

MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

APRIL 1975

Price : Rs. 1-75

LIFE-MEMBERSHIP RATES

Inland : Rs. 250/-
Overseas : £ 28 (Sea-mail).
 : \$ 70 (Sea-mail).

OVERSEAS AIR-MAIL

Owing to the rise in postal rates, the revised
Air-mail charges are:

Overseas Life-Membership: £ 91 and \$ 238,
Overseas Yearly Subscription: £ 6. 50 and \$ 17.

Posting Date for MOTHER INDIA :

26th to 28th of the preceding month.

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

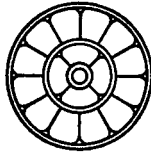
All Rights Reserved. No matter appearing in this journal or part thereof may be reproduced or translated without written permission from the publishers except for short extracts as quotations.

All correspondence to be addressed to:

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

Editor's Phone: 782

Publishers : Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

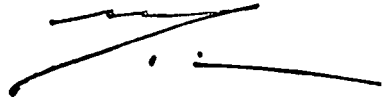


Lord, Thou hast willed, and I execute,

A new light breaks upon the earth,

A new world is born.

The things that were promised are fulfilled.



MOTHER INDIA

MONTHLY REVIEW OF CULTURE

Vol. XXVII

No. 4

“Great is Truth and it shall prevail.”

CONTENTS

	Page
A PRAYER OF THE MOTHER: APRIL 8, 1914	... 281
THE FOUNDATION OF YOGA: A LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO	... 281
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	<i>The Mother</i> ... 282
GOD OF MY LIFE (Poem)	<i>Beatrice Bruteau</i> ... 286
SRI AUROBINDO AND THE CRIPPS PROPOSALS	<i>K. D. S</i> ... 287
AMERICA AND AUROVILLE	<i>William T. Netter</i> ... 291
WORLD UNITY	<i>Norman C. Dowsett</i> ... 295
HAVING SEEN HER ONCE (Poem)	<i>A. Venkataranga</i> ... 296
THE CRISIS OF KNOWLEDGE IN CONTEMPORARY LIFE: THE RESUMÉ OF A TALK AT “KNOWLEDGE” HALL ON JANUARY 3, 1975	<i>Indra Sen</i> ... 297
IN TUNE WITH THE INFINITE: AN APPRECIATION OF THE SONNETS OF SRI AUROBINDO	<i>G. Sriramamurty</i> ... 299
THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE FUTURE: A SEARCH APROPOS OF R.C. ZAEHNER’S STUDY IN SRI AUROBINDO AND TEILHARD DE CHARDIN	<i>K. D. Sethna</i> ... 305
EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY	<i>Charles Maloney</i> ... 314
THEY (Poem)	<i>Ajit S. Rao</i> ... 319

CONTENTS

LOTUS-FLAME OR SURYAMAN (Poem)	<i>Romen</i>	...	320
THY CHILDREN (Poem)	<i>Har Krishan Singh</i>	...	321
FLOWER OF LOVE: A STORY FOR CHILDREN (Translated from the German)	<i>Michel Klostermann</i>	...	322
THE HAWK (Poem)	<i>Kamalakanto</i>	...	325
SEMINAR ON NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION		...	326
EUROPE 1974: A TRAVELOGUE	<i>Chandauna & Sanat K. Banerji</i>	...	328
TO OUR MOTHER THE INFINITE: INVOCATION AT THE MATRIMANDIR CONSTRUCTION SITE (Poem)	<i>Seyril</i>	...	331
SEVEN LIVES: A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL	<i>Bina Bragg</i>	...	332
“LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL”: AUROVILLE — THE CITY OF SRI AUROBINDO	<i>Narayan Prasad</i>	...	338
BOOKS IN THE BALANCE: KOSHISHTO KARISH: A Novel in Gujarati by Sunanda	<i>Review by Lalita</i>	...	342

Editor: K. D. SETHNA
 Managing Editor: K. R. PODDAR
 Published by: P. COUNOUMA
 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

A PRAYER OF THE MOTHER

APRIL 8, 1914

O LORD, with thought in-gathered and the heart at peace, I approach Thee and all my being is filled with Thy divine Presence; grant that I may henceforth see Thee alone in all things and that all be resplendent with Thy divine Light. O may all hatred be appeased, all rancour effaced, fears dispelled, suspicions destroyed, malevolence overcome, and in this town, in this country, upon this earth, may all hearts feel vibrating within them that sublime love, source of all transfiguration.

THE FOUNDATION OF YOGA

A LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

EQUANIMITY and peace in all conditions in all parts of the being is the first foundation of the Yogic status. Either Light (bringing with it knowledge) or Force (bringing strength and dynamism of many kinds) or Ananda (bringing love and joy of existence) can come next according to the trend of the nature. But peace is the first condition without which nothing else can be stable.

31-7-1936

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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

JANUARY 2, 1957

DELIGHT OF BEING

“If Brahman were only an impersonal abstraction eternally contradicting the apparent fact of our concrete existence, cessation would be the right end of the matter, but love and delight and self-awareness have also to be reckoned.

