely nothing of all that! It was the blossoming of a delight in life, nothing but that, in a general love, a general harmony — the flowers, the minerals, the animals were all in accord.

It was only long afterwards (but this is a personal impression), long afterwards, that things got spoiled. Probably because certain mental crystallisations were necessary, unavoidable for the sake of the general evolution — so that the mind should be able to prepare itself to pass on to something else. It is there that, pooh! it seems like falling into a hole, into an ugliness, obscurity; everything becomes so dark after that, so ugly, so difficult, so painful. It is truly ... that really gives the feeling of a fall.

(*Silence*)

I knew an occultist who used to say that it was not (how to put it?) unavoidable. In the total liberty of the manifestation, it is the voluntary separation from the Origin which is the cause of all the disorder, isn't it so? But how to explain? Our words are so poor that one cannot say these things. We can say that it was 'inevitable' since it has happened; but if one goes outside the creation, one can conceive (or one could have conceived) of a creation where this disorder would not have occurred. Sri Aurobindo also said nearly the same thing, that it was a kind of 'accident' if you like, but an accident which allowed to the manifestation a much greater and more total perfection than if it had not taken place. But that is still in the realm of speculation, and speculation which is unhelpful, to say the least. In any case, the experience, the feeling is like that — a ... (*Mother makes a gesture of a brutal fall*) Oh! all of a sudden.

For the earth, probably it happened like that, all of a sudden: a kind of ascent and then the fall. But the earth is a very tiny focus point. Universally it is another matter.

(*Silence*)

So the memory of that time is preserved somewhere, in the terrestrial memory, in that region where all the memories of the earth are recorded, and those who are able to come into contact with this memory can say that the earthly paradise still exists somewhere. But I do not know anything about it, I don't see it.

Q: And the story of the serpent? Why has the serpent got this reputation for evil doing?

MOTHER: The Christians say that it is the spirit of evil.

(*Silence*)

But all that, it is all misunderstanding. This occultist of whom I spoke said that the true translation of the Bible story (of the paradise and the serpent) is that Man wanted to pass from a state of animal divinity, like the animals, to the state of conscious divinity, through the development of the mind (and it is that symbol, when it says that they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge). And the serpent (he always used to say that it was an iridescent serpent — that means that it had all the colours of the prism), it was not at all the spirit of evil, it was the evolutionary force — the force, the power of evolution, and that, naturally, it was the force of evolution which had made them take the fruit of knowledge.

And then, according to him, Jehovah was the chief of the Asuras, the supreme Asura — the egoistic god who wanted to dominate everything, and that everything should be under his control; and from the moment when he took the place of Supreme Lord in relation to the terrestrial realisation, naturally it did not please him that Man should make this mental progress which would give him a knowledge that allowed him to no longer obey! That made him furious! Because that allowed man to become a god by the power of the evolution of consciousness. And it was for that that they were driven out of paradise.

There is a great deal of truth in it, a great deal.

And Sri Aurobindo was in full agreement; he said the same thing: it was the power of evolution, the power of the mind which led man towards knowledge — a knowledge which was a knowledge of division. And it is a fact that Man became conscious of himself with the sense of Good and Evil. But, of course, that spoiled everything and he could not stay there. He was driven out by his very consciousness; he could not stay there any longer.

Q: But were they driven out by Jehovah or by their own consciousness?

MOTHER: These are only two different ways of saying the same thing. According to me, all these old Scriptures and these old traditions have a graded content. (*Mother makes a gesture showing levels of understanding.*) And depending on the period, the people, the need, one symbol or another has been drawn from them and used. But there is a time when one goes beyond all these things and one sees them from what Sri Aurobindo calls 'the other hemisphere', where one recognises that these are only figures of speech to make a contact, a kind of bridge, a link, between the lower way of seeing and the higher way of knowing.

And the people who discuss and say to you 'Ah no! This is like this, and this is like this' — there is a time when that appears so funny, so funny! And just that, that spontaneous response of so many people 'Oh! That is impossible!' Just that word is so comical! Because the least, I can even say the most elementary, intellectual development makes you know that you could not even think it if it were not possible!

(*Silence*)

Oh! if one could find it again, but how?

In reality, they have ruined the earth, they have ruined it — they have ruined the atmosphere, they have ruined everything! And for the atmosphere to become again what it should be, oh! there is a long way to go — above all psychologically. But even, even the structure of matter (*Mother feels the air around her with her hands*) with their bombs and their experiments, oh! they have made a mess of all that! They have really made a mess of matter.

Probably — no, not probably, it is quite certain, that it was necessary to crush it, to churn it, to prepare it so that it would be able to receive *that*, the new thing which is not yet manifested.

It was very simple and very harmonious and very luminous, but not complex enough. And it is the complexity which has spoiled everything, but which will lead to a realisation which is infinitely more conscious, infinitely. And then, when the earth becomes as harmonious, as simple, luminous, as pure; simple, pure, purely divine — with this complexity,... then it will be possible to do something.

(At the time of leaving, Mother notices a canna flower of brilliant crimson.)

In fact, there were many flowers like that in the landscape of the earthly paradise, red, so beautiful!

11.3.1961

FROM SRI AUROBINDO TO ESHA

LETTERS TO A CHILD

These letters were written in Bengali by Sri Aurobindo to Dilip Kumar Roy's niece, Esha. She was about six or seven years old when she came to the Ashram with her parents — most probably in 1930. She was the first child who received letters from Sri Aurobindo in Bengali. As will be seen from them, the Mother and Sri Aurobindo took special interest in her and considered her an extraordinary girl.

10-5-1935

It isn't necessary that one should leave home in order to call the Mother. One can do it remaining at home. Besides, the Mother doesn't like what you want to do in this connection. Because you are very young, you'll not be able to do it but you'll only suffer. And the Mother doesn't want that you should suffer in any way.

No, it's much better that you remember the Mother within you, call her, in all circumstances, whether happy or unhappy, pray for her nearness, her help, her protection.

If you do that, then everything will be achieved.

*
**

13-5-1935

I don't know when you'll be able to come again — perhaps your father won't let you return so soon, don't be sad about it. Remember the Mother always, she will be always with you. Let this firm faith be awake in you that she is always with you and protecting you. You will try for three months, and if there are no results after that you will give up: that's not right. The main thing is: remember her and call her, however long it may take; as you go on doing it you will become conscious, feel that she is with you, and also see her.

*
**

14-5-1935

I am replying to your letter in Bengali. From now on I will do so. It is difficult to say what will happen in the future, but I hope that circumstances will be such that you will be able to come back to have darshan before long. Till then remember us and wait. The closer our inner relation becomes, the greater will be the possibility of your life being fulfilled.

*
**

17-5-1935

It is better for you not to go to a house where no one calls the Divine. But if you are sent there, even then call the Mother. If you can't do it any other way, do as you do now, silently in your mind — in such a way that nobody will understand or know. Then you will get the result of your calling the Mother.

*
**

28-5-1935

I have got three letters from you, but as I was busy with many things I couldn't answer them — today I am answering all the three together. It was known that it wouldn't be possible for you to come for darshan this time, it can't be easy to come twice within this short time. Don't be sorry, remain calm and remember the Mother, gather faith and strength within. You are a child of the Divine Mother, be tranquil, calm and full of force. There is no special procedure. To take the name of the Mother, to remember her within, to pray to her, all this may be described as calling the Mother. As it comes from within you, you have to call her accordingly. You can do also this — shutting your eyes you can imagine that the Mother is in front of you or you can sketch a picture of her in your mind and offer her your pranam, that obeisance will reach her. When you've time, you can meditate on her with the thinking attitude that she is with you, she's sitting in front of you. Doing these things people at last get to see her. Accept my blessings, I send the Mother's blessings also at the same time. From time to time Jyotirmoyee will take blessing flowers during pranam and send them to you.

*
**

16-6-35

I've got your two letters. Remember what I wrote to you when you were here and remember the Mother with a calm mind, call her. At the beginning one sees the Mother by shutting one's eyes, can hear her words within oneself, but even that does not happen easily. Man sees the external form, hears external words and sounds — only what he sees and hears with his outer senses, that alone he sees and hears. To see or hear anything else is difficult for him, but the capacity for inner vision and hearing has to be opened, one has to try for it, it takes time. If it doesn't happen in the beginning, don't be sad. The Mother will always love you and remember you, one day you will have her vision and hear her voice. Don't be sorry, invoke the Mother's peace and force within you, you will feel her nearness by that.

*
**

26-12-1935

I haven't been able to write to you though I wanted to. Work doesn't become less, in fact there is always more of it, — if there is less work of one kind, others pile up. While I'm trying to finish all this the night gets over; after that there is no time left to write letters [to anyone] outside the Ashram. It's the same today also, still I'm writing.

I see that both you and your mother have been very ill. I hope this won't happen again and all that has come to an end. This has happened in many places, here and also in the case of many sadhaks in Bengal. It hasn't been easy to control the situation and bring it to an end.

No, I am not angry with you, why should I be? Our love for you is undiminished, it will always remain so.

There is no time to write anything more, I shall do so later. Accept our blessings.

(To be continued)

“O DIVINE AND ADORABLE MOTHER...”

No words can tell down what enkindled ways
 Those unassuming footsteps earthward fare —
 What mysteries inviolate make her bear
 Beauty like benediction on her face!
 In vain the wilful, visionary soar.
 O not by keen conceiving is she known:
 Our very self must mingle with her own!
 Descend, O seer, from your majestic top
 Of azure contemplation, learn to implore,
 With sightless awe and memory of sin,
 Disclosure of the unutterable Grace
 Whose image is her blissful countenance!
 Enclasp her feet in prostrate ignorance,
 With simple love sweeter than prayer or praise,
 Till, from the measureless vacancy within,
 A holy gleam is shed on the dark gaze,
 And the still heart drinks heaven drop by drop ...

AMAL KIRAN

SWEET MOTHER

A TALK BY NOLINI

This is the latest of the series of talks given by Nolini at the Hall of Harmony in the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education.

THE pressure from above has been withdrawn and normalcy restored to the earth-consciousness.

Pressure meant a separation: something foreign acting from elsewhere, an interference. As a process, a passage needed for a time, for a special purpose and under special circumstances, it was necessary and welcome. But circumstances have changed.

The higher consciousness is not to remain always high but become level with the normal. Either the higher must come down and mingle totally with the lower or the lower has to rise and merge altogether into the higher, or both meet and unite midway somewhere.

Earth or material nature does not easily tolerate anything unknown and foreign to it. Even if it is for its own well-being, a foreign touch makes it shrink and turn on itself. It is even painful for it to bear. In the end the earth is not to be goaded on or driven along: it has to go on its own. It must depend entirely on itself, bring out what it carries within itself or has acquired or stored. It has to outgrow its childhood or apprenticeship, the period when an intelligent amount of pressure or even coercion might be needed or inevitable. But that stage passed, the higher realisation is to be the natural expression of ordinary earth-life: its normal state is to be the state of the higher consciousness, its life naturally moved by its self-nature expressing its own truth.

If there is to be a divine destiny for earth, it must be because of its free choice. There must be no pressure or even solicitude from any agent outside itself to compel it or force it that way. It must be a glad and spontaneous impulse from within to follow the line of destiny it has itself chosen.

As the original birth of Ignorance was a free choice of Ignorance, even so the return of Ignorance to consciousness is to be a matter of spontaneous self-seeking. It may be true or it is true in a deeper way that a mortal is chosen whom the Divine has already chosen, but that is another matter. Here upon earth we, mortal souls, are free agents, we choose or we do not choose.

In any case if one is to possess truly something one must acquire it by one's exertion and in one's complete liberty. A free gift or an imposition even of a precious object is always something foreign and unnatural to it. One must learn to love a thing in order to have it wholly for oneself, it must be made part and parcel of one's being. And true love can exist only in free choice.

Latterly the Mother was saying whenever the question of the descent of supermind was raised that there was no descent any longer: for, the thing has descended and it is here, it is no more a question of descent, that is to say, something arriving from

elsewhere that was not here before. At present it is simply the question of manifestation of the thing that is with us and among us.

At one time Mother was asking for, even pleading for collaboration from the material nature. It was accorded in principle but in act it was found wanting. Now the tables are turned. The earth-consciousness has now to ask for, pray for collaboration from the Divine. The material consciousness has to come forward and take the lead and play the frontal role in the working out of the evolution. The collaboration of her physical body has been withdrawn, in order to leave us free in our physical movements so that we may learn to labour and labour in full freedom for the service expected of us. We say she has withdrawn herself, that is to say, in her physical body, but she is still there, and her being there, her very existence is force, a helping force and that is collaboration enough and is always at our disposal.

Now at present it all depends how much the earth consciousness has received, imbibed or assimilated of the Divine Presence. That will be the measure of the fulfilment human being can achieve. As much as we earth-creatures feel and express of the higher reality, that much we shall become truly and divinely. If we continue to be the old stock with no or little change, well, we shall have to wait perhaps for another million years.

It would mean for us naturally a change of dress for good many a time perhaps. There seems to be no other way. But a change of dress is inevitable and should be welcome, for kept on too long it would stink. A dip in the Vaitarani or Acheron (if we happen to be in Greece) would be wholesome. There is however always the possibility of a miracle happening: to this Mother was referring very often. In that case you might learn to change, to renew yourselves in the inner way, even like the Vedic cows: as the Rishi says — *Paliknirid yuvatayo bhavanti* — even those of them who were grey with age became young again. (Rigveda V. 2.4)

Naturally it does not matter at all to the Divine, the supreme consciousness — the whole eternity is his play-field, a million years this way or that do not count for Him anything.

And yet we are human beings and we can have other vistas equally divine.

The Mother became a human being like us as totally as possible for that purpose, to shorten the million years.

*
**

The Mother continues to do what is necessary under the circumstances and perhaps more, she has not stopped her work. But the most crucial thing and the most critical — turning the corner — has been done. Sri Aurobindo has spoken of it in memorable words — we know the passage in *The Mother* — I quote the lines and conclude:

“The Mother not only governs all from above but she descends into this lesser triple universe. Impersonally, all things here, even the movements of the Ignorance,

are herself in veiled power and her creations in diminished substance, her Nature-body and Nature-force, and they exist because, moved by the mysterious fiat of the Supreme to work out something that was there in the possibilities of the Infinite, she has consented to the great sacrifice and has put on like a mask the soul and forms of the Ignorance. But personally too she has stooped to descend here into the Darkness that she may lead it to the Light, into the Falsehood and Error that she may convert it to the Truth, into this Death that she may turn it to godlike Life, into this world-pain and its obstinate sorrow and suffering that she may end it in the transforming ecstasy of her sublime Ananda. In her deep and great love for her children she has consented to put on herself the cloak of this obscurity, condescended to bear the attacks and torturing influences of the powers of the Darkness and the Falsehood, borne to pass through the portals of the birth that is a death, taken upon herself the pangs and sorrows and sufferings of the creation, since it seemed that thus alone could it be lifted to the Light and Joy and Truth and eternal Life. This is the great sacrifice called sometimes the sacrifice of the Purusha, but much more deeply the holocaust of Prakriti, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother.”

WHITHER THE DRIVE OF YOUR FEET?