The universe is not merely a mathematical formula for working out the relation of certain mental abstractions called numbers and principles to arrive in the end at a zero or a void unit, neither is it merely a physical operation embodying a certain equation of forces. It is the delight of a Self-lover, the play of a Child, the endless self-multiplication of a Poet intoxicated with the rapture of His own power of endless creation.

We may speak of the Supreme as if He were a mathematician working out a cosmic sum in numbers or a thinker resolving by experiment a problem in relations of principles and the balance of forces: but also we should speak of Him as if He were a lover, a musician of universal and particular harmonies, a child, a poet. The side of thought is not enough; the side of delight too must be entirely grasped: Ideas, Forces, Existences, Principles are hollow moulds unless they are filled with the breath of God’s delight.

These things are images, but all is an image. Abstractions give us the pure conception of God’s truths; images give us their living reality.

If Idea embracing Force begot the world, Delight of Being begot the Idea. Because the Infinite conceived an innumerable delight in itself, therefore worlds and universes came into existence

Consciousness of being and Delight of being are the first parents. Also, they are the last transcendences. Unconsciousness is only an intermediate swoon of the conscious or its obscure sleep; pain and self-extinction are only delight of being running away from itself in order to find itself elsewhere or otherwise.

Delight of being is not limited in Time; it is without end or beginning. God comes out from one form of things only to enter into another.

What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.”

Sri Aurobindo, *Thoughts and Glimpses*,¹ Vol. 16, pp. 380-81)

¹ All page numbers refer to the Centenary Edition.

Sweet Mother, can one go out of Time and Space?

If one goes out of the manifestation.

It is the fact of objectivisation, of manifestation which has created time and space. To go out of that one must return to the origin, that is, go out of the manifestation. Otherwise from the very first objectivisation time and space were created.

There is a feeling or a perception or an experience of eternity and infinity in which one gets the impression of going out of time and space It is only an impression.

One must go beyond all forms, even the subtlest forms of consciousness, far beyond the forms of thought, the forms of consciousness, to be able to have this impression of being outside space and time. This is what generally happens to people who enter into samadhi (the true samadhi), and when they come back to their normal consciousness, they remember nothing, for, in fact, there was nothing they could remember. That is what Sri Aurobindo says here: If Brahman were only an impersonal abstraction, the one reasonable end would be cessation. For it is evident that if one goes out of time and space, all separate existence automatically ceases.

There, then. So one *can*, without much result!

Is that all? Have you tried to go out of time and space?

(The child shakes its head vigorously)

Mother, will you explain the New Year message? What is the meaning of: "It is not a crucified but a glorified body that will save the world" ?¹

I am going to tell you something, you will understand.

One day, I don't know when exactly, suddenly I remembered that I had to give a message for the year. Generally these messages reveal what is going to happen during the year, and as I had nothing to say, for certain reasons, I asked myself, or rather asked if I could not receive a clear indication of what had to be said. I asked exactly this: what was the best state in the world, and the thing which could help men or that state of consciousness to draw a little closer to the truth?

What was the best state?

A few hours later I had in my hands a booklet which had come from America, a sort of review of a photographic exhibition entitled *The Family of Man*. There were quotations in this booklet and the reproduction of many photographs, classified by subjects, and all for the purpose of trying to awaken the true sense of fraternity in men. The whole thing represented an effort — immense, pathetic — to prevent the probable war. The quotations had been chosen by a woman-reporter who had come here and whom I had seen. And so, all this had come expressing really touchingly the best human will which could manifest on earth at present, from the collective point of view. I am not saying there are not individuals who have risen much higher and

¹ "A Power greater than that of Evil can alone win the Victory. It is not a crucified but a glorified body that will save the world."

understand much better, but these are individual cases and not a collective attempt to do something for humanity. I was really touched.

And then I came to the end of their booklet and as a remedy they suggested in their ignorant goodwill to prevent men from killing one another It was so poor, so feeble, so ignorant, so inefficient, that truly I was moved and — I built a dream: that this exhibition may come here, to Pondicherry, that we could show it and make a concluding fascicule to their booklet in which they would be shown the true remedy. And all that took shape very concretely, with the kind of photographs which would be necessary, the quotations that should be put, and then came, quite decisively, like something welling up from the depths of consciousness, this sentence. I wrote it down, and as soon as it was written I told myself: "Why, it is this, my message." And it was decided it would be that. *Voilà*.

This means that it is just the thing which can make the best goodwill of mankind progress, the goodwill which is being expressed on earth today. It has taken a rather special form because this goodwill came from a Christian country and had naturally a fairly special Christian influence, but this is an attitude found everywhere in the world also, differently expressed according to the countries and religions, and it was as a reaction against the ignorance of this attitude that I wrote this. Naturally, there is the same idea in India, that idea of the complete renunciation of all physical reality, the profound contempt for the material world which is considered an illusion and a falsehood, leaving, as Sri Aurobindo always said, the field free to the sovereign royalty of the adverse forces. If you escape from the concrete reality to seek a distant, abstract one, you leave the whole field of this concrete realisation at the full disposal of the adverse forces — which have taken hold of it and more or less govern it now — in order to go away yourself to realise what Sri Aurobindo calls here a Zero or a void unit — to become the king of a nought. It is the return into Nirvana. That idea is everywhere in the world but in different forms of its expression.

It is because so far evil has been opposed by weakness, by a spiritual force without any power for transformation in the material world, that this formidable effort of goodwill has ended only in deplorable failure and left the world in the same state of misery and corruption and falsehood. It is on the *same* plane as where the adverse forces are ruling that one must have a greater power than theirs, a power which can conquer them totally *in that very domain*. To put it otherwise, a spiritual force which can transform both the consciousness and the material world. This force is the supramental force. What is necessary is to be receptive to its action on the physical plane, and not run away into a far-off Nirvana leaving to the enemy full power over what one abandons.

It is neither sacrifice nor renunciation nor weakness which can bring the victory. It is only Delight, a delight which is strength, endurance, supreme courage. The delight brought by the supramental force. It is much more difficult than giving up everything and running away, it asks for an infinitely greater heroism — but that is the only means of conquering.

Nothing more? I have some questions here, but now it is a bit late.

Mother, this new force which is at work now, will it act through individual effort or independently of it?

Why this opposition? It acts independently of all individual effort, so to say automatically in the world, but it *creates* individual effort and *makes use* of it. Individual effort is one of its means of action, and perhaps the most powerful. If one thinks that individual effort is due to the individual, it is an illusion, but if the individual under the pretext that there's a universal action independent of himself refuses to make individual effort, he refuses to give his collaboration. The Force wants to use, and in fact does use, individual effort as one of the most powerful means at its disposal. It is the Force itself, it is this Power which *is* your individual effort.

And so, don't you see, that first movement of vital self-love when it is told: "You don't exist in yourself"; naturally it says: "Good, I shan't do anything any more! It is not I who work, so I don't work any longer" and "It is good, the Divine can do everything, it is his business, I don't stir any more. If the credit does not go to me (it comes to that), I don't do anything any more." Well, but indeed these things cannot be qualified. This is a thing I hear constantly, it is simply a way of venting one's vexed vanity, that's all. But the real reaction, the pure reaction is an *élan* of collaboration, to play the game with all the energy, the will-power at the disposal of one's consciousness, in the state one is in, with the feeling of being sustained, carried by something infinitely greater than oneself which makes no mistakes, something which protects you and at the same time gives you all the necessary strength and uses you as the best instrument. And one feels that, and one feels one works in security, that one can no longer go wrong, that what one does is done with the maximum result and — in delight. That indeed is the true movement; to feel that one's will is intensified to its maximum because it is no longer a tiny little microscopic person in infinity but an infinite universal Power which makes you act: the Force of Truth. That is the only true reaction.

The other — miserable. "Ah! it is not I who am doing things, ah! it is not my will being expressed, ah! it is not my power that works ... so I lie down flat, stretch myself out in an inert passivity and don't move any more." "Good, good," one tells the Divine, "do all that you like, I just don't exist any longer." That is poor indeed! *Voilà*.

GOD OF MY LIFE

God of my life, I greet You with joy!
With laughter and singing and gay abandon!
For I have found You, O hidden One:
You are the wild freedom at the center of my soul.

There, at the inmost point, where I
— as I had been I —
should be I no more,
there, where the quintessence of I-ness
loses all dimension
and is merged in the marvel of Your out-flowing Energy —
there, Mother, I found You.

There is none before You.
Here we stand at the beginning,
and I exult in You
and call You softly,
Radix Realitatis!

In the intense unity of Your selfhood
You hold all the worlds.
From Your streaming heart they come forth
and yet they remain within You.

You are our environment,
You are our summit,
You are our inmost truth.

I greet You with joy, O Mother,
God of my life.

BEATRICE BRUTEAU

(With acknowledgements to New Catholic World)

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE CRIPPS PROPOSALS

THE end of March and the beginning of April 1942 are memorable for one of the very few interventions of Sri Aurobindo in India's public affairs. World War II was in full swing and Japan had joined hands with Hitler and posed a threat to Burma and even India, both of whom were then under British rule. There was considerable discontent in India and a great reluctance to join the war effort of the British Commonwealth. India could not see much difference between German Nazism and British Imperialism. Most people forgot that the latter was the gradually fading remnant of an old turn of the human political mind, which had once played a necessary role in history but had lost its *raison d'être* in the modern age of national freedom, whereas the former with its dogmas of master race and absolute dictator and merciless regimentation was a current contrary to the drive of human evolution with its many-sided variation both individual and collective.