How long will you wait, poor man, by the Vast's shore,
 Clutching the rails, dreading the call of the ocean?
 Tell tall challenging tales with a confident roar,
 Yet coward of faith waver with weak commotion?

Or with your legs in two boats you enter water,
 For safety you hold to material supports,
 Your yearning yawns, your trustless emotions totter,
 Soul gasps for breath, head doubts, heart temptation courts!

You stupidly think none knows your dirty deeds
 You try to cover up with your clever show,
 With your lust-indulgences, your money-greeds
 You are defenceless against the fell hostile blow.

Whither your deeds? Whither the drive of your feet?
 How long will you, weak-willed, shun the Mother Sweet?

SOME MEMORIES OF THE MOTHER

I

WITH the Mother's ninety-seventh birthday coming on February 21, 1975, it is natural that I should look back on the forty-six years during which I knew her. I first saw her on December 16, 1927, and the last look was on November 20, 1973, the day she was laid in the teak-wood casket and placed in the same vault as Sri Aurobindo, both of them making a common "Samadhi" in the courtyard of the Ashram they had built up and loved and set floating like a dream-ship on the uncharted waters of the unknown Supermind. Already I have written about her in many an essay, just as I have done about Sri Aurobindo; but there is always more to remember of a personality that had such a multitude of diamond-facets and such depth beyond depth of light. The memories may seem trivial at times, yet there is ever a revelatory touch in all that the Mother said or did, a glint of the Spirit's gold through all the small currency of daily word or deed.

I shall begin with a jest which she would have been the first to appreciate. For, the Mother was full of wit and her eyes never failed to sparkle when anybody was quick and keen in mind. Let me say then that, while we have heard of her four great aspects — Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati — very few have heard of the Mother as "Maha-Examiner". And by this new name I do not mean her all-seeing, all-probing, all-evaluating, all-classifying consciousness in dealing with our yoga from day to day. The four great aspects would sufficiently cover it. I mean "Maha-Examiner" in a very literal sense: one who, because of her great standing in Aurobindonian knowledge, is appointed to examine a thesis written by a student of Sri Aurobindo's vision and work. A certain Indian University once sent her an M.A.-thesis to scrutinise and adjudge, and it offered her a remuneration of Rs. 50 for the task. The Mother accepted the assignment.

In advance of the thesis, she had received a letter from the student. He said in effect: "My work was not considered up to the mark last year. I have been made to toil at it again. I have done my best. But I don't know my fate. I am a whole-hearted admirer of Sri Aurobindo and I would have written more enthusiastically, but my overseer is not well inclined towards the Master. So please read more into my expression than you see." The Mother was touched by the fellow's bad luck the preceding year as well as by his good-will towards Sri Aurobindo. She took the trouble to go through his introductory note, where he had set forth the scheme and the scope of his disquisition. The disquisition was meant to be a survey of the entire range of the admirable Aurobindonian achievement in writing. The Mother liked the ambitious piety of this intention. Having done what she deemed necessary on her side, she handed me the bound volume of nearly 250 typed pages and said: "Read this and make your report. I shall sign it. But let me tell you from the start that I have made up my mind to pass the student."

I was tickled by her statement, but also stimulated by the glimpse it gave me of her unconventional attitude, her unacademic approach and the happy audacity of her decisions. I smiled and she smiled back.

Immediately I got down to reading the thesis. I found it moderately good in several parts but absolutely off the track wherever Sri Aurobindo's metrics were concerned. The writer knew nothing of metre and yet laid down the law. The mistakes were grotesque. In other matters too there were errors to correct. But, by and large, one could pass the lengthy treatment of Sri Aurobindo's versatile genius. I wrote out a favourable report of four pages for the University Board and a far longer private piece for the student himself so that he might rectify the numerous howlers before publishing the work in book-form after obtaining his degree. My shorter report was read out to the Mother. It had a passage on technical points of English poetry. She said: "I don't know English prosody. So I couldn't have written this passage." I generalised and abbreviated my remarks and brought the passage within the Mother's acceptance. She signed the report. Then I said: "Mother, what about your fee, the fifty rupees?" She sharply replied: "I don't care for them. Do you want them for yourself?" I rose to the occasion: "Not at all."

There ended the world-manifestation of Maha-Examiner. But the free, bold and compassionate spirit shown in it was at play elsewhere too in different forms. Once I came across a street-hawker who had baby fountain-pens in various colours, each worth the equivalent of the present 25 paise. I bought up half a dozen and, filling them with inks to match their colours, presented them to the Mother. She tried out one of them on a large, white, thick piece of paper, executing a fascinating "doodle" of lines and curves in green like a complicated Mandala. She signed it, put on it the date and gave it to me. The multi-inked pens were taken upstairs to her room and the next day she expressed her pleasure in them, even telling people: "See how beautifully these cheap little things of Amal work while your big pens give all sorts of trouble." It was arranged that when the ink got finished I should be handed the pens to refill. The day of refilling never came. For, after four days of joyous scribbling, the Mother got her hands full of ink! The pens started leaking profusely.

On our subsequent meeting, the Mother made a wry face and said: "It took me nearly two hours to wash the ink off my fingers." I apologised. She gave a soft smile and the episode was over. But I wondered why it had occurred in the first place. Surely she must have known that these cheap pens were rejected goods and would prove treacherous in a short time. Champaklal offered the explanation: "It was not appreciation of the pens that made the Mother use them but her desire for an act of Grace towards Amal." I can hit upon no other explanation, though why at that particular moment she wanted to bestow her Grace I have no idea.

It is certain that she could go out of her way to be gracious to poor inept fools. I for one had been allowed to stay on at noon after all the others who used to be around her from about 9 a.m. up to 12 had gone home. At that hour she would go behind a small screen for her lunch with Pranab and I would wait in the passage near the stairs.

I could hear all the talk she had with Pranab during lunch. I would in the meantime write little notes to her, tiptoe to a table in the proximity of the screen and put my chits under a glass paperweight. On finishing her lunch she would pass by that table, pick up the letters and go to her bathroom through a backdoor and, after a while, come out from the door in the passage where I sat. She would stop and talk and then retire for a bit of afternoon rest. On one occasion I thought of spending my time in Sri Aurobindo's room nearby instead of sitting in the passage. I forgot myself there. Suddenly I realised that someone was outside the door of the room. I turned: it was the Mother. Not finding her disciple at his usual spot she had guessed where he had disappeared and come in search of him to give him the smile and the blessing-tap he so little deserved. The disciple was overwhelmed with gratitude. He rushed out and kneeled at her feet.

Most considerate though the Mother again and again was, it would be a mistake to think she could never be stern. But a still greater mistake would it be to misunderstand her sternness. Every act of hers was an act of Grace and aimed only at the development of one's soul. The Mother had no egoistic reaction, no personal interest to serve, no wish for any gratification of self. What she was stern towards was petty desire in us, our forgetfulness of the grand purpose for which we were in the Ashram.

Early in 1954 I was staying on the ground-floor of a fine spacious building. On the upper floor were two other disciples. When they went to stay elsewhere, I wanted, before new sadhaks could come, to move downstairs a large swing which was on the verandah above mine. At Pranam time I gave the Mother a little note in which I expressed my request for the swing. I never thought there was anything wrong here. But, reading it, she made an angry face and then asked in a withering tone: "You want a swing for yourself?"

I was taken aback. She who had looked to all the comfort of my wife Sehra and me was now a Goddess of Terror over so trivial a plea on my part. At once I said: "No, Mother, no. I want nothing. I am sorry." Flaming Mahakali turned into calm Maheshwari and blessed me. Within my heart I came to realise that the high aim with which I had just come back to the Ashram for a permanent stay after an absence of several years had been cut across by this silly move towards self-indulgence. The actual matter was fairly innocuous and, under other circumstances, my request might easily have been granted. But it must have marked a momentous point in the poise of the consciousness. Sri Aurobindo has said that sometimes in Yoga what might seem the loss of a mere postern-gate might spell the surrender of the whole fort: nothing in Yoga is trivial or negligible — especially at a critical instant. We cannot ordinarily see into the heart of an occasion. But the Mother could and for her to allow an instant of Yogic oblivion would mean a lapse of her Grace.

Yogic oblivion could come in many shapes. Perhaps the most startling that ever came to me had nothing to do with any greed or lust or anger. It came one evening in the early 1930's when, along with some others, I was waiting on the north pavement of the Ashram block for the Mother to return from her usual car-drive. Just for a few

twinkles of the eye I forgot that I was in the Ashram and doing Yoga. As soon as awareness was back I found myself utterly shut in heart and mind: no touch of devotion, no stir of aspiration, just a sense of darkness in the whole being. Later I asked the Mother how this could be. She answered: "Suppose you are on a battlefield and you forget that fact. Do you realise what would happen to you? In the life of Yoga it is the same."

Of course, this does not signify that one has always to be on pins and can never be "A spirit sliding through tranquillity". The Mother always tried to make our lives as smooth and easy as possible and concentrate all the rigours of Yoga in herself so as to give us the shining fruit and spare us the struggle and the pain. But certain crises are unavoidable and now and again one has to make a stand and fight or have the consciousness that, as an Upanishad puts it, "sharp as the razor's edge is the path."

To revert to more pleasant subjects. A peep into the unusual state of subtle perception in which the Mother lived was once had by us when at the end of the morning's meeting with us and interviews with people she started to walk towards the stairs leading up to her room on the second floor. Before she had gone a dozen steps she stopped. She was looking down at the carpet under her feet. We were curious to know what had happened. So we inquired. She turned round and said: "Suddenly this carpet which has been lying here for years asked, 'How do you find me?' I replied, 'I find you very nice indeed.'" At another time she told us that in the room where we used to meet her the furniture had at last got into the right relative positions and there was a harmonious consciousness in it which should not be disturbed.

Passing words but holding truths for a life-time fell sometimes from the Mother during those wonderful mornings upstairs. On May 19, 1961, apropos of some topic which slips my mind, she stopped a minute before going up to her room and said: "I once told an occultist friend, 'There are many people who say they want to be independent. He at once remarked, 'That means they don't want to be loved.' I have never forgotten this. If you look into it, you will see much meaning."

As a supplement or complement to this nugget of wisdom we may recall some words of the Mother where she speaks not of being loved but of loving. The words run: "They always speak of the rights of love, but love's only right is the right of self-giving."

Perhaps we may best close this first instalment of memories with a pronouncement that affords us a brief insight into her own love for us. There was a disciple who got into a number of difficulties owing to his weak nature but he had a simple heart with a sort of helpless turn towards the Mother in all conditions. He voiced to her his doubt whether with all his defects he could continue to stay in the Ashram. She wrote back: "You are my son and I am your mother for eternity. Do not worry, I take the entire responsibility of your spiritual growth and you can live in the Ashram so long as you feel it your home and you sincerely consecrate yourself to the Divine's Work" (13-12-1966).

TWO DREAM-VISIONS

THE MATRIMANDIR

ON the 29th of October 1974, early in the morning, at about 6 a.m., I saw in a dream-vision the Matrimandir ready — beautiful — full of The Mother.

I saw many familiar faces. I particularly marked Nolini, Champaklal, Panditji of Rameshwaram and Laljibhai. They were holding flowers in their hands.

Everybody was moving and yet they were in a deep trance. The trance was absolutely effortless. The floor of the big hall was of marble, with various coloured designs in it.

The Mother's music was heard. It was not played from any recording instrument. It was as if The Mother had been directly playing it. It came from some far and high region of bliss.

It filled the entire hall where people were gathered and the music reverberated in the dome.

THE MOTHER

I saw The Mother between 2 and 3.30 a.m. on the 16th of November 1974. She spoke many things about the body's transformation. I cannot remember all of them. But She definitely said:

“The transformation of the body is not an impossibility and has to be done. I am working for it in order to make it a reality upon earth ...”

HUTA

A MESSAGE HEARD ON NOVEMBER 17, 1974

BEFORE PASSING IN A QUEUE THROUGH THE MOTHER'S ROOM

“Do not look for me only in my room. I have liberated myself from my human body. I am now everywhere.”

SEHRA

THE MOTHER AND THE CROW

AN EYE-WITNESS'S ACCOUNT

It was the August Darshan in the year 1945. The whole Ashram was vibrating with an inexpressible joy. It was my first visit to the Ashram for the Darshan of the Master and the Mother. On the very day of my arrival, after having the Mother's Balcony Darshan, the Morning Pranam and the Window Darshan we all gathered again in the Ashram courtyard for the Mother's Terrace Darshan at about 11.30 a.m. just before the lunch-hour in the Dining Room. To my utter surprise we humans were not the only beings present for the occasion.

A crow came speeding like a bullet and sat on the terrace-parapet near the door leading to the Mother's rooms on the first floor. I felt a pinch of envy in my heart when this little black creature received a biscuit direct from the Mother's hand. Holding the divine prize in its beak, it winged away in triumph.

For about a week or so the drama went on. Every day the crow came, sat at the same spot, received its gift and flew away triumphantly. But one day it came a couple of minutes late and by that time the Mother had started out for a walk on the second floor terrace. Just when she was about to climb up the stairs the crow, instead of going to the usual place, cleverly sat on the parapet right in front of her. The fortunate creature now received a caressing look from the Mother, followed even by a pat on its back. Then the Mother went up to the higher terrace, had her walk and returned downstairs. The crow was silently waiting for her.

The Mother asked someone inside the room to bring a biscuit. When the biscuit was brought to her, she gave it to the waiting winged sadhak with a touch of divine affection and perhaps with some secret message too. For, from the next day onwards the crow did not come. It must have received some soul-satisfying word for its future evolution.

A. VENKATARANGA

CHILD OF THE ONENESS

THE god Thoth assumed many functions in the religion of ancient Egypt. He was honoured as “the first of the Ennead”, the highest among the nine main Egyptian gods who are in reality one. As the sacred Ibis he hatched the world egg. As the divine scribe he gave a written form to the word of Amon, the supreme sun and truth-consciousness. And lower on the ladder of manifestation he was that part of our mind that receives the message: the intuitive illumined mind. But his most occult and important role was to lead the psychic being, which had passed through the gate of death, to its central being. For Thoth was also our psychic and cosmic memory, “the Keeper of the Records” and that part of our self which remembers our origin, the living gnosis in us. A very interesting papyrus now in the Cairo museum, of which the Sri Aurobindo Library has a copy, shows him standing under the divine eye, introducing the soul to its central being. Thus Thoth manifested under a variety of forms, but as the divine guide he preferred that of a monkey.

The central being towards which the god Thoth leads the soul was represented by Egyptian artists as a child sucking his finger — feeding himself on his own substance. Surrounded by the Serpent of the Infinite biting its tail, he was embraced by the One. This is the divine child, the golden child who never leaves the arms of the One. In him we rest and from him, from age to age, we take birth. The way to his wholeness and bliss has been explored and described from different perspectives and by different names since the beginning of man, but not how, on the return journey, to come back to the many without losing contact with the One.

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Up to now yoga has been exclusively, by one path or another, the inner practice of the union of our small separate consciousness with the all-consciousness of the One. But whatever the integrality of this realisation, it was never able to permeate and transform our external life to make it an image of the inner union. There was always a kind of unbridgeable abyss between appearance and the truth. As Sri Aurobindo has Satyavan say in *Savitri*:

“I looked upon the world and missed the Self,
And when I found the Self, I lost the world,
My other selves I lost and the body of God.”