Churchill was England's Prime Minister at the time. He had been known as a die-hard Imperialist. All of a sudden he appeared to have felt that in the war he was conducting against Hitler the cause of civilisation was at stake and that to serve it at all costs was more important than to preserve the sanctity of the British empire. He wanted India to give up her distrust of the British and throw in her lot wholeheartedly with Britain's own valiant effort to fight the barbarism that was on the march from Germany under the emblem of the Swastika. He gave ear to the advice of liberal thought in England that was in favour of conceding greater freedom to India who had been agitating for independence, especially since the days when Sri Aurobindo had become for a few years the leader of the Nationalist Movement. The well-known liberal thinker, Sir Stafford Cripps, was prominent as a spokesman of this advice. Churchill chose him to carry to India certain proposals meant to meet her basic demands and induce her to join the united front of Britain and her allies against Hitler and his associates. In connection with what came to be known as the Cripps Proposals it may be interesting to put together all the documents relating to Sri Aurobindo's intervention.

Sir Stafford, on arriving in India, issued the following Draft Declaration on behalf of the British Government: "His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of promises made in regard to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion associated with the United Kingdom and other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic and external affairs."

On hearing this declaration on the radio, Sri Aurobindo had the vision that the offer sent by Churchill through Sir Stafford Cripps had come on the wave of a Divine inspiration and that it gave India the substance of independence. At once he sent a

telegram to Sir Stafford: "I have heard your broadcast. As one who has been a nationalist leader and worker for India's independence, though now my activity is no longer in the political but in the spiritual field, I wish to express my appreciation of all you have done to bring about this offer. I welcome it as an opportunity given to India to determine for herself and organise in all liberty of choice her freedom and unity and take an effective place among the world's free nations. I hope that it will be accepted and the right use made of it putting aside all discords and divisions. I hope too that a friendly relation between Britain and India replacing past struggles will be a step towards a greater world-union in which as a free nation her spiritual force will contribute to build for mankind a better and happier life. In this light I offer my public adherence in case it can be of any help in your work." (March 31, 1942)

Cripps immediately telegraphed back to Sri Aurobindo: "I am most touched and gratified by your kind message allowing me to inform India that you who occupy a unique position in the imagination of Indian youth are convinced that the declaration of His Majesty's Government substantially confers that freedom for which Indian Nationalism has so long struggled." (April 1, 1942)

On the heels of this telegram came one from Arthur Moore, editor of the Calcutta Daily, *The Statesman*: "Your message to Sir Stafford Crippps inaugurates the new era. Nothing can prevent it. I am glad that my eyes have seen this salvation coming." (April 1, 1942)

By now negotiations had started between Cripps and the Congress leaders.

Arthur Moore the very next day sent to his paper an editorial comment on Sri Aurobindo's message: "We have not doubted that Sir Stafford Crippps' mission will succeed nor were we depressed by Tuesday's wave of pessimism But since then an event has happened which will change a whole army of doubters and pessimists into optimists. After listening to Sir Stafford's broadcast, Sri Aurobindo has, from his Ashram in Pondicherry, offered his public adherence 'in case it can be of any help in your work'. Rarely in history can so great a help have been so unostentatiously offered. This is the release not only upon India but upon the world of a great spiritual force which has long been awaiting its appointed time." (New Delhi, 2-4-1942)

Seeing that the negotiations with the Congress were not going right Sri Aurobindo decided on a further intervention. This took two forms. On the one hand he sent messages to some important figures in Indian politics. Through Mr. Shiva Rao he communicated to Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru that Cripps's offer should be accepted unconditionally. He also sent a couple of telegrams. One was to "Rajagopalachari, Birla House, New Delhi:" "Is not compromise defense question better than rupture? Some immediate solution urgent face grave peril. Have sent Duraiswami insist urgency. Appeal to you to save India formidable danger new foreign domination when old on way to self-elimination." (2-4-1942, 9-30 a.m.) The reference to the danger of a new foreign domination was evidently to the presence of Japanese forces approaching India. The other telegram was addressed to "Dr. Moonje, Hindu Mahasabha, New Delhi": "Settlement India Britain urgent face approach

grave peril menacing future India. Is there no way while reserving right repudiate resist partition Motherland to accept cooperation purpose war India Union. Cannot combination Mahasabha Congress Nationalist and anti-Jinnah Muslims defeat League in elections Bengal Punjab Sind? Have sent advocate Duraiswami Iyer to meet you.” (2-4-1942, 9-30 a.m.) Here an important point is the grave possibility of a division within the country due to Jinnah’s movement to separate Muslims from Hindus. One of the salutary effects of accepting the Cripps Proposals would be to keep India united in the face of the Japanese threat and thus lead to an unpartitioned free India in the future.

As the telegrams indicate, Sri Aurobindo also took the extraordinary step of sending a personal representative so that his appeal might go home better to the wrangling negotiators. Nirodbaran in his book *Twelve Years with Sri Aurobindo* has memorably painted the scene:¹ “It was the evening hour. Sri Aurobindo was sitting on the edge of his bed just before his daily walking exercise. All of us were present; Duraiswami, the distinguished Madras lawyer and disciple, was selected as the envoy, perhaps because he was a friend of Rajagopalachari.... He was to start for Delhi that very night. He came for Sri Aurobindo’s blessings, lay prostrate before him, got up and stood looking at the Master with folded hands and then departed. We may remind ourselves of Talthybius’s mission to Troy in Sri Aurobindo’s epic poem *Ihon*. Similarly, Duraiswami went with India’s soul in his frail hands and brought it back, down-hearted, rewarded with ungracious remarks for the gratuitous advice.”

Nirodbaran has also written:² “Cripps flew back a disappointed man but with the consolation and gratified recognition that at least one great man had welcomed the idea. When the rejection was announced, Sri Aurobindo said in a quiet tone, ‘I knew it would fail.’ We at once pounced on him and asked him, ‘Why did you then send Duraiswami at all?’ ‘For a bit of *nṣkāma karma*,’³ was his calm reply, without any bitterness or resentment. The full spirit of the kind of ‘disinterested work’ he meant comes out in an early letter of his (December, 1933), which refers to his spiritual work: ‘I am sure of the results of my work. But even if I still saw the chance that it might come to nothing (which is impossible), I would go on unperturbed, because I would still have done to the best of my power the work that I had to do, and what is so done always counts in the economy of the universe.’ We know the aftermath of the rejection of the Cripps Proposals: confusion, calamity, partition, blood-bath, etc., and the belated recognition of the colossal blunder.”

Gradually the colossal blunder is being rectified in general conformity with, though not yet in precise adherence to, the vision expressed by Sri Aurobindo when on his seventy-fifth birthday on August 15, 1947, India obtained her independence and, as Nirodbaran puts it,⁴ “Sri Aurobindo’s ‘bardic’ voice was heard once again”, declaring about the partition of British India into India and Pakistan as a price of

¹ P. 153. ² Pp 153-54.

³ Disinterested work, the essence of which is that the work is inwardly dedicated to the Divine with no attachment to the result. ⁴ P. 154.

freedom: "... by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go: unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future." Nirodbaran has noted¹ that "Sri Aurobindo's prediction has been half-fulfilled, for Bangla Desh (East Pakistan) is now entirely independent, a secular democracy in close collaboration with India."

We may close our account with a significant letter written by M. C. Desai, on September 29, 1942 to the Bombay Daily, *The Times of India*. It is entitled "Complex of Dependency" and runs:

"It is amusing to find such Congress and Liberal stalwarts as Mr. Rajagopalachari and Sir Chimanlal Setalvad openly advocating almost unconditional acceptance of the Cripps proposals and denouncing the Congress leaders for rejecting them.

"But what the Indian man-in-the-street would like to know is why these wise and eminent gentlemen did not speak out their real mind at the right time when Sir Stafford Cripps was here. What prevented 'C.R.', for instance, from breaking with the Congress Working Committee during the negotiations, when he knew it was giving a wrong lead to the country?

"Similarly, one remembers that Sir Chimanlal Setalvad saw Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of the Indian Liberals and submitted their resolution. The elaborate resolution did not fail to emphasise such minor omissions in the scheme as that of a specific mention of women's vote in the provincial plebiscite. But on the crucial question whether the country should accept or reject the scheme the resolution neither definitely said yes or no — quite like the Liberals.

"Curiously, the solitary Indian statesman who took a realistic view and had the courage of his conviction to advise his countrymen unequivocally to accept the Cripps proposals was that mystic and visionary of Pondicherry — Shri Aurobindo Ghose. The belated wisdom of our leaders emphasises the truth of the ancient Sanskrit proverb: 'The Brahmin always thinks too late.'

"Instead of harping on the Mahatma's admittedly 'unpractical idealism', let our leaders organise a countrywide educative propaganda to convince the wide mass of the people of the wisdom of accepting a compromise solution like the Cripps plan if India's problem is to be resolved peacefully and create opportunities for ordinary people to express their honest opinion."

K. D. S

¹ *Ibid*, fn. 2

AMERICA AND AUROVILLE

BACK in Pondicherry after three months in America ... back with renewed vigour to the challenge of Auroville after a re-tasting of past challenges well met in the west ... back to the building of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's City of Dawn after a rich reunion in the invigorating climate and electric atmosphere of the United States.