To bridge the abyss, humanity had to wait for Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother started their life with the old yoga, which consists in going out of the multiplicity to find the One. But their yoga did not end there. They turned again towards manifestation and found and conquered a new dimension of consciousness, a new launching pad for a new world: the truth-consciousness, the

truth-relation between the One and the many. Now unity and multiplicity are no longer two opposite or even complementary realities. They are one reality and contain each other: the One is the soul of the multitude and the multitude is the soul of the One. This is the great liberation proposed to us in this new age. In an oral message given in 1960, the Mother formulated this new mode of existence which consists in remaining One while playing the many:

“Never forget from where you come
or who you are.
Always remember your eternity.
Everything which happens to you
you have willed to happen.
Nothing can surprise you.
You know where you are going.
The terrestrial play is a game
the Divine plays with himself.”

The bringing down of the truth-consciousness does not merely add a new segment to the road of evolution. It radically changes the conditions of the journey. It makes the road and its pilgrims infinite and eternal. It opens new vistas, new possibilities to manifestation. It transforms everything in such a way, said the Mother, that “even a dog will be able to see it”.

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Seven years after the supramental manifestation he came: the first being I ever met who had never lost the sense of his origin. He had not practised a strenuous yoga to reach this summit of consciousness, nor did he need to make an effort to keep it; it was his normal way of being and living. He was, according to the words of the Mother, “conscious of his divinity”. That is all. He simply had never lost it. He was one year old. And he was a monkey.

In my article in *Mother India*, November 1974, entitled “A Child of the Ashram”, I have already spoken about that South Indian Bonnet Macaque whose name was Thoth, that of the Egyptian god. What did this little pilgrim of eternity carry within him? In the most natural way the One and the universe, as a single being without any distinction or separation; and with it a kind of completeness and royalty; and, as a striking trait of his personality, an absoluteness in his knowledge and living memory of things even apparently far out in time. What we normally separate into inner and outer knowledge proceeded in him from the same movement: identity. Life and death, health and illness, psychology and sociology, plants, animals, men and gods were subjects in which he excelled. He could read movements of consciousness in beings and things with more clarity than we read sentences in a book, because of his capacity

to identify consciously with them. Some anecdotes will show him in his daily life.

One evening when we were taking a walk on the Cours Chabrol we met a lady of the Ashram whom Thoth had not seen before. She was smiling very sweetly while pushing her cycle beside her as in a dream. After asking my permission to approach her, Thoth gently stopped her cycle and climbed upon it. He could do it with such a perfect sense of equilibrium that the person holding the cycle would not feel his climbing. Once on the handle-bar he looked very tenderly into the lady's eyes. She was astonished and charmed by his manners. He touched her lightly, understandingly, and then descended as carefully as he had climbed up. In spite of her apparent good health and radiating smile, he knew she was going to die, and a few days later she left her body. Another time we paid a visit to one of our friends who had had a heart attack. She was sitting in a chair and welcomed us as usual. Thoth did not climb onto her knees as he would have done otherwise, but greeted her cheerfully to help her participate in his own vitality and strength. He could see the fragility of her condition and did not touch her. Though at times he could be quite mischievous and playful, never under any circumstances did he commit a *faux-pas* with anyone, and always he knew how to behave and to make himself understood. I remember the time when he put the hand of somebody holding a tangerine against his heart. The person asked: "Do you want my hand or the tangerine?" Ostensibly offended, he seized the tangerine and threw it away; then with a triumphant smile he again put the hand of that person on his heart. He could reach peaks of intensity that overwhelmed his partner, whether human or animal, with his certitude that they had known each other since the beginning of time and with such an authoritative tenderness and love as to leave the companion trembling with wonder at the visiting god.

One day for about twelve hours he refused to approach me. I did not know at that time that I had contracted the mumps and was already in the contagious stage, for I did not feel sick. Two or three weeks later the mumps entered into their visible phase, and then Thoth assured me that now I was not contagious any more and that the disease would take a mild form. He made me lie down and he put his two long feet on my ears. Three days later I resumed my normal activities. I informed the Mother of the event and she admired his attitude and his knowledge.

Once I asked the Mother why Thoth liked my paintings and drawings so much. My drawings specially fascinated him and he could watch me for hours while I was working on them. She explained that in spite of their abstract appearance my drawings represented very concrete movements of consciousness that Thoth thoroughly enjoyed. The only time he interfered with my artistic activities was when I put my signature at the bottom of one of my paintings; Thoth found it out of place and scratched it off with his finger nails.

The tests a selected Tibetan boy has to undergo to be recognized as the new Dalai Lama are based on ESP faculties. Different objects which are considered in the Orient as personal, like a rice bowl, a prayer bell, etc. are put in front of the child, who has to be able to identify those belonging to the previous Dalai Lama of whom he is supposed

to be a reincarnation. Thoth invented and passed his own test during one of our visits to the Sri Aurobindo Library. It was night, and all the lights were off as we were looking through the telescope standing on the lower terrace. Thoth, at the end of a long leash, was playing on the adjacent veranda. When we started home I noticed that he had something in his hand. It was a stone. In the darkness, among twenty or more different stones kept on the reading tables and shelves as paper weights, he had picked up one: the only one which had been given by the Mother to the library and had originally come from the Ganga. For several years he kept the stone in his cage and sometimes slept with it.

On the occasion of the visit of Srimat Parijnanashram, Swamiji of Chitrapur Math of Shirali, and his entourage, who wanted to see "the monkey of Sri Aurobindo Ashram", Thoth made use of his extraordinary capacities to entertain everybody. Srimat made his offering of fruits which Thoth accepted through me as intermediary, and Srimat and Thoth looked each other over thoroughly for a long time. Then Thoth turned his attention towards the entourage of Srimat and smiled enthusiastically at somebody hidden at the back. The others drew apart so the object of his welcome could come to the front. She returned his salute. "Yes," she said, "my name is Mrs. Monkey."

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Thoth enjoyed a direct access to and participation in the treasures of human civilisation. He could demonstrate surprisingly the ancient Greek dances of the bacchantes, the hieratic gestures of ancient Egypt and the filial salutations to the statues of Indian divinities, as well as improvise his own dances to the music of Bach.

During the months when I explored the world of perfumes, Thoth insisted on sleeping every night with a piece of cloth impregnated with one of them. Each fragrance awoke his curiosity. But some were magical to him and induced entranced states of consciousness. Some day we will have to take possession again of this immense kingdom of odours, scents and perfumes with its endless power of expression and communication and its capacity to speak directly to the psychic being. But man has neglected and forgotten this sense, acquired by evolving life long before sight. Years after our common experiment with odours seemed to be over, Thoth asked one day for an old garment of mine impregnated with my perfume. It was the day he was going to die.

Thoth had at his disposal a kind of scientific method of testing precisely and systematically step by step on his own body the effects of a new food or plant. He first analysed it by smell and only if it passed this test he touched it lightly with his tongue. Then he seemed to discard it for a moment. But he came back and cautiously took an infinitesimal piece of it. He waited again for a while for any effect to become perceptible before he decided he could eat a more sizable bit. Then he gave his final verdict, either by eating it with a lot of approving noises and appropriate facial expressions or by throwing it far away as in a tantrum of anger — thus showing dramatically that the leader of the tribe had tested and judged the food good or dangerous for everybody.

The rejection might come a few seconds after the beginning of the test, as once with a very highly-advertised biscuit, and when six months later he was given that biscuit again he immediately recognised and condemned it with the same gesture.

Thoth had the capacity of a great teacher to pass his experiences and his states of consciousness on to other people. One night he was deep in contemplation of the garden and he quietly invited me to look at it with him. At first I saw only darkness. Then suddenly the sleeping garden started to dream. Everything was softly lit from within, animated and flooded by a single vibration of life which set off humming fire-works of joy and hung perfumed festival garlands from branch to branch. Each leaf had its own asana and power of reflection of the inner luminosity and delight. The change from the garden I knew to this one so alive with its waving arms and hands dancing like multiple flags and flames at the signal of a wonderful heart, was as great as from a stone to a diamond.

Another night we were sitting on the terrace when he showed me the moon as it appeared to him. In Egypt the god Thoth wore it on his head as Shiva does. It was floating towards us like a cradle of time in which all our meetings — past, present and future — all our lives and the whole universe were blooming again and again. And though these events happened only once, we are still living them for ever there on the beach of eternity.

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In spite of his adoption of human 'culture', Thoth remained fiercely a monkey. And if he manifested comprehension and compassion, he never showed any attraction to or special respect for our human condition.

His main preoccupation and work was with his animal brothers and sisters, whom he loved very much without any trace of sentimentality. Wild monkeys came occasionally to visit him. Though much older than he, they treated him like a king, studying each of his gestures and trying to imitate him. Even the most sleepy or indifferent cow along the street turned her head and looked intently at him when we happened to pass by. Thoth called out a personal greeting to every dog crossing the Cours Chabrol under his windows. And in spite of my fear of their bringing contagious diseases, rats came into his cage to die at his feet.

His complicity with rats culminated in the most fairy-like festival I had ever witnessed. The anniversary of his meeting with the Mother was approaching, and he was radiating with a joy that he communicated to everybody. This anniversary remained for him the greatest event in the year. The eve of the blessed day had come, and it was about 10.30 at night when he silently called me. On the parapet of our balcony a fantastic show was going on: a ballet of rats. In the dim light coming from the veranda they were dancing, jumping, forming figures. One of them detached himself from the group and jumped into the cage carrying something. It was an offering to Thoth, a well-chosen delicacy that I normally refused him because of his tendency to put on weight: Ashram bread. It was a perfectly intact slice stolen from God-knows-

where. Thoth was extremely fond of bread, and he uttered a note of happiness and gratitude and started eating the slice while the show was going on.

The greatest festival of all happened in December 1972, a few months after Thoth had left his body, but it was not in the field of our ordinary physical vision. I was coming down from the Mother's room, and it was almost like descending from the One to the many. When I arrived under the arches of the meditation hall I saw the sunny courtyard full of a silent and vivid crowd. The whole army of Hanuman was there, with King Sugriva and many monkey chiefs mixing with the sadhaks of the Ashram, all offering their dedicated service in the great battle of the future against the past. At the same time I felt that the battle was already won and everybody was enjoying a victorious mood where extreme alertness was maintained but turned happily towards new conquests.

In 1970, Thoth adopted 'Plato', a six-months-old Lion-tailed Macaque from Kerala, as his chosen successor for the continuation of his work, and set about passing on to him all the knowledge he possessed and showing him how to enter freely into the future. For a door had opened, and in a mysterious way the liberation of the animal had begun.

The new yoga leading from the One to the many without losing contact with the One, that Thoth demonstrated with the greatest ease, was combined in him with a yoga so old and so fundamental that it must have been pre-human, the awakening of the latent capacity of the many to remember the One. This non-verbal and non-mental yoga was based on the simple natural knowledge that everything flows from and to the One, that all is One and all is all. In the course of evolution this diffused knowledge started flowering, first on the animal level and then on the human level, into the yoga of the warrior, the chief and the king. To be a leader of his family or tribe a monkey must be first in everything and specially in the capacity to embrace in his consciousness those depending on him. He has to know at each moment what they do and what they need and to take care of their psychological and physical fitness and happiness. He is the conscious oneness of their multiplicity. As an animal alpha, Thoth possessed this global consciousness of his environment. And most of the monkeys who are leaders of a strongly organised tribe would be able to accomplish some of Thoth's deeds — though not all. The yoga of the chief was later put into a human code of practice and became the raja yoga, the yoga of the king; while the old primeval knowledge degenerated into magical formulas. The genius of Thoth was to be able to link this ancient yoga to the latest revelation of Sri Aurobindo, not in a mental but in a practical way. He showed that from the all-is-all of our pre-mental ancestors to the all-in-all of the truth-consciousness, there might be billions of years of evolution but also a direct access due to a special topological configuration of space-time, an overlapping of time-zones making it possible for earth's ancient wisdom and joy to enter directly into the new age without having to go through intermediary human realisations. The serpent of life has bitten its tail; the whole of life can become divine.

The revolution in my anthropocentric, yoga-centred, education-centred life caused by Thoth's coming can hardly be imagined. For what is the meaning of our educational endeavour if an animal, a monkey, can know what he chooses to know without being taught? And what is the merit of our discipline and asceticism if a monkey can possess the siddhis and stand on the side of truth without tapasya?

We cannot understand it as long as our consciousness is still turned in the old direction, according to the old perspective which sees the universe under the conditions of separation and ignorance. But there is another perspective in which everything flows from the supreme truth and bliss and simply manifests. As the Mother said in 1956: "We have completed the turn. We are on the other side." "A new world is born." In this new world, education means no longer learning but being, becoming, knowing by identification. Yoga means no longer the solitary finding of our way back to the One, but the incarnation of total space and time in each of our movements, uniting the two conquests — from the many to the One and from the One to the many — into a single adventure of consciousness; for as the Mother wrote in her last message: "When you are conscious of the whole world at the same time, then you can become conscious of the Divine." And the golden child of our dreams and legends has the capacity, newly activated in man, to maintain his divinity when he passes through the gate of birth. A little monkey had come to show that now it is possible.

If the old gods agree to change, if Thoth (who, it seems, has already agreed) takes a next step in his legendary role, then, after having led the soul of man for millions of years inwards to the plenitude of his central being, he will also show him the way outwards from his central being to his true manifestation and how to descend the golden stairs of life while remaining the child of the One.

In this new direction taken by terrestrial life every child can be the golden child. And if enough children succeed in doing so, man will become new man and earth a paradise again. But it is not a ready-made gift. Just as so many generations of yogis have paved the way first traced by the avatar towards the realisation of the One, so now the way from the One towards a divine manifestation must be paved by generations of children.

One day when the Mother was speaking about my responsibility in education I spontaneously replied: "Mother, I don't believe in education." She laughed, delighted. And as she laughed we saw them coming, "crowding down the amber stairs of birth; Forerunners of a divine multitude ...", the children of the new age, our own children of the earth of today, direct descendants of the One, conscious by birthright of their divinity. I asked her: "Will it be exceptional, for only a few blessed ones?" And she answered: "It is true for all children." We looked at their coming for a long time and she added:

"Pourvu qu'on ne me les abîme pas! ..."

"Provided they do not cripple them! ..."

YVONNE ARTAUD

THE MOTHER'S PRESENCE

OURS is a time of testing. It is as though the Integral Yoga had reached a threshold where old and new meet, where there is a pause inviting us to take stock and to re-examine our motives, our sincerity and our understanding.

Since the Mother's withdrawal from the gross physical a new situation has arisen, her help, advice and encouragements being no longer available in the same manner as before. We have to do without the much-treasured support of her physical presence on which we greatly depended and which many of us took for granted. In the face of this should our reaction not be to carry on in renewed dedication, deepened devotion and faith trusting in the Mother's continued guidance and protection?

The question is whether a new situation such as we are encountering now does not call for a new response, one that does not aim solely to intensify our previous endeavours but to imbue them with new meaning and purpose. If this is so, a quantitative increase of our sadhanic efforts along habitual lines, although necessary, is not sufficient. The same holds of attempts to widen our activities or move at greater speed if, at the same time, we do not try to enliven our yoga with fresh qualities and insights that give access to greater depth of experience and awareness.

A threshold symbolises the juncture of two planes, in our case two planes of being. As such it stands for a continuation of what has gone before as well as a break and a new beginning. It is up to us either to remain stationary in the old awareness or to venture across the threshold to explore new territory and face new challenges.

Our main task within the framework of the Integral Yoga, as we know, is to lend support and to give ourselves wholly to a mode of acute interpenetration of the seemingly opposing worlds of Matter and Spirit. For the first time in human history, this has become possible through the lives and work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The new challenge that confronts us now is to fulfil the sacred task without the support of the physical presence of either Sri Aurobindo or the Mother. Does the Integral Yoga itself contain a teaching of how to meet this challenge?

Two main processes of transformation carry the Integral Yoga along its path of perfection. Although they belong to two different planes of existence they are closely related, one giving meaning and support to the other. Both are triple processes; one is the mental, vital and physical change, the other the psychic, spiritual and supramental transformation. It seems tempting to assume that the first constitutes the pre-condition or fore-runner without which the second cannot get under way. In actual practice it is found that events do not favour such a clear-cut and rational order. The sequence this dual process of change follows is not only determined by the individual in whom it unfolds but there is such a close interdependence of these two movements that, as Sri Aurobindo tells us, neither is complete without the other. What is experienced is a sequential working spaced out in time as well as a simultaneous action effecting both. Sometimes it is the one that demands our attention sometimes the other, the mainspring of the inner happenings always being to arrive at a complete

mastery of the Spirit and, with this aim in view, to allow this intricate process of transformation to unfold and to further its growth by an integral surrender to it.

Occasionally Sri Aurobindo uses the term psychicisation for the change and ascent of the mental, vital and physical and reserves the term spiritualisation or spiritual change for the descent of the spiritual and supramental into the lower nature. This gives us a clue as to where to look for the point of contact at which these two processes become linked. They meet and interfuse in the soul and through it in the psychic being; for it is here that the rays of light from the higher plane are received and, as it were, transmuted and transmitted to our human condition. In fact the psychic transformation shows itself to be the central instrumentation crucial to both transformatory processes; in other words it belongs to both. Thus the pre-condition for an integral change of our nature is the 'coming to the fore' of the psychic being, so that it may become the determining factor in our lives, just as its opening affords a channel for the descent from above. Furthermore, Sri Aurobindo is insistent that in the Integral Yoga the awakening of the psychic being is intimately related to, if not in actual fact identical with, the experience 'of the vision and sense of the Mother everywhere'.

Psychicisation, in the sense Sri Aurobindo gives it, not only includes but wholly depends on our active and devoted surrender to the Divine Mother. This holds the key for both the ascent and the descent, the raising of our nature as well as the influx into us of higher modes of consciousness.

We cannot doubt that the Mother's bodily presence amongst us and our close contact with her was instrumental not only in awakening the psychic being in many of us but in keeping it open and to the fore thanks mainly to the chance of a constant or periodical renewal of that personal touch. In other words the consecration and activation of our psychic being derived their impetus and staying power to a high degree from this physical closeness that imparted itself also to the atmosphere of both the Ashram and Auroville. We were enabled to recharge almost at will and bathe in the Mother's all-penetrating fluidum. This particular source of energy having been withdrawn on the physical plane, does it follow that the psychic being has been deprived of its accustomed life-giving nourishment?

Past experiences and realisations are only creatively alive in the present if they have wrought a lasting change in the depth of our being determining our present as well as our future attitude and response to life. When this has happened they become independent of the material circumstances that gave them birth precisely because they have become an integral part of our nature on all levels including the physical and material. Yet a purely subjective, mental, emotional and vital realisation of this fact, though helpful, is not enough, for, as Sri Aurobindo shows, it is incomplete. It must be supplemented by an objective realisation because a one-sidedly subjective approach to the sadhana is, by its very nature, dependent upon physical conditions. An objective approach, on the other hand, breaks this dependence, for its pre-condition is a change in our physical consciousness. This change which is both an opening and a widening clears the way to that integral and central realisation of the physical presence of the

Mother being potentially and experientially in us. What is the instrumentation necessary to make this a living reality?

Sri Aurobindo speaks of an ever progressive inner law of our action that alone sustains successfully and securely the intricate process of the Integral Yoga. This inner law stems from, and is dynamically maintained by, the interplay of two factors. The psychic being calling upwards and inwards, yearning to receive and to be filled, and the Power of the Divine Mother, the Divine Shakti, as the responding and all-penetrating descending force.

Sri Aurobindo calls the psychic being the leader or the priest of the sacrifice, for it presides over the intricate ritual of the progressive sacrifice of our ego-dominated nature. Its sacrificial fire clears the way for the action of the Divine Shakti, the Mother's Force which, according to our preparedness, liberates us from the yoke of a mainly subjective and ego-centred outlook on life. With this one of the most cruel but potent illusions inherent in such a life becomes dispelled; the illusion that only physical and bodily nearness and contact can overcome the isolation and separation the material world imposes upon us. From the very first the Shakti acts objectively on mind, life and body alike, gradually transforming our mental, vital and physical awareness. In the process we learn that the sense of physical closeness and intimacy is not and cannot be dependent on fixed locations in time and space but can be experienced genuinely and lastingly if filled and carried by the dynamic interaction of psychic being and Shakti.

The Shakti can manifest in many ways, as peace and strength in the vital, as devotion and love in the heart, as knowledge and insight in the mind, as joy and bliss in the entire being. Could it be that we have reached a point in the Integral Yoga where its aspect of force has become of paramount importance? The Shakti as the creative power of the Divine knows no limitations; it acts on the individual, the cosmic as well as the transcendental level and it does so because it constitutes the very essence of all existence: pure consciousness. Veiled, obscured and often unrecognised, it is present in us and the universe as a conscious force; in other words it has two main aspects, awareness and force. This in our Yoga is a crucial fact, for, as Sri Aurobindo makes it clear beyond doubt, we need both; the conscious awareness of the Mother's force as present and working in our souls and the will and dynamism nourished by the force to implement our Yoga in life.

Only because consciousness and executive force are one in the Divine Shakti the unique action Sri Aurobindo and the Mother victoriously initiated on earth can and does continue unabated in the world today; for through this consciousness-power which is the Mother it has become of the very stuff of life itself. Hence the most pressing task confronting us now is to seek and cultivate an acute awareness of this soul-force, the psychic being filled with the quickening energy of the Shakti and to open ourselves and respond actively and integrally to it. If we can do this, our devotion and surrender to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother take on an objective character, they become universalized without losing their subjective and personal intensity. Further-

more, the soul recognises itself as 'a portion of the Divine Mother' and, in the Mother, knows itself to be one with all men and all creation.

Soul-force meets soul-force and out of this unifying experience in the depth of our being grows the collective soul in action. With this the individual Yoga expands and changes into a communal and eventually a global venture.

EDITH SCHNAPPER

YOUR EYES

YOUR Eyes, an undreamed world of waking —
 Vast vistas of luminous violet
 With spark-speckles of electric bronze —
 Deep seas where suns never set.

Eyes around whose glow all things fade,
 Depth upon depth of healing light,
 Calms of an intimate all-penetrating joy —
 Green hazel Elements of mysterious might.

Realms of long-sought inner comfort,
 Hope's rebirth, despair's cessation —
 Domains of never-ending universe-blending love —
 Eyes starry with night-enveloping compassion!

MINNIE N. CANTENWALLA

AUROVILLE

HAVE you seen the giants walking
Across the wide red land?
Seen them moving large and grand
Against the sky?
I have seen them coming,
Tiny seedlings in their hands,
Hands and feet as red
As the dirt they work each day,
Carrying the future on their backs and in their dreams —
Seen them growing tall and strong
As they hammer out their way
In a land of yielding beauty
Making progress from delay,
Seen them growing wise and deep
As they dig the hardened clay,
Worry water from the dry red earth,
Bend their backs,
Sweat out their sorrows,
Wrest from yesterday
Tomorrows,
Coming of a new world's birth.
Have you seen the giants working
In the quiet secret places,
In the kitchens, in the gardens,
The world's forgotten spaces?
I have seen them rise, emerging
Out of ignorance and pain.
Faith sustained, they work and labour
To create a new domain.
A thousand tiny troubles
Tell the story of their struggle
As they strive to bring alive
A long forsaken dream:
In their hearts an angel singing,
Being's beauty widely winging
As they grow to know the truth
Of creation's will to be
A living harmony.
Have you seen their victory?
Have you seen the giants working
High atop construction beams?
Suffering the toils of their hardest dreams?

I have seen them growing, changing,
 Working, working out the problems
 Of a vast and varied nature
 Through necessity and failure
 With enduring dedication,
 Consecrated to completion,
 Seen them struggle with the grasping
 Of the passing ways of time;
 Hoping deep enough to open,
 Feeling love enough to trust,
 Finding courage to create
 A living wonder with their labour.
 From the nameless, from the formless
 You can see a promise rising
 In the clearer, higher spaces
 At the centre of the city:
 Breathless peace, transcendent beauty.
 While the glorious expansion
 Of the limitless in man
 Opens wide the striving hearts
 To manifest the miracle of destiny's decree.

LORETTA

TREMENDUM ET FASCINANS

THOU wilt not bless me nor wilt let me go,
 Nor break the seal Thou set'st upon my lips
 Thy purpose to presage. These are but strips,
 Thou hast the pattern into which they flow.
 Thou wilt not hide nor yet Thy mercy show;
 As oft I creep towards Oblivion's verge
 Descends the ruthless terror of Thy scourge
 That bids nor lie nor weep, but rise and go.

Long have I lived in pain and loved through tears
 And seen Death peering through Life's lusty eye,
 Seen too, but dimly, all our wasted years
 Restored to riches in Thine alchemy;
 Thus seen too little, sorrow to disprove,
 And yet too deeply to deny Thy love.

J. N. CHUBB

THE SILVER TREE

A STORY FOR CHILDREN

ONCE upon a time in a peaceful valley there lived a shepherd with his wife and their beloved daughter Seraphine. Although no one else lived in the valley they never felt lonely because they loved the beautiful meadows, the flowery hillsides and the profound peace so much that they could perceive within them the marvel of life in its entire purity.

Often Seraphine used to take a walk towards a small lake in the middle of the valley. There it was especially quiet. On one side of the lake there was a meadow, and on the other a forest. The majestic heights of the mountains all around were reflected in the lake's blue waters. Here she loved to sit under a tree to dream beautiful stories.

One day when she came to the lake she found that someone was already sitting under the tree. It was a very little man clothed in fine velvet robes. A large hat lay at his side. His face was like the bark of the tree under which he sat; a tender smile was playing round his mouth and his eyes looked like two radiant stars. The little man was looking calmly out over the lake and didn't seem to notice Seraphine. She advanced curiously and as the little man did not react, she simply sat beside him and also looked out over the lake. The situation did not seem at all strange to her.

'It is as if we had sat here together under this tree forever,' she thought, and felt a deep joy.

Then suddenly the little man said, 'Why aren't you wandering in the world, in the cities with all their riches and pleasures?'

'What are riches?' answered Seraphine. 'Riches are in the heart, and the greatest pleasure for me is the peace and delight I feel here.'

'You are a very unusual kind of person,' said the little man, and turned slowly to Seraphine. 'After a thousand years you are the first person I like talking to, and with whom I enjoy sitting.'

'One thousand years — are you *so* old?' asked Seraphine, impressed.

'Yes, I am a mountain dwarf, and we tend to become rather old,' the little man said. 'I often saw you sitting here and sometimes I even sat next to you, but you didn't realise it, you were so absorbed in your dreams. You have not lost the connection with something very beautiful and true.'

For some time the mountain dwarf smiled at Seraphine. Then he got up and said softly, 'I came today to do some magic for you.'

At the same instant Seraphine was surrounded by light. She jumped up in amazement.

'What light is this?' she asked.

'Turn around,' said the mountain dwarf. Seraphine turned and saw that the tree under which they had been sitting was changed into fine silver.

'From now on, whenever you come to this tree an extraordinarily beautiful story will be waiting here for you,' the mountain dwarf said, and his eyes shone large and pure. Then he turned round, rose into the air and flew off towards the mountain on the other side of the lake. Soon he was out of sight.

Seraphine still stood before the silver tree and seemed herself to be under a magic spell. The silvery light played all about her as if it wanted to lift her higher and ever higher into worlds which no human being had ever seen. Seraphine smiled joyfully.

'It is true beauty.'

After some time she went back home and told her parents about her experience and all were very happy about the fine magic.

From this day on, Seraphine went to the silver tree whenever she could, and each time a new wonderful story awaited her. Tales of sublime and pure beings living beyond the earth, stories of a heavenly love which is constantly penetrating our lives and protecting and guiding us, without our ever realising it.

But one day a rich wood-merchant came into the valley with his wood-cutters to fell trees and as Fate decreed he came also to the small lake and saw there the silver tree.

'Zounds!' he cried, 'it is a tree of silver', and with his eyes shining greedily he ran to it to feel it rapaciously.

'Silver, silver, pure silver!' he gasped and his eyes became greedier still. Then he called his men and ordered them to cut down the tree. What a dreadful sound it made as it fell! Then they put the tree on their ox-cart and soon were gone from the valley.

When Seraphine came again to the small lake, at first she could not believe that the beautiful silver tree was no longer there. But the tracks and the stump soon told her the sad story. Tears filled her eyes.

'How gruesome and greedy men are,' she thought desperately. Then she saw something flying through the air. It was the mountain dwarf who landed a moment later beside her and silently looked at the remains of the tree.

'Well, Seraphine, this is the way of men. They want to possess everything, and are not able to find simple joy in the beautiful. But the thief will not be happy with his booty.' He remained silent a moment in thought and then continued:

'Come, my dear Seraphine, don't be sad. I will enchant you with a new tree and all will be as beautiful as it was before.'

'Oh you good mountain dwarf — but it's no use. There will always come evil men — better to leave it,' said Seraphine mournfully.

'This time I will slightly change the magic spell.' He smiled and there was a twinkle in his eye. At the next moment, the silver tree again stood there.

Yes — it seemed to be even more beautiful and radiant than before.

'But what will happen if ...'

'Don't be afraid,' the mountain dwarf interrupted Seraphine. 'This tree will be visible only to those human beings who have no greed and selfishness in their hearts.'

All others will perceive in it only an ordinary old tree — yes, an especially ordinary old tree.'

Now Seraphine was happy, and her whole face shone.

'Who knows,' said the mountain dwarf, 'maybe it is like this with all things — that we cannot perceive their true beauty unless we have a straightforward heart and sincerity within us, which permit us to look at the world humbly and unselfishly. Who knows, who knows?' Then he was silent, smiling mysteriously and when Seraphine was back home again she had to think over his words for a long time.