Perhaps I had forgotten after seven years in India, or perhaps everything had been taken for granted before, but one can only be tremendously impressed, even awed, by the great material progress in my native land ... the airport as you arrive — huge, efficient, with a quiet throb of beautifully controlled and constant activity, with shots of colorful design and works of art placed all around with taste and professional restraint ... the fantastic telephone system which waits to connect you at the press of a few buttons with anyone you would like to talk to anywhere in the country, and this within seconds and with a crystal clarity ... the car that drives you away from the airport — powerful, beautiful, comfortable and piped with hi-fidelity cassettes of sound ... and all the other cars on the wide, smooth, beautifully engineered roads ... the buildings and the country-side outside the car window — lush, well cared for, not at all the worse for wear but rather tuned up by the current concern for pollution and ecology ... the home in which you are received — warm, in fine taste, and filled with every gadget imaginable to make life more easy, free and charming — perfectly controlled lighting and temperature, beautifully covered floors, large glass windows and doors efficiently and tastefully treated, fire-places which work perfectly and are used, orthophonic sound systems and telephones, radios, and television sets everywhere ... furniture which blends and has been figured out just right for every room ... gleaming bathrooms stacked with plush towels, soaps, shampoos, scents, creams, medicines for every possible minor ailment, and with a limitless supply of clear, clean water, hot and cold ... unbelievable kitchens which almost work by themselves at the flip of a switch — enormous refrigerators and deep freezers, wall-ovens and broilers with plexiglass doors and lights inside, electric clothes-washers and driers, dish-washers, toasters, can-openers, even electric carving knives, and every shape of cabinet and rack crammed full with matching sets of glasses, dishes and silverware, and food — in cans, in boxes, in packages, in bottles — liquid, solid, frozen, dehydrated, quick-dried and pre-mixed — so that an attractive, tasty meal filled with vitamins and proteins can be whipped up in a matter of minutes ... the great stores and supermarkets where all these things can be purchased with absolutely no pain at all, except the prices — literally, acres — row on row — lean, bright, air-conditioned, thousands of choices packaged so creatively and with such a flare for color that it is like a “pop” dream happening ... the great universities, libraries, public schools, hospitals, government buildings, the restaurants, the specialty stores, the boats, the great factories, the modern buses and trains, the big manicured farms, the architecture, the cinema houses, theatres, art galleries and culture centres, the parks, sports arenas, the beaches, the hotels, the resorts, the drive-in banks, the gas stations and the

car-washes ... and, by far the most of all, the people — open, warm, healthy, beautiful and strong, friendly, courteous, really ready to help with a few exceptions in the over-crowded large cities, full of vitality, generous, ready to laugh, ready to listen and to learn, and almost hungry to love and be loved, the most out-going people in the world.

To denigrate or knock this great technology and material progress is pure sour grapes. Not to see the dynamic presence of the Divine in all this beauty, wealth, warmth, and efficiency is simply not to want to see it, a kind of blindness which would look for an ideal which ignores the great potentialities of this material earth, a kind of insecure vision which would be afraid of the Divine in matter as a threat and a distraction for the more purely spiritual levels in man. The fact is that the general movement in America is outward towards the God they find in their full extroverted lives, towards the magic which happens through their alert cooperation with the energy and powers of nature. It may be true that the union they are finding with God in matter is an unconscious one for the most part, but in general they seem to be happy with this and able even to face their own personal tragedies like sickness and death with a natural resignation and courage. In their outer lives and on the surface of their pulled-together material existence, nothing would ever seem able to rock the optimism of this great people. In a sense, it is the promised land.

There is some doubt at the moment, however, whether the political and economic systems which have enabled the people to create this great standard of living can protect it and nurture its further growth. Democratic politics seems to have gotten away from the people and they are perplexed, disturbed and ashamed by it. The capitalistic economy seems to have gone a bit shaky with obvious repercussions at home and abroad and the people are frightened by prices out of control and by a rather darkly motivated process of competition which must go on in spite of itself. In general, the people do not seem to be overwhelmingly bothered by this and they go on spending and living as high on the hog as possible, trusting that something will be figured out as it always has in the past. However, the more thoughtful elements in the country and many of the younger people are more deeply disturbed and are looking for new directions, not only to protect the American life style but to perhaps find a higher way of life with an even fuller promise for the future. These advanced people were really ready to listen about India and Auroville. They begin to admit that America's extroverted movement towards satisfaction, joy, even God in the good life outside might not be the full picture. Their new search is manifesting itself quite clearly in many ways: the hyper-realism and questioning in the cinema and theater; abstract art, still in vogue; many groups dedicated to the search for self-realization — with their interest in telepathy, bio-feedback, mind control and Yoga even in the shallow way it is being presented for the most part in America today; the intense way you are questioned about India and Auroville by the younger intelligent element all over the country; the new attitude towards sex where the current license itself would seem to be a questioning: a man like Nelson Rockefeller accepting political office when he

needs it only to help his countrymen towards something perhaps totally new; the ever present problem of drugs and alcoholism where questioning is linked, sadly, with self-destruction; the complete re-styling and re-thinking of the institutions of religion, where the spiritual leaders are trying every way to preserve a great treasure which seems to be slipping away from them ... all of this an admission, consciously, sometimes unconsciously, of an inner emptiness, a suspicion that there is perhaps a deeper kind of life inside man not yet tapped enough, which may be even more satisfying, more secure and more full than the great, vibrant outer life which they have pioneered with such success in the past. They know that they would be fools to give up the good life they have achieved but they seem ready to become more aware of what makes it good ... some are eager to have the great divine Presence in the outer world given its proper name and then to have it introduced and joined with the great divine Presence within. It is in this sense that we can talk about Auroville and its place in a completed picture of the future of mankind.