Thus time passed in undisturbed peace, but one day when Seraphine once more sat under the tree she saw a man approaching her. He was richly dressed, but his face was pale and drawn, and his eyes were full of distress. Hesitatingly he came nearer, his eyes on the tree, which he obviously could not see in its true splendour. Then he asked Seraphine:

'Excuse me, can you by any chance tell me anything about the silver tree which once stood here?'

She was taken by surprise — who might this stranger be? But something in her heart told her it would be good to tell him the whole story. So Seraphine spoke of the mountain dwarf, of his magic spell, of the wonderful stories, and finally of how the tree had disappeared. While she was speaking the man sat silently beside her and when she had finished he wept bitter tears.

'I am the thief of the silver tree,' he groaned. 'I took it, to become even richer. But now I regret it bitterly.'

Seraphine looked at him compassionately.

'Do please go on,' she said. 'What happened then?'

Gratefully he glanced at her — and then everything poured from his heart.

'Yes, the silver tree made me much, much richer, but some days ago something strange happened. As I sat at the table to take my food, suddenly everything changed into pure silver. In my stupidity I was happy about it, but it was really a curse. From that time on, each meal turned into silver before I could take even one mouthful. If only I hadn't been so greedy!' the man sobbed. 'I am now one of the richest of wood-merchants, but soon I will die of hunger. Please help me — don't let me die.'

Without saying a word Seraphine tenderly took his hand and brought him to her parents' house. There she prepared a simple meal and offered it to him, saying sweetly, 'Good appetite.'

'Oh, how much I would like it,' the man cried, full of despair, 'but it will again turn into silver.'

'Oh no, you have truly regretted your deed — and that changes everything.' Seraphine answered. Somewhat timidly he took a piece of bread and bit into it gingerly — and it remained bread! Full of gratitude he took his meal. Then he said, 'Whatever you want from my riches is yours.'

But Seraphine and her parents refused in a friendly way.

'We have everything we need. Here within our hearts is the true treasure.'

Then they sat together for a long time and Seraphine told the many marvellous stories she had heard under the silver tree. Finally, the happy wood-merchant prepared to leave. After he had said good-bye to everyone and was already standing in the door he hesitated for a moment, turned back again and asked,

‘Only one favour, dear Seraphine. Will you come with me again to the tree by the lake?’

‘Yes,’ she said and they went together to the small lake. This time the wood-merchant also could see the tree in all its silver glory.

‘It is true beauty,’ he whispered, deeply moved.

And Seraphine was thinking of the words of the mountain dwarf:

‘Who knows, maybe it is like this with all things — that we cannot perceive their true beauty unless we have a straightforward heart and sincerity within us, which permit us to look at the world humbly and unselfishly. Who knows, who knows?...’

MICHEL KLOSTERMANN

(Translated by Shraddhavan from the German)

THE CHILD'S HEART

AGAINST the slow seizure of the years
 Let the child's heart prevail;
 And even when all things assail,
 May candid youth be above all fears.

Bathed in light,
 Let my being no longer
 Cast a shadow
 On Thy sacred form of Beauty
 Or stain Thy deep Love's pure delight.

ALAB

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 January 1975)

6

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TEILHARD'S FAITH: THE NATURE OF HIS CHRISTIANITY — WHAT IS BASIC TEILHARDISM? — WHAT PLACE HAS HIS CHRISTIANITY IN IT? — TEILHARDISM AND THE MODERN RELIGIOUS INTUITION

(p)

WHAT we have concluded so far from the most challenging portions of the new book of letters¹ leads us to a crucial challenge: "A Soul of the World taking evolution forward is the central truth to Teilhard. All else is subordinate and, for his personal life, even insignificant and inutile. This includes the historical Jesus himself — because the past does not concern Teilhard. Could it then be that he is deceiving himself in making out, as he does at some places, the historical Jesus to be an irreplaceable beginning for his Cosmic Christ? Is not a Universal Godhead, who is also a Supreme Person, the primary reality, whose manifestation is the historical Jesus and whose name is Christ simply because that manifestation, bearing this appellative, made the primary reality concrete and recognisable for men like Teilhard?"

We have to seek for an answer from the new book. Teilhard plays on the theme from several sides which do not always cohere. But the key to his basic position is supplied by what we have already noted about the relationship between his Christianity and his Evolutionism. The fact of Evolution is to him all-important. Christianity must be adapted to it. His attempt at its adaptation and his pleasure at his success are reflected in the passages where he speaks of his re-integrating the Personal God of Christianity into his evolutionary *weltanschauung*. We have quoted parts of a long passage in this connection. Now we may look at it again in our present context.

The full relevant passage² occurring in a letter to Henri de Lubac on 15 August

¹ *Lettres Intimes de Teilhard de Chardin* à Auguste Valensin, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac, André Ravier 1919-1955, Introduction et notes par Henri de Lubac (Aubier Montaigne, Paris, 1974).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 314-15: "... ma grande découverte (? !) actuelle est d'apercevoir 1^o que tout le problème humain se ramène à la question de l'amour de Dieu, — mais aussi, 2^o que la légitimité, la possibilité psychologique (partout contestée, à ma grande surprise), et le triomphe de cet amour *dependent* de la *compatibilité* (ou mieux de l'*association essentielle*) des deux termes: Universel et Personnel ... L'essentiel chrétien, à mon avis, ce n'est précisément aucun des idéals humanitaires et moraux si vantés par les croyants et les incroyants: mais c'est de maintenir et de sauver 'le primat du Personnel', étendu analogi-

1936 runs: "... my great present discovery (? !) is to perceive (1) that the whole human problem resolves into the question of the love of God — but also (2) that the legitimacy, the psychological possibility (everywhere contested, to my great surprise), and the triumph of this love *depend* on the *compatibility* (or, better, on the *essential association*) of two terms: Universal and Personal ... The Christian essential, in my opinion, is not precisely any of the humanitarian and moral ideals so vaunted by believers and unbelievers, but to maintain and to save 'the primacy of the Personal', extended analogically to the All — and also to put positively the World in relation with the supreme Personal, that is to say, to *name* him. — Thus I succeeded in re-integrating the historic Christ — as a structural condition for the universal equilibrium. I had need of that.... It is a great point of force for me, in any case, to recognise that the whole effort of 'evolution' is reducible to the justification and development of a love (of God). It is already what my mother used to tell me. But it will have taken me a lifetime to integrate this truth into an organic vision of things. I imagine that it is this effort of integration that the World must make in order to be converted: 'in the mass, our World denies the Personal and God, *because* it believes in the All: everything comes back to showing it that, on the contrary, it *ought* to believe in the Personal because it believes in the All."

The passage is somewhat complicated. Apropos of "re-integrating the historic Christ", de Lubac¹ has the comment: "This constant reference to the historic Christ, to Jesus of Nazareth, is one of the 'notes' which radically differentiate the Teilhardian Christology from all the 'gnostic' or 'gnosticising' Christologies. Personal God, historic Jesus: these are the two fixed poles of all his effort of intelligent faith (whence the constancy, in his spiritual life, of the prayer, the love, and the fidelity to the Church which preserve for us the presence of Christ). To tell the truth, we notice no fundamental evolution in his thought in this regard. When he speaks of 're-integrating' the one or the other of these two verities into his synthesis, that does not signify that

quement jusqu'au Tout, — et aussi de mettre positivement le Monde en relation avec le Personnel suprême, c'est-à-dire de le *nommer*. — Ainsi arrivé-je à ré-intégrer le Christ historique, — comme une condition structurelle de l'équilibre universel. J'avais besoin de cela . Ce m'est une grande force en tout cas de reconnaître que tout l'effort de 'l'évolution' est réductible à la justification et au développement d'un amour (de Dieu). C'est déjà ce que me disait ma mère. Mais il m'aura fallu une vie pour intégrer cette vérité dans une vision organique des choses. J'imagine que c'est cet effort d'intégration que le Monde doit faire pour se convertir : dans l'ensemble, notre Monde nie le Personnel et Dieu, *parce qu'il* croit au Tout: Tout revient à lui montrer que, au contraire, il *doit* croire au Personnel parce qu'il croit au Tout."

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 316-17, Note 5. "Cette référence constante au Christ historique, à Jésus de Nazareth, est l'une des 'notes' qui différencient radicalement la christologie teilhardienne de toutes les christologies 'gnostique' ou 'gnosticisante'. Dieu personnel, Jésus historique: ce sont les deux pôles fixes de tout son effort d'intelligence de la foi (d'où la constance, dans sa vie spirituelle, de l'adoration, de la prière, de l'amour, et de fidélité à l'Eglise qui nous conserve la présence du Christ). A vrai dire, on ne constate aucune évolution foncière dans sa pensée à cet égard. Quand il parle de 'ré-intégrer' l'une ou l'autre de ces deux vérités dans sa synthèse, cela ne signifie pas qu'il les ait plus ou moins perdues de vue ou laissées s'estomper dans son esprit, mais qu'il parvient à les mieux justifier intellectuellement. Ainsi en allait-il déjà pour l'idée de 'personne'."

he has more or less lost sight of them or allowed them to get blurred in his mind, but that he finds his way to justify them better intellectually. He has already done the same for the idea of 'person'."

De Lubac admits Teilhard's urge and need to arrive at an intellectual basis for the existence of Jesus as God-Man no less than for the existence of God as Person and for the value of the person-element in the world-plan. What de Lubac fails to bring forward is the nature of the intellectual basis. We have a clue to it in Teilhard's own expressions: "the whole effort of 'evolution'", "an organic vision of things" — and in his reference to the modern world's belief "in the All".

Teilhard's overmastering intellectual preoccupation is with an immeasurable unitary evolving universe, a gigantic "All" organically moving in the direction of an ever greater physical complexity and psychological centrality — in the direction, that is, of the physically organised "personal" consciousness and, beyond it, to the physical organisation of a unified collectivity of persons, a psycho-social ensemble on an earth-wide scale, charged with a "cosmic sense", inspired by a love of the Universal, the All, who is felt to be a supreme Person attracting them from "ahead". By Him and in Him the various collected and harmonised persons get universalised without losing their distinctive beings. The Universal Person, as the final focus of the converging cosmos, is called by Teilhard "Omega Point". In *Intimate Letters*, de Lubac¹ quotes from Teilhard's book, *The Phenomenon of Man*: "Like the Omega which attracts it, the element only becomes personal when it universalises itself." Teilhard's letter to Bruno de Solages on 2 September 1947² speaks of "the passage of the phenomeon of man to Point Omega". Teilhard's Omega, the Universal Person, is at the same time self-existent in Himself and emergent from the evolutionary process as the latter's Term and Climax. He is the Soul of the World, the God of Evolution, the cosmic culmination and fullness, the only Deity acceptable to the religious mood of the modern scientific age with its faith in an increasing human progress and its drive towards a complete earthly fulfilment.

Teilhard's problem as a Christian was to find a natural and logical place for the historic Christ, the human-divine Saviour, in his scientifically religious cosmic scheme. Unless he could thus "re-integrate" Jesus of Nazareth, he could not rest satisfied — both because he felt the necessity to give Omega, the Cosmic Person, an identifiable name in order to render Him thoroughly lovable and because the historic Christ would lack a meaningful reality if not understood in a universal evolutionary framework. The background of the re-integration would broadly be the argument we find in a letter to Léontine Zanta on 23 August 1929, to which de Lubac³ refers when annotating Teilhard's earlier mention of re-finding the value of the "person" after a long "journey". In that letter Teilhard⁴ writes: "... if the Universe needs, *by the very*

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 316, note 4: "À l'image d'Omega qui l'attire, l'élément ne devient personnel qu'en s'universalisant."

² *Ibid.*, p. 356: "passage du Phénomène humain au point Omega ..."

³ *Ibid.*, p. 198, note 8.

⁴ *Letters to Léontine Zanta* (Collins, London, 1969), p. 95.

structure of Being, to fulfil itself in 'person', there must be some *Revelation* of the Centre-Person to the 'elementary-persons'; as no one can penetrate to the core of the Centre save the Centre itself." To Teilhard the historic Christ is this "Revelation": he discerns there all the signs that Omega has expressed Himself: "Only Christ, *who is conscious of his situation*, can say of the universal labour. '*Hoc est Corpus meum*' ['This is my Body']"¹ Thus Teilhard could declare: "I have rediscovered the exact Christian perspective, but *grafted* (as it should be) onto a universal and evolutive perspective."²

The upshot of the Teilhardian dialectic is: the universal and evolutive perspective involves a Universal Person who is the Prime Mover ahead, effecting the upward gradient of evolution — an upward gradient which expresses His own cosmic labour — and in the course of this gradient He manifests Himself in a concentrated form in the person of the historic Jesus. Considering Jesus the sole manifestation of the Universal Person, Teilhard calls that Universal Person "Christ" and thus repeats in his own world-view the function he deems as part of the "Christian essential" — that is, to relate the World to the Supreme Personal by naming Him. But the Teilhardian world-view stands on its own feet independently as a scientific religion, a spiritual Evolutionism: that is why the task of re-integrating the historic Christ arose and Teilhard said, "I had need of that." Omega, not Christ, is the ultimate ground of Teilhardism.

No doubt, Teilhard often speaks of Omega and Christ as one: again and again we come across the compound "Christ-Omega". An example is the phrase in a letter to de Lubac on 4 December 1947:³ "... a new Faith, which appears to me precisely to be that which one obtains by combining, as I was saying, the Above with the Ahead, upon Christ-Omega." But actually there are two entities for him, each an Omega by being final in its own field and endowed with the same all-gathering function, and his work as a Christian who is also a scientist lies in unifying them. We perceive this activity clearly in a quotation de Lubac makes in a note to Teilhard's letter to Auguste Valensin on 12 June 1925.⁴ The quotation is from Teilhard's essay, "The God of Evolution," written in 1953: "Is there not a revealing correspondance between the shapes (the patterns) of the two confronting Omegas: the one postulated by modern science and the one encountered by Christian mysticism? ... Drawn together by a fundamental identity, the two Omegas, I repeat (that of experience and that of faith), are certainly on the point of reacting upon each other in human consciousness and finally of being synthesized."

The moment we have two entities designable as Omegas, we see that the historic

¹ *Ibid.* ² *Ibid.*

³ *Lettres Intimes*, p. 362: "... une Foi nouvelle, laquelle me paraît précisément être ce qu'on obtient en combinant, comme je disais, l'En haut et l'En avant, sur le Christ-Omega."

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124. note 4: "la correspondance n'est-elle pas révélatrice entre la figure (le 'pattern') des deux Omégas en présence: celui postulé par la Science moderne, et celui éprouvé par la mystique chrétienne? ... Attirés l'un vers l'autre par une identité de fond, les deux Omégas, je répète (celui de l'Expérience et celui de la Foi) s'apprentent certainement à réagir l'un sur l'autre dans la conscience humaine, et finalement à se synthétiser."

Christ who is Omegalic in his own sphere is not irreplaceable as the starting-point for belief in a Cosmic Person: this belief can be based on the data of modern science, and the historic Christ is irreplaceable only if we want to call the Cosmic Person the Universal Christ. Steeped in Roman Catholicism and unable to think of any incarnate divinity other than Jesus, Teilhard could never quite free himself from Christifying the Cosmic Person; but his sense of that Person's independence of Christ made him repeatedly feel the historic God-Man of Nazareth to be a vague and vanishing figure that could hardly draw his love and adoration: none except the Universal Christ whom he built out of that figure could he love and adore — and, in loving and adoring Him, he tacitly knew that his love and adoration really went to the Cosmic Person who had nothing radically to do with Christianity.

His tacit knowledge peeps out pretty openly at times. In an earlier chapter we have cited a letter written on 24 February 1918. De Lubac himself has it in one of his notes. There Teilhard is dealing with the difficulty of reconciling his doctrine of the Cosmic Christ with the plurality of inhabited worlds in our universe:¹ “Since the Cosmos is *certainly* indivisible and Christianity is not smaller than the Cosmos, one must admit a certain ‘polymorphous’ manifestation of the cosmic Christ in various worlds, according to the aptitude of these worlds for being integrated into the celestial Universe. The human Christ would then be but one aspect of the cosmic Christ. — Otherwise, Christ (if he upheld only the earth) would be smaller than the World.”

Surely, if life and mind could develop in other parts of the Universe than our earth, they would do so not always in a period after their terrestrial development: they could flourish centuries and thousands and even millions of years before their epoch here. So the manifestation of the Cosmic Christ in those parts would in several cases precede the appearance of Jesus on our planet. This must mean that the Cosmic Christ is precedent to Jesus's appearance. If so, why employ the term “Christ” which is associated with the Son of Mary? The only excuse is the assumption that “Christianity is not smaller than the Cosmos” and Christ not “smaller than the World”. But, even granting this assumption, there remains no reason to tie up Jesus inseparably with what Teilhard knows as Cosmic Christ. And the inseparableness is denied by Teilhard himself when he talks of the Cosmic Christ's “‘polymorphous’ manifestation” and of “The human Christ” — that is, Jesus — being “only one aspect of the cosmic Christ”.

Another glimpse of the Cosmic Person in His own right and without necessary association with the historic Christ is afforded by another quotation² from Teilhard by

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40, note 7: “Étant donnée que le Cosmos est *certainement* inséparable, et que le Christianisme n'est pas plus petit que le Cosmos, il faut admettre une certaine manifestation ‘polymorphe’ du Christ cosmique sur divers mondes, suivant l'aptitude de ces mondes à être intégrés dans l'Univers céleste. Le Christ humain ne serait alors qu'une face du Christ cosmique. — Autrement, le Christ (s'il ne soutenait que la Terre) serait plus petit que le Monde.”

² *Ibid.*, p. 216, note 12: “J'ai souvent l'impression que notre Christ n'est qu'un voile et qu'une

de Lubac, dating to 1946: "I have often the impression that our Christ is only a veil or an outline behind which there awaits us and desires us Someone or Something incomparably greater."

Teilhard's tacit knowledge that he loved and adored a Cosmic Person with whom Christianity was not radically connected was the product at the same time of his scientific consciousness and another factor which played a decisive part in the totality of his life as a man of religion and a man of science. Before he conceived Omega Point he was already enamoured of a unitary cosmos. His letter of 12 October 1951¹ to John Janssens, General of the Jesuits, speaks of "the congenital quality (or weakness) which brings it about that, since my childhood, my spiritual life has not ceased being completely dominated by a sort of profound 'feeling' of the organic reality of the World; a feeling originally rather vague in my mind and heart, — but a feeling gradually grown, with the years, a precise and overflowing sense of the general convergence of the Universe upon itself". Doubtless, he² goes on to speak of "this convergence coinciding and culminating, at its summit, with the One 'in whom all things hold together', Him whom the Company [of Jesuits] has taught me to love". But that does not negate the prior power in Teilhard of World-worship nor the fact that at all times his spiritual life was completely dominated by his deep and in-born cosmic "feeling". This feeling evidently constituted the root of his religion and flowered both into the concept of Omega and into that of the Cosmic Christ — Christ in his aspect of the World's omnipresent holder-together and ultimate all-gatherer, the Christ of St. Paul whom Teilhard strove to identify with his own Christ the Evolver. Such a feeling Teilhard saw not only as his root-religion but also as the essence of all mysticism. De Lubac³ quotes a writing of Teilhard's from the winter of 1951: "Essentially, the mystical feeling is a sense and a presentiment of the total and final Unity of the World, beyond the present and felt multiplicity; a cosmic sense of *Oneness*." And, when a name is to be given to the fundamental intuition of the World's Oneness, Teilhard writes on 15 September 1934 to de Lubac:⁴ "It seems to me ... that there is, in the great religious phenomenon (in which the substance of human and even universal history expresses itself), a fundamental *consensus* which can serve as the basis of all

ébauche derrière quoi nous attend et nous désire Quelqu'un ou quelque Chose d'incomparablement plus grand .." (1946).

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 399: ". . . la qualité (ou la faiblesse) congénitale qui fait que, depuis mon enfance, ma vie spirituelle n'a pas cessé complètement dominée par une sorte de 'sentiment' profond de la réalité organique du Monde; sentiment originairement assez vague dans mon esprit et dans mon cœur, — mais sentiment graduellement devenu, avec les années, sens précis et envahissant d'une convergence générale sur soi de l'Univers .."

² *Ibid.*, : "cette convergence coïncidant et culminant, à son sommet, avec Celui 'in quo omnia constant', que la Cie m'a appris à aimer."

³ *Ibid.*, p. 275, note 3: "Essentiellement, le sentiment mystique est un sens et un pressentiment de l'Unité totale et finale du Monde, par-delà sa multiplicité présente et sentie; sens cosmique de l'*Oneness*".

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 295: "Il me semble ... qu'il y a, dans le grand phénomène religieux (en quoi s'exprime la substance de l'histoire humaine, et même universelle), un *consensus* fondamental qui peut servir de base à toute apologétique: la foi 'panthéiste' en unité finale."

apologetic: the 'pantheist' faith in the final unity."

"Pantheism" is "the quality (or weakness)" that was "congenital" in Teilhard. And it is to the focusing of the true posture, so to speak, of this quality that we have to bring the light shed by *Intimate Letters*.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

THE RUBY BIRD

"O HUNTER from the great high hills,
What is your fugitive prey?"

"The Ruby Bird from Twilight's rills
Has stolen my heart away.

I chased the dappled shy fawn,
When Night was fast flying;
But soon uprose the golden Dawn,
And the fawn dropt low adying.

My silver-bow shook and fell,
My jade-arrows missed their mark;
Since then, roving through hill and dale,
I am a Hunter — a Nomad stark.

Roaming through World's emerald deep,
And silent Moon's Star-strewn domain,
My feet found no rest, nor my eyes sleep,
I raced for the Ruby Bird in vain!

Now the Ruby Bird is in my eyes,
She has nestled in my heart's core;
She has left her home in the skies,
And she will not fly any more."

KAMALAKANTO

EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

(Continued from the issue of January 1975)

(This is the second instalment of a paper by a competent American psychotherapist, Charles Maloney, who has been in living touch with Sri Aurobindo's Yoga and Ashram. His paper tells us how the psychotherapist can make his discipline more effective by using Yogic techniques based on Sri Aurobindo's spiritual vision. Within the field to which it confines itself it brings an abundance of observations highly enlightening for Maloney's fellow-practitioners and of considerable interest to the disciples of Sri Aurobindo who wish to understand the higher possibilities of psychotherapy in service of the common man who may not always be ready for Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga.)

Psychological Organization of Man

VIEWING various psychological problems through the optic of yoga, it is imperative to be aware at the outset of the extended range and depth of the field of consciousness. It has already been indicated that one can become conscious of the whole being, *i.e.* of all the forces both hidden and apparent that move us — the “how” and “why” of our actions, feelings and thoughts. Implicit in this perspective is the possibility of becoming conscious of one's entire psychological history, *i.e.* all of the experiences that have formed and conditioned us since our birth. If a person is plagued by a deep fear that was imprinted on his being during the first or second year of his life it is possible in this context to become fully conscious of the source of the fear and remove it. Consciousness here is not restricted to memory in the sense of being aware of an event that happened in the past but rather to the power to re-experience and not be identified with a poise of our being which reacts to that event. In this light consciousness has two principal dimensions:

Consciousness is made up of two elements, awareness of self and things and forces and conscious-power. Awareness is the first thing necessary, you have to be aware of things in the right consciousness ... seeing them in their truth; but awareness by itself is not enough. There must be a Will and a Force that make the consciousness effective.¹

Thus, in the context of therapy, one may be aware of the problem but not have the power to change the way it controls his life. Or, one may have the will to change but not be aware of the source of the problem. This can be further translated in the context of problems which present themselves in psychotherapy. A person may have many memories (usually very partial or selective) of his past which give him a great deal of insight and understanding as to why he thinks, acts and feels as he does in the

present. He may, however, lack the will-force or energy to change his present mode of being. Another person may be able to express many strong feelings but lack the proper awareness to apply the feeling or will force in the right way at the right place. The former situation would illustrate the limitation of insight therapies or the power of the intellectual mind to solve the problem. The latter would depict the insufficiency of feeling therapies if one remains unaware of the source and nature of the feelings.

In the beginning of the paper I alluded to the limitations of various therapies which take a predominantly mental, emotional or physical approach. What I would like to focus on now is the practical possibility of tapping a higher consciousness beyond mental, vital and physical consciousness, which has both the power of awareness and the will force to effect a real change and integration of the being. The key assertion here is: there is a higher consciousness which has the awareness, will and force to effect both a healing and an integration of the mental, vital and physical aspects of our being:

Those who live in the mind and the vital are not so well able to do this; they are obliged to use mostly their personal effort and as the awareness and will and force of the mind and vital are divided and imperfect, the work done is imperfect and not definitive.²

To place Western psychology in an evolutionary perspective is to acknowledge the possibility of moving, in a very practical and radical way, beyond man as a purely mental-vital-physical organization of consciousness. What is being advocated is a psychotherapeutic approach which will envision and move toward a transformation of character or nature. This means a method of deconditioning and transforming the conditioned personality or egoic consciousness which may be described as a temporary organization of selected mental, vital and physical energies. It has been the long standing *dictum* of philosophies and yogas that you cannot change your character, you are born like that, you are like that. This deeply ingrained attitude has quite naturally permeated the psychological disciplines whereby many mental and emotional problems are assumed as inherent to certain personalities and must be accommodated in the least painful way, *e.g.* obsessive and compulsive behavior or certain fears. To recognize a power of awareness and a creative energy beyond the mental is to acknowledge the possibility of healing parts of the being which are not responsive to the current utilization of mental, vital and physical energies:

Consciousness is usually identified with mind, but mental consciousness is only the human range which no more exhausts all the possible ranges of consciousness than human sight exhausts all the gradations of colour or human hearing all the gradations of sound — for there is much above or below that is to man invisible and inaudible. So there are ranges of consciousness above and below the human range, with which the normal human has no contact and they seem to it unconscious.³

While it has been the contribution of modern depth psychology to discover and examine some of the forces of the unconscious or subconscious a mystery remains yet as to the nature and organization of these forces which reside beyond waking consciousness. Beyond the postulation of the unconscious as a chaos of forces controlled or mediated by the ego, there is the more positive view that there is a "creative unconscious" which surpasses the ordinary mental creativity. This has long been recognized by artists. In conjunction with this recognition is the ever increasing acknowledgement in the West of the capacity in man for paranormal states of consciousness, e.g. telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychokinesis, etc. Sri Aurobindo's discoveries of various levels of consciousness in man embraces those of the West but are far more extensive.

It is not possible in this paper to give a full account of his formulation of the psychological organization of man. However, in order to provide a context for an understanding of the use of yogic techniques in psychotherapy the basic psychological framework will be indicated. What we know of ourselves in our present conscious existence is only a representation or selection of a vast field of consciousness which is unmanifest yet influential in our daily activities. This *frontal being* is composed of mind formations, vital movements and physical functions all organized around a temporary center of orientation called ego. It is only by going beyond this surface construction into the concealed depths of our being that we can truly understand what we presently call personality or individuality:

... the most thorough and acute surface scrutiny and manipulation cannot give us the true understanding or the completely effective control of our life, its purposes, its activities; that inability indeed is the cause of the failure of reason, morality and every other surface action to control and deliver and perfect the life of the human race.⁴

Below this surface consciousness is the *subconscient* or that dimension of our being which preserves our past — all of the experiences in our psychological history judged to be too painful or not necessary for the functioning of the surface personality. The forces in the subconscient, or what Western psychology generally calls the unconscious, constantly infiltrate our waking consciousness, and cause what Western psychologists call neurotic or psychotic behavior. In an evolutionary context these subconscient forces can prolong our past and influence our future. While it is one of the purposes of psychotherapy to provide some kind of resolution between the forces of the subconscient and the waking consciousness, it is one of the goals of yoga to become conscious of *all* of the forces in the subconscient.

Behind our surface consciousness is a vast *subliminal* consciousness which consists of an inner mental, inner vital and inner more subtle physical range of consciousness all supported by a psychic entity or soul or what Sri Aurobindo calls the "true individual" or "central person" (distinct from the surface egoic person or individual). Forces,

characterized in the West as psychic (different from psychic entity) phenomena have their source in this region and while these creative and powerful sources of consciousness are often lumped together with subconscious forces under the label of "the unconscious" by the Western mind, it is, nevertheless, quite a distinct realm for Sri Aurobindo. While we seem to be separated from all that is around us in our surface consciousness, except through the indirect contact of exterior mind and sense-contact,

... in these inner reaches, subliminal, the barrier between us and the rest of existence is thin and easily broken; there we can feel at once ... the action of the secret world forces, mind forces, life forces, subtle physical forces that constitute universal and individual existence.⁵

And yet above the realms of the waking consciousness, the subconscious and the subliminal lies the superconscious or the higher consciousness that both knows and has the power to integralize our divided being. To evoke this superconscious power through the utilization of yogic techniques can provide the healing disciplines with a deeper and more integral understanding of the resolution of emotional problems.

The foundation of this psychological approach to healing is neither what we presently call mind nor is it

a scientific psychology with a materialistic basis which assumes that the body and the biological and physiological factors of our nature are not only the starting-point but the whole real foundation and regards human mind as only a subtle development from the life and the body.⁶

To look at man only within the limits of mind, vital and physical in terms of healing disorders is to consider only the superficial man. Adopting a yogic approach one begins to see man's real nature unfold, *i.e.*, "a spirit using the mind, life and body for an individual and a communal experience and self-manifestation in the universe."⁷ What now are the concrete techniques which can be used to allow this higher consciousness to both heal and integrate mind, life and body?

(To be continued)

CHARLES MALONEY

Notes

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *Letters on Yoga*, (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1970), p. 238.

² *Ibid.*, p. 238. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁴ Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1971), pp. 170-1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 171. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 597. ⁷ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 598.