As opposed to the West, India's motion has mainly been within and she is a great expert on man's contact with his spiritual nature. The great people here have always looked first within for their satisfactions, their joys, their God, and however they move towards the outside it is always in the light of what they have found within their inner hearts. Apparently, what they have found outside has never compared very well with what they find within because they go out with reluctance and with an indifference which is sometimes interpreted by the outside world as lassitude, a primitive lack of sensitivity to matter, a lack of the ability to cope with life. The fact is that, compared with the living standards and technologies of the West, India is still in a squalid semi-darkness. Poverty and human degradation are so rampant in many parts of the country that it has been difficult for some foreigners to walk on the streets without suffering a combination of nausea and a broken heart. Yet, most of the faces in India are happy and the majority of the people do not seem to be overwhelmed by their plight. They are simple, patient, long-suffering, and strong with an inner strength which can only come from a true contact with the Divine. They have deep love for one other, for their particular native places, and for their "Mother India". Everything is symbolic to them of the great Brahman Presence whom they seldom question. There is a spiritual atmosphere in the country as pervasive as the air itself and as strong as the light from the Indian sun. The pace is slow and quiet and nervous tension, by Western standards, does not exist at all. The Indian people are filled with peace and a secure awareness of the profound spiritual purpose of the universe. They are beautiful to look at and could be as beautiful as the gods if they had enough food to fill their stomachs. Their habits of cleanliness and hygiene are so advanced that they are ritual, but the water with which they must clean themselves is usually polluted. Their music, dance and folk art is so exalted that in almost every instance it makes direct contact with the psychic being alive within them. On the simplest reed flute, they can perform transcendent magic. True Indians do not take, they give. Even in the most extreme poverty when there may only be one inadequate

bowl of food there is no question of not sharing it. Their greatest joy seems to be in giving to their families, their friends, and to their own favorite household God. To their gods they give without stint, without tax deductions, without any conditions whatsoever. To their friends they give with such care and happiness that there is no custom here of saying thank you to an Indian host. As for the large family unit, it is like a spirit with one body, one belly to fill, with one mind, and one heart. Until now, it has not seemed to bother the general run of the people too much that there are too many stomachs to be filled and that the outer conditions of their lives are miserably low and completely out of proportion to the harmony, peace and fulfilment they can find within themselves. However, here too, as in America the advanced people are perplexed and ashamed by corruption in politics, and fearful of an economic planning which has never yet seemed to take into consideration the great masses of the people in this large, complex, and still under-developed country. There is a growing impatience among the real leaders with a tradition of spirituality which leaves the majority of their people degraded and destitute. It is in this sense that there is such a great interest in Auroville here in India.

In general, therefore, the situation seems to be that in America the major movement is outward towards the Divine Presence in the most advanced technology and the highest standard of living the world has ever seen. Since the movement towards the Divine there is mainly unconscious, there is an inner emptiness and lack of any real direction in depth, and this is causing among the advanced elements of the people a sense of insecurity and a questioning as to whether the real parade has been passing them by altogether. In India the major movement is within towards the direct conscious contact with the Divine Presence in the inner heart and a strong awareness of man's true nature as a spiritual being with a deep spiritual destiny. Still, the majority of the people in India are powerless and helpless in their handling of the outer world, and the advanced elements are beginning to question the completeness of a spirituality which negates matter and slows down the outer progress of evolution. America has much to teach India about progress in the twentieth century and India has much to teach America about the deeper levels of the spirit but to get a communication started effectively the soul of each nation should be understood and respected. We hope that Auroville will be an occasion for this urgently needed process to begin. Perhaps there is an hour now upon the earth when the great Divine Presence manifesting itself outside in America can be united with the great Divine Presence manifesting itself within in India. Perhaps this is an hour of God when the full spirit of the Divine, now hidden, can move through the world as one, integrated, unifying Force.

(To be continued)

WILLIAM T. NETTER
Auroville, South India

WORLD UNITY

THE fundamental cause of disunity lies in the separativeness of human nature, the separation from its origin, its source, from the Truth, the Divine. From this basic cause derives the multiplicity of all creation which at the same time separates the manifestation of the Original Essence from its Source.

Mankind today sees the present disunity as a "sickness" which needs to be cured. The immediate diagnosis of this "sickness" is, of course, the negative result of its influence on our lives which manifests itself as a world-wide acquisitiveness in human nature in general. We have a world of "takers" — everybody wants to possess, to grab, to steal, to take without giving anything in return. The trouble is that very few people *have* anything of real value to give. The individually unique values of human life are eroded away, perhaps so that they make room for a wider and truer earth experience.

Psychologically, the evolving being requires two fundamental assurances: *love* and *security* and he must have them in some form or other, pure or perverted.

The climate throughout the world at present seems to be that of: "get all you can however you can, make yourselves 'secure' by accumulation of possessions." This is, of course, the perverted concept of security. It is based on the primitive impulse to possess things — round stones, straight sticks, food, mate, offspring. Today it is money, cars, domestic plenty, weapons, collective power, etc., *ad infinitum*.

But there is every indication that today man is ready for a Great Change, he is virtually tired of the "rat-race" to acquire bigger and better things and a larger sack to hold his wealth. He is weary of the frustration of pretence and the fashion of "difference" without change for progress.