LOTUS FLAME OR SURYAMAN

(Continued from the issue of January 1975)

BOOK I, CANTO 2 (*Contd.*)

CHANGE was the law of the common erring globe.
Shifting from gloom to gloom, from pain to pain,
Uncertain, torn between the strokes of deaths
And births, the preludes to that visionless end.
All was a game of shade and dusk and fall,
A scheme of twilight-pangs, of groping dreams,
Of frustration's lash, the blind horse-whip of Fate;
Of blood and tears the earth was a constant friend.
Out of that dismal scheme the world had its birth;
But for the supporting seed of Flame within,
This unfallen sperm of God within its caves,
The universe would have been a senseless nought,
A dumb zero without the trace of life,
A vacant lie in a forgotten vast.
Here too when Suryaman had birth in Time
Crossing the aeons of slow ascending form,
Gathering the sap of errant unsure earth,
The mire could sense, quickening in its cells,
A new overture to immortality.
Hidden behind lay yet that spark divine
Aiding unseen the tardy rise of things
Out of their protean nothingness and floods.
Lotus-Flame too arose with that ascent,
A white astonishing heart of sky in sod.
As he crossed the boundaries of the Unseen,
The earth became pregnant with matter's life
Groping towards the vistas of distant thought
And wider becomings of the soul's outpour.
And cycles of a myriad births it passed,
Cycles of beginning's joy and death's stark groan.
The movement of gradual revelation-light
Grew ever larger, with the unfelt ascent.
Passed were the numerous births of flame in time,

Each time glowing brighter with another name,
 Another form's amazing epiphany,
 Another face revealing the eternal Face.
 Another gleam followed this epical course,
 Coeval with the infinity and the grace;
 Another eye following this eye of light,
 A ray pursuing a ray in the fields of chance,
 Sharing equal the load of human void.
 A star, a beacon, distant heaven's clasp,
 A smile, a rose behind the screen of sense,
 A hand outstretched from behind the moment's veil.
 It was she, the nameless divinity of hush
 Bearing viewless the weight of creation's pangs
 And throes of gloom that deliver the golden child.
 Sometimes they clasped their hands or were estranged,
 Or met or shared the labour of the Gods,
 Or were left lone in a frustrated world.
 None saw their intimate drama and their game,
 Their hide and seek amid all nature's ways,
 Like sun chasing the trail of ravishing moon
 Or the wind pursuing the gallop of the foams.
 Silent they smiled across the moment's eclipse,
 Or gazed like strangers in the heat of the play,
 Or their souls wedded in a timeless embrace.
 All was their play, this rise and fall of the worlds,
 The throe or bliss of emerging universe,
 The ascent of the Gods, the titan's deep decline,
 The secrecy of the stars, the frown of the night,
 The coma of the abyss, the trance of the Peak.

(To be continued)

ROMEN

THE NEEM TREE

SRI Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, nestling among wooded trees, is situated on Sri Aurobindo Marg, the main highway to Qutab Minar. Qutab Minar is just over a mile further up from the Ashram.

Just inside the main gate of the Ashram Campus facing Sri Aurobindo Marg stood a towering old Neem tree — it stood there in all its majesty and magnificence; 200 feet high, 30 feet in circumference, with hundreds of its branches grandly spreading over a well below. The thick deep layer of its roots spread and wound itself in knotted coils all around the main trunk of the tree. The tree was pretty ancient and could have been well over a hundred years.

The Mother has given the symbolic meaning of Spiritual Atmosphere to the Neem. We are fortunate that we have many more Neem trees all over the campus; but this one was unique in all its imposing grandeur and beauty; in comparison, the others appeared so puny and looked just like its grandchildren or its great-grandchildren.

The school buses, which bring over a thousand of our school children daily to the school and take them back home, used to go round this grand old tree; the bus drivers and conductors and also the visitors to the Ashram and passers-by, all found a welcome shade under the towering branches of this Neem tree.

To make way for the rapid expansion that is taking place in the Ashram Campus, suggestions were made on several occasions to pull down this tree; but since it had come to occupy a special place, these suggestions and arguments were always overruled.

Sometime back I conceived the idea of an unusual plan and I immediately called all the persons concerned including the overseer and carpenter and told them: “A foolish idea has come to me! I shall narrate it to you, provided all of you promise to cooperate with me to have it executed.” They all spontaneously agreed.

The novel idea was to have a hut built on the upper base of the main trunk of this tree, a Tree-Top-Lodge; the hut was to be supported only in one corner by a pillar to be erected. The hut would be just like a “Machan” which is constructed on forest tree-tops for shikars. It was agreed that only indigenous material from the Ashram Campus would be used for building the Tree-Top-Lodge; dry thatches of grass for the roof as in Auroville huts, observation windows all round with a panelled entrance door, the floor of the “Machan” to be covered with wooden planks. Its furniture and furnishings were to be modern, with a carpet and wall-paintings, creating a restful atmosphere.

This was in the evening. The next day the concrete pillar required for the support of the hut was constructed, and we were busy searching for suitable long wooden rafters for construction of the hut.

Another meeting was called to plan the stairs reaching up to the “Machan” and lo! a wonderful idea came. Deep cuts in the grand trunk of the tree itself could

serve as steps leading to the hut with ropes to support on both sides. It was an excellent idea and all were greatly excited and myself the most.

We were all full of anticipation, thinking what a novel hut it would be and how it would be furnished and decorated and what a joy it was going to be for all of us sitting in the Tree-Top-Lodge, watching the children playing and people below.

The thought even passed through our minds that the Tree-Top-Lodge could be an ideal place to guard the whole Ashram Campus! And why could it not become a tourist attraction like the Tree-Top-Lodge in Kenya which has become world-famous? And perhaps it could even be put on the itinerary of the Tourist Department and thus be a part of the tourist programme for visitors coming to see Qutab Minar from all parts of the world. With all these wonderful ideas and dreams we slept through the night to give shape to the "Machan" the next day.

Alas! a furious storm lashed through the night and, centring mainly on the Ashram Campus, it wrought havoc everywhere. The grand old Neem tree, struck down by the storm, lay flat on its face, and many other trees were also uprooted and lay about here and there. Our dreams were dealt a shattering blow! Was it that the old Neem tree had foiled our plans? The grand old being perhaps divined what was afoot, our plans and conspiracies, and could not face the onslaughts and insults and humiliations to be inflicted and hurled upon its personality. Perhaps it could not bear that its august personage should be desecrated in this fashion!

It took us well nigh over a month to clear up the debris of this mountain of a tree and give it a final send-off. Its giant trunk, its branches and winding roots had to be sawn off into hundreds of pieces. The logs had to be cut and sorted out for making furniture or constructing buildings. Part of the remains was to serve as firewood for cooking. Another part would go as fuel for the brick-kilns. Every bit including the leaves would be of some use. The Neem fruit "Nimoli", which was blossoming, has medicinal properties. It was to be collected and crushed into oil for making soap and the residue could be used for making special manure. And wherever Nimolis fall off at distant places, they eventually sprout into new small Neem trees.

The remains of the Divine's entire creation are put to valuable use in millions of ways. The vegetable kingdom is responsible for the existence of the human race, supplying it with food, clothing and shelter and herbs for health, the animal kingdom and birds and the living creatures of ocean supply pearls, food, all types of leather articles and even certain animal skins to sit on in the temples for puja and meditation. There is no limit to their uses and utilities.

Perhaps man is the only being whose mortal remains are of no use or utility unless, of course, he has lived a saintly and divine life and has become worthy of emulation and worship.

SURENDRA NATH JAUHAR

AYURVEDA: A MENTAL TOUR*

INDIA, 1967! Hundreds of Ayurvedic institutions turning out thousands of graduates! Thousands of Ayurvedic hospitals and dispensaries and hundreds of thousands of Ayurvedic physicians administering relief to hundreds of millions of patients! The foreign visitor, struck by this phenomenon, asks: "What is Ayurveda?"

Neither the tourist guide nor the "modern" medical graduate is equipped with adequate information on the subject. The usual replies, describing Ayurveda as the "traditional" or the "folk" medicine of ancient India, do justice neither to the system nor to the intelligent inquirer.

The inquisitive scientist, who comes to India with a crowded itinerary but limited time at his disposal, wants a rapid mental tour of the world of Ayurveda, more or less in the same manner as a tourist wishes to see India within a matter of days or weeks. Even if it is not possible to hand over to him a sizable mass of the large corpus of Ayurveda on a platter, it is not altogether impossible to enable him to return home with a fairly clear picture of the subject.

Time is as powerful an enemy of unsound ideas as it is of pretty women. Both lose their hold over people's minds with the passage of time. It is significant, therefore, that time has added lustre to the ideas and practices which constitute Ayurveda. The progress of modern science has increasingly upheld the soundness of Ayurvedic tenets.

Why has Ayurveda not gone the way of Egyptian and Greek medicine? What lies behind its survival value, its capacity to compete against eternity in the race for benefiting humanity? Why does Ayurveda continue to enjoy a vast following in this subcontinent in spite of the fact that its fundamental concepts were evolved some three thousand years ago? For an answer, consider the following.

Sir Havelock Charles, a former Principal of the Calcutta Medical College, the first medical educational institution to be established in India by the British, once castigated the Ayurvedic profession in strong terms for prescribing a salt-free diet in dropsy and for believing that filaria aggravated during sleep and at night. Shortly after the publication of this criticism, Widal and Javal of Paris released their findings on the harmful effects of retained chlorides in cases of anasarca and ascites (dropsy, fluid retention), confirming the 3,000-year-old Ayurvedic, and reversing the modern allopathic, stand on the subject. This was followed by the rediscovery and confirmation, later on, of the Ayurvedic concept of filarial aggravation during sleep and at night. Sir Havelock, like all great men, took this in a scientific spirit.

The consistent excellence, soundness and utility of the Ayurvedic concepts are reflected in the continuing success of Ayurvedic treatment of patients. A typical example, demonstrating the spectacular curative value of Ayurveda, is that of a highly westernised Bombay lawyer who would not have anything to do with this system of medicine. Convalescing from an attack of coronary thrombosis in what could be

* Editor's Note : This article will be of special interest to our readers because the Ashram has, as part of its manifold medical service, a large Ayurvedic clinic under Vaidya Kesarimal.

described as India's leading modern hospital under foreign management, he developed pyelitis (acute inflammation of the kidney). Microscopic examination of urine showed 300 pus cells per field. Treatment with an antibiotic, streptomycin, cleared the pus and the symptoms within seventy-two hours. The condition recurred two weeks later. As streptomycin proved ineffective this time, furadentin, the antibiotic of choice against B.coli infection, was administered. The pus cells started diminishing in number. But, even as the treatment was on, they started to increase again! Heavy doses of furadentin and added antibiotics failed to control the disease. The infection had become antibiotic-resistant. In an atmosphere of funk and worry, the Ayurvedic treatment was resorted to. It consisted of medicines which, in their highest concentrations, could not destroy a single bacillus *in vitro*. Yet the patient was completely cured.

Such cases, covering a wide field of disease, are legion.

However, medicine is only a single facet of Ayurveda. In its full scope, it covers all aspects of life, from the moment the organism comes into being to the time it reverts to inanimate matter. But, perhaps, it would be better to present the textual concepts themselves.

Literally, Ayurveda means biology. But the ambit of Ayurveda is much wider than that of biology. In addition to covering all that the term biology covers, the corpus of Ayurveda embraces the art of living a full and purposeful life. The Ayurvedic morals and way of life are almost the opposites of their biological counterparts.

Ayurveda defines health as a state of well-balanced metabolism with a happy state of the being, the mind and the senses. The definition of disease is very comprehensive: *dukha-samyoga* — that is, contact with *dukha*. *Dukha* has no exact equivalent in the English language; it means physical discomfort, pain or suffering as well as mental anguish, including the pangs of jealousy, fear, anger, avarice, hate, passion, etc.

Disease is fourfold: 1. *Agantuka* (adventitious); 2. *Shariraka* (physical); 3. *Manasika* (mental); 4. *Svabhavika* (natural).

Generally speaking, the adventitious disease is treated surgically; the physical disease medically, the mental disease psycho-analytically and the natural disease spiritually.

The inroads that the ideas of God, Soul, Karma and the cycle of birth and death have made into Ayurvedic literature *do not affect* the basic concepts of metabolism in health and disease and the prophylactic and therapeutic approaches thereto. Their influence on the non-religious and main empirico-scientific aspects of Ayurveda is no more than that of a religious-minded surgeon's prayer for the success of an operation. The technique remains unaffected.

The definition of Ayurvedic treatment boasts of the widest coverage of possible prophylactic and therapeutic approaches conceived by any system of medicine: "A salubrious use of (a) drugs (*aushadha*), (b) diets (*anna*) and (c) practices (*vihara*), prescribed jointly and severally, (i) contrary to the cause of the disease, or (ii) contrary to the disease itself, or (iii) contrary to both the cause and the disease, or

(iv) similar to the cause of the disease, or (v) similar to the disease, or (vi) similar to both the cause and the disease, constitutes treatment (*upashaya*)."

This accepts and covers all the principles of allopathy, homoeopathy and naturopathy, and explains why the Ayurvedic system is not in a position to disapprove of any of these "pathies". According to Ayurveda, they are alternative approaches to a common objective.

The definition of medicine is even wider: "Nothing exists in the realm of thought or experience that cannot be used as 'medicine' (therapeutic agent)." It means that all existing phenomena, physical or physiological, psychic or emotional — *e.g.*, anger and tranquillity, joy and sorrow, fear and confidence, love and hate, food and drink, drugs (of mineral, vegetable or animal origin), fasts, massage, posture and exercise, desirable or undesirable experiences or situations, social, geographical and climatic conditions, laudatory or adverse comments, good, bad or indifferent thoughts, etc. — have a bearing on the body chemistry. There is nothing that can be experienced or conceived that does not influence the body or the mind of the individual to a greater or lesser degree. Since *anything* that affects the constitution in one way or another can be utilised as a therapeutic agent, there is nothing that is not medicine.

Human beings are divided into three psychosomatic types, according to their psychic and physical traits and their respective characteristic reactions to drugs, diets and practices, all of which, strictly speaking, have different actions on different constitutions. And the three types are dominated by three respective *doshas*: *vayu*, *pitta* and *kapha*. The Ayurvedic physician, while treating the patient, has thus to keep an eye on the specific norm of the "type" and deviations from that norm. That is why Ayurveda is said to treat the patient "as a whole".

The village *vaidya*, the grandma, the elders in general, by instinctive observation and assimilation, as also by constant practice, develop a "feel" of the constitution of the patient even while suggesting a remedy for the disease. They accommodate the constitutional traits of the patient, thereby extending to him the benefit of the characteristic Ayurvedic treatment, which is practically free from drug allergies and side effects. Even when the highly generalised popular remedies are commonly prescribed for a large number of people having different metabolic patterns, the constitutional peculiarities of the patients are accommodated by adding different *anupanas* ("vehicles") which give the desired specific metabolic "slants" to the general remedies prescribed.

SHIV SHARMA

(With acknowledgments to *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, July 16, 1967).

SEVEN LIVES

A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL

(Continued from the issue of January 1975)

CHAPTER VIII: Part 2

ERIC Torgeir was thirty-four years old when he made the move from Oslo to the U.N. Secretariat in New York, even though the time there was not a fertile one for an idealist. Each major nation still believed itself to be dangerously and heedlessly sovereign when dealing with its peers and supposed colleagues. The world teetered on the brink of, and occasionally toppled into, open conflagration in several arenas simultaneously. A sizeable percentage of the world's "under-developed" nations were seeking and achieving their full rights to political independence, which meant that Africa and the Middle East were in upheaval, while China was in the process of swallowing Tibet. Meanwhile U.N. agencies flitted here and there wherever they were not positively repulsed, like barely tolerated good fairies holding the combatants apart with their thin, shaky arms and exercising their voices for restraint — ever more restraint — considering the nature of the consequences. Nevertheless there was no doubt that given the unenlightened state of mind which most of the participating governments still exhibited, what the U.N. achieved was nothing short of a quiet miracle, and that the little fairies existed at all pointed to some unheralded and unprecedented achievement in the world's consciousness. Eric would have been the first to acknowledge this, yet during his initial months at U.N. headquarters, those days would inevitably come when he heard the debates in the Security Council revert to a tone of barbaric tribalism that Homer would have greeted with familiarity, and several thousand years of human development would appear to slip into the void. It was at these times that Eric's faith in his own human idealism would totter, and he would wonder if the incorrigible species of which he was a member merited the trouble of its own redemption. The glacial waters and the dark forests of Norway would beckon him back from the treacherous frontiers of man's world, and a few times he came within a hair's breadth of abandoning everything and heeding the call.

The decade of the fifties marched drearily by, yet Eric stuck to his work not daring to turn from it decisively, despite the recurring disillusionments and disappointments. It was at just such a low point after ten years in the service of the world body that he happened to be passing through the Publications Division Book Shop in the basement of the Secretariat building when he was paralysed in his tracks by the sight of a familiar face. The lordly visage of Sri Aurobindo, the same image he bore imprinted on his soul from the cave relief of Hiranyamaya, gazed imperturbably at him from a book cover in a glass-fronted show-case. Stunned, Eric found he could not breathe for several seconds, and he stood utterly dazed amidst the madly whirling eddies of his own

fragmented recollections, till he was afraid he would faint. Yet nothing was clear, nothing coherent. All he knew was that he had stumbled upon some great, long-buried knowledge. But he could not sensibly uncover it. Some vast emotion threatened to overwhelm him but in his confusion he could make out neither its source nor its nature. Some immense yearning uncoiled in him like an awakening serpent but to what end he could not see. He knew only one recourse and he resorted to it immediately: he left the building after informing his staff that he was unwell and fled to the tranquillity of his apartment, his thoughts and his feelings still swimming around him as though he were an inebriate. Once secure in his room's encapsulated stillness, he did what Edward Everton had done on a similar occasion. For the first time in his adult life he wept in his agony of remembrance — that agony which is equal to the indescribable delight of seeing one's beloved after an unconscionable and despairing separation. For the pieces of recollection ceased to fly about disjointedly in an hour or two. After that, they began to knit together until Eric knew his Lord again, recognized and embraced the White Lion which was the token of his love, remembered the hands that had carved the bas-relief — the hands of Hiranyamaya which had been his own — surrendered to the splendour and ecstasy of Silent Daughter's unveiled presence — the goddess he had been privileged to love as his queen at Deogarh; and lastly yearned to read and absorb once more the words of the Master as he had come to know them during the last years of his life as Edward Everton.

That night when he finally fell asleep for sheer exhaustion, he experienced the sweetest repose of his life. The turbid jangle of man's affairs was driven from his consciousness by the ambrosial nectar of a more blissful world, and he felt buoyantly released from the shackles of his own humanity. As a consequence, the next morning when he awoke he felt a vastly different man. Within him the plane of the human mental ideal to which he had heretofore linked his aspirations and which he had found so increasingly beleaguered by present circumstances and the conduct of his fellowmen, had taken flight, and he was glad to note its disappearance. The void it left within him felt wide and free, and he himself felt as he stepped into the controlled hubub of city traffic that the nymphs of the fjords and the forests had come to him even in the midst of these exhaust fumes and concrete towers. For he had freed himself from the tight cages of the human mind and its constructions, and could soar limitlessly like a great, supernatural eagle and summon to himself what he pleased.

His first task was to acquire the book of Sri Aurobindo's that he had seen, plus any others of his Master's works that he could lay his hands on, and then, in every moment of his spare time, to immerse himself in them. Within a week, from one source or another he had accumulated in his flat almost all of Sri Aurobindo's works available in America. And six months later he had understood from all he had absorbed in his reading that not only must man surmount the beast but must still further awaken in himself the latent, waiting god. Nor was the time for such an awakening set for some distantly future date. Its time was now, and the price man would pay for his failure to rise to the occasion would be destruction and death. How desperately

true, Eric knew. The phantoms of such an apocalyptic destruction haunted every corridor and chamber of that soaring block of glass, concrete, and steel where he worked, more than they haunted any other place on earth. Each day they brushed against him as he moved from office to office. Their heady, indefinable smell assailed his nostrils, and their chill wrapped about his heart like the breath of a grey and hopeless Stygian realm from whose doom there is no return.

But now, galvanized by the new inspiration, Eric flung himself still more earnestly into his work. All traces of a personal life vanished from his routine, and several times a week he felt compelled to remain at his desk till well after ten at night. It was not long before his diligence was noted, and met with its reward. His movement up the hierarchical ladder of promotions became accelerated. New areas of responsibility rapidly began to come into his hands, and the range of his administrative control took in wider and wider areas of the august body's inner working.

Eric scarcely had time to breathe, and yet he was loving every intense and hectic moment of it. He found himself curiously prepared for his exacting task — his body as nerved and pliant as a superb piece of machinery for the immense quantities of energy that passed through it, his mind and heart united in an utterly calm yet obsessive desire to serve to the very maximum of which they were capable, his soul light and quietly joyful as it watched the daily drama of his life unfold. Altogether he felt like a cheetah in its prime bounding across the African plain faster than any other creature alive, revelling in the perfection of its own movement, its enthralled senses carried on the surge of its own speed.

Eric found too that he no longer cared for any particular result in his work or in the outcome of the U.N.'s workings as a whole. He had come to feel instead his Master's hands resting on his head lightly yet ever so definitely, and he knew that his energy and inspiration flowed from that magic touch. At the same time, the Stygian phantoms faded from his consciousness for it was borne in upon him with the certitude of a god child's faith, that the Divine One wished earth and man to live — not meet their end in the wretched oblivion of Babylon's Gilgamesh, who once having died never again succeeded in returning to the realms of the living. Thus Eric was relieved of all his former worries and all-too-human despairs, the Master of the White Lion having once again blessed him with his presence and enfolding security. Then there were the boons — for the Divine Being's generosity had not slackened over the centuries — and the most spectacular of them was presented to Eric on an August evening in 1963 when he had allowed himself to go home by an early eight o'clock.

It came to him after his dinner was over, and he had sat down to read. No sooner had he taken the volume in his lap than his Master's presence emerged and rose vividly from his divine symbol stamped upon the cover of the book. The presence continued to unfold before him, and then ascended into a heaven blindingly illuminated with a golden light, while Eric's heart and soul rose in a mounting cumulus of excitement. Now the great being faded from view and in his place — or rather through and out of him — emerged a vast and dazzling sun. In its turn the orb of the sun metamorphosed

to the form of a blazing god — the Sun God himself — while about him a chariot materialized. In front of the chariot stood four horses of a shimmering golden white, their manes and tails as bright and softly delicate as cloud wisps caught in their chariot-*eer's* fiery blaze. And yet again before the horses there stretched the huge and empty space of a stark and gold-washed desert, utterly void of life yet somehow ardently beckoning, intensely desirous of having its emptiness filled, its horizons overrun. Nor did its mute wish turn out to be an idle one. Soon a multitude began to trickle into the great arena from every side. It seemed to materialize out of the light particles in the air itself and converge towards the farthest horizon where the Sun God waited in his chariot, and from which he silently welcomed the gathering of his peoples. For by earth standards this was no single group, but nation upon nation, horde upon horde, army upon army that gathered at the call of some imperative yet inaudible summons. Nevertheless there was a great deal in common between all the gathering beings. All had bodies of golden light, and all were children born from the Sun God's unnumbered beams. With them came a strange assortment of creatures — to begin with, millions upon millions of golden horses, many bearing riders upon their backs, yet many also running free with an instinct and knowledge as perfect and true as that possessed by any of the beings in human form. Then there were the dogs, sleek hounds that ran with the horses, and with a divine fidelity and intelligence performed every task appointed to them. Finally came the birds — the air becoming thick with them in all shapes and sizes from tiny tits to great white falcons and eagles, many of whom sat on the peoples' wrists and shoulders while the rest soared and circled in the sky. Owls too were especially represented for they had come in great numbers but few were on the wing, the majority of them perching on the sun-men's shoulders as austere omens of prescience. For the owls knew everything past and present and they revelled in any sacred rite propitiating divine wisdom, for which they always arrived *en masse*. Indeed, what was in progress now was to be such a rite and much more besides, and the owls would not have missed a moment of it. A strange power emanated from their hypnotic eyes — a power weighty with expectation and the foretaste of some new and unheard-of victory.

Victory? Yes. In minutes, it became clear to Eric that the concourse he was being privileged to watch was the nucleus of a numberless army gathering for some cyclopean offensive. And then in a flash he understood that the object of the offensive was humanity and the earth itself. His excitement swelled almost to the point of delirium, yet inexorably the vision kept unfolding, and gripping him in ecstatic thrall. Now almost the entire desert seethed with the intermingling movement of the hordes, and the next stage of the drama unfolded. All at once out of the chaos a miraculous order emerged. The mass of beings parted in the centre to form a wide clear avenue through its midst, and down this avenue in stately splendour the Sun God's chariot began to move with the god erect in his car and his immortal horses unbridled and unreined, pulling him forward by the light of their own divine intelligence. The effect of the scene was stunning and awesome as only the spectacles of the gods can be. With steady and unflinching step the horses paced through the centre of the gathered hordes, and

then suddenly, as the Sun God raised his white flamed arms and brought them down before him in a sweeping gesture, leapt forward as with one body and began to fly over the ground. At the same time, as the God leant over the front of his chariot, a great cry broke from his throat and fine whips of light sprang from his fingertips to ply over his horses' backs. Even then, they did not run for fear as earthly horses would have done, but for the joy and exaltation of the movement and the mission toward which they flew. Now the whole army surged into motion behind its leader. The open avenue closed on the wheels of his chariot and beings whose numbers it would be impossible to calculate in human figures stretched their fluid resplendent limbs in flight as they poured across the aureate desert and filled the air with their enormous symphonic cry.

Invincible, irresistible and illimitable in strength, the forces of the Sun God streamed on, the beautiful deity aflame in their midst, the golden horses galloping on with the rising and falling motion of waves in a golden, on-flowing sea. Now again with a renewed shock of recognition Eric realized that the destination for which this massed invasion of light was headed was the earth itself, shrouded as it was in its cloud-blanketed layers of a habitual obscurity. Would the Sun ever succeed in piercing that darkness? Eric was tempted to say "no", for the sombre encrustations about the earth were too thick, too old and too well established to allow themselves to be displaced. And yet — and yet could anyone deny the certainty of that descending vision of light? Was not the very basis of its power the utter certainty that it bore, that utter stamp of divine invincibility once the divine decision had been taken? The war the golden beings would have to wage may be protracted and muffled in the obscurity of the Adversary, but the ultimate result was sure. That Eric found difficult to refute, for he had looked directly into the face of a divine certitude and not even his human mind had the courage to question it.

Still the vision continued to unroll as the golden army left the desert where it had gathered, and flowed through the black, velvet spaces of a heavenly night. Below it, the earth appeared as a turgid, slowly enlarging dot, while to one side of the great river of light now arose the immobile form of the Divine One as he had come to Hiranyamaya — the Master of the White Lion. He it was, Eric realized, who directed the entire flow, he who had marshalled it to begin with, he who had ordained the movements of the gods and their followers.

Simultaneously soaring above the moving army appeared a great white bird — its incredible, outstretched wings spanning the entire horde; and Eric knew by some mystic instinct that it was the supreme force of the universal Creatrix that had incarnated in that giant form to protect the onward movement and see it to its fruition under the resplendent aegis of her spreading wings.

Now at last there was no more to be seen, as the river of light poured itself upon the earth and there seemingly ceased to exist. For as soon as the light came into contact with the darkness only the darkness prevailed. The light was swallowed, and the earth appeared as before, clothed in its dense coat with a meteor of luminosity attached

to it that in no way seemed to effect a change in its original covering. Yet by the same instinct that had revealed the identity of the white bird to Eric, he sensed the forces of light penetrating the dark crusts and infiltrating through them despite the light's apparent disappearance from view. At the same instant a new image confirmed his feeling, for now he found himself transported from his viewpoint of galactic space, and implanted once again upon man's little earth. The envelope of darkness that enclosed it was above him filling the sky to the horizons like a thunderous mantle of storm clouds; and through this mantle drops of golden rain were falling. The drops fell on the soil, on men and their cities, on beasts and forests, mountains and seas, and sank deep into the substance of each. They entered into Eric too as they entered into everything, and floated down to the depths of his consciousness, where he lost them from sight. But he was no longer dismayed at their disappearance, because he knew each drop to be deathless and indestructible — not one would perish even in the direst abysses. Even though it may not immediately blossom, it would lie in its appointed place, immortal element that it was, and await the hour of its victorious re-emergence.

Now at last the Divine Master's latest boon of vision faded into a boundless peace, and Eric slipped into the repose of his life for he truly slept that night in the lap of the immortal gods.

(To be continued)

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BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

How The Mother's Grace Came to Us, Part One, by *Har Krishan Singh*. Published by Har Krishan Singh, 16, Rue Saint Louis, Pondicherry-1. Price 1.50.

THIS is a very timely publication. It is particularly useful to spiritual aspirants who want to follow the rugged path of spiritual life, a path full of struggles, troubles and doubts.

While going through the true stories related in this book, one gets a new courage, a new hope. When faith falters and one is up against a hundred odds on the spiritual path, these stories' content of spiritual experiences infuses an invigorated confidence in the Grace of the Mother. One begins to feel that if Her Grace could do so many things to others, if by Her Grace so many miracles could happen in the lives of others, they can happen in one's own life also.

Now especially as the Mother is not there in Her physical form, these reminiscences of various people who got help and Grace from Her, got their problems solved and their difficulties removed or were uplifted into Her Love's care, are of particular use, are particularly relevant to our present stage of growth. They readily boost one's faith and save one from backsliding and despondency.

Even for others the book can be of great help in turning them to the spiritual life. The stories are short and easy, and children will relish them very much. If they are told and retold to them, they can bring about a definite leaning towards spiritual understanding and faith and direct the seeking soul to the Mother.

There are two inspired poems by the poet-author. One describes his spiritual experience when the Mother's body lay in state and She inwardly gave him Her last-hour message. The other, named "Thou Shalt Come", invokes Her blessings for all. Here he expresses his conviction about Her return for the sake of Her children.

The author had special blessings from the Mother on reporting and collecting these experiences and reminiscences, and he will be glad to publish in his future books the experiences and reminiscences of those who want to have the privilege of putting on record how the Mother has been helping them and the way in which they received Her Grace. These may be sent to him directly.

There is a beautiful painting by the author on the cover "with love" from the Mother.

Paper, printing and get-up are good.

We shall eagerly wait for the publication of the subsequent Parts of this book.

JAYINI ROY