He talks of Human Unity without knowing how to put the first step to walk towards this Great Ideal. He talks of the need for *love* and *security* but it is a perverted love of "I'll love you if you'll love me", which is only a bargain and can never bring happiness. He talks of the need for security but only succeeds in surrounding himself with a mountain of possessions which add to his burden of worldly responsibilities, again limiting his freedom to grow, to progress, to evolve towards the happiness he dreams of in his inmost moments of communion with the Truth.

Parallel to these two fundamental needs for love and security there is the attendant bi-play of "fashionable conformity" and search for individuality. This is the psychological condition of most 'educated' centres of society today.

What is to be done to help this frustrated seeking for a world unity?

Somehow the polarity of *taking*, of *wanting to possess* has to be changed to that of *giving* and *wanting to contribute*.

Man's greatest sense of happiness is when he can create, contribute something of himself that is unique. We can find this attribute only in man's greatest potential. We have, therefore, to educate children with only this in view to *educate* the inner potential within the child and thereby make possible the greatest contribution which each

individual has to offer to life.

If we can educate children so that they may learn what their innermost being wants to learn and not what the parent or teacher thinks they ought to learn, then the true inner potential of each individual would manifest as the unique contribution to the society, the nation, the world. This would be a first step towards human unity because one only finds true freedom, true happiness, when one can fulfil oneself, give the best of oneself.

Union with the Divine, or union with anyone or anything, can only be truly effective when there is a genuine self-giving without any demand of a return, otherwise it is merely partial, perverted, polluted and a poor pretence of union, an ever increasing negative instead of the positive joy of union by self-giving which is self-fulfilment — the union from which new worlds are created.

This is the fundamental occult law which has to be recognised: *to give with joy without expectation of return*: then the true movement of human unity can be set into motion, then the world can enter upon a New Adventure of Consciousness and the Great Joy and Evolving Happiness that is its ultimate Birthright.

This fundamental occult law of man's evolution and progress is not new, it was well recognised by the Rishis of Vedic India thousands of years ago. It rings down the long passages of Time as the central message of the Gita:¹

*Karmanyevā ādhikaraste mā phaleṣu kadāca na
Mā karmaphalaheturbhu mā te sangostvakarmaṇi.*

“Thou hast a right to action, but only to action, never to its fruits; let not the fruits of thy works be thy motive, neither let there be in thee any attachment to inactivity.”

NORMAN C. DOWSETT

¹ The Bhagavad Gita. sloka 47, chapter Two.

HAVING SEEN HER ONCE . . .

HAVING seen Her once who would live without Her presence?
The sly, siren-shadows of the hooded Ignorance
May for a while hold to ransom the marvellous face.
But, from some occult beyond, the vision, the diamond point pierces
Through the granite mind opening up a small luminous hole.
Then in the deepening silence of the being the flaming fire of the soul
Shatters veil after tenebrous veil, annuls every gap;
Until the self is lost and found again a twice-born child of Her lap.
The Mother's solid presence now lights my mortal brow,
Earth's huge dragon base yields to the God-touch of Her love.

A. VENKATARANGA

THE CRISIS OF KNOWLEDGE IN CONTEMPORARY LIFE

(THE RESUMÉ OF A TALK AT "KNOWLEDGE" HALL ON JANUARY
3, 1975)

I. The progress of knowledge in the contemporary period is so great that knowledge is said to double itself in a decade. And the wonder of it all is that with this advance of knowledge the sense of insecurity and anxiety is also increasing.

Should knowledge not really lead to certitude, mastery and security?

II. Why is it the other way round?

Let us consider: what is our general approach to knowledge? What is the kind and the quality of our knowledge? What are our instruments of knowledge? Is our knowledge fragmentary, *i.e.*, of parts only or does it carry a sense of wholeness? Is it competent to guide our life as a whole?

What is the kind and quality of the contemporary personality, which seeks and wields knowledge? Does it possess the competence of wholeness — wholeness in the comprehension of things and wholeness in the guidance of life?

These are challenging questions and must be squarely faced if we wish to get some clarity in regard to the intriguing situation of contemporary knowledge.

III. Now, our outward-turned egoistic mind knows and the deep-hearted psychic being also knows. But their ways of knowing are different. The egoistic mind approaches its objects of knowledge in the attitude of acquisition and personal possession. It strives, it struggles, seeks to know more and more and possess that knowledge and use it as a personal possession for its personal ends. Its instruments are the sense-organs and the intellect working deductively and inductively. It is itself the superficial part of the knower's consciousness and can deal with the surface parts of its objects. Its knowledge of the wholeness of a thing and its essential nature is inferential and always subject to doubt.

The approach of the deeper heart consciousness, on the other hand, is that of an inner contact with the essential fact of the object of knowledge. Its movement is that of whole-hearted self-giving to the whole of the object. It just persists in that attitude with the best possible awareness of the higher, wider, transcendent consciousness as the ultimate source and repository of knowledge. In the course of time, long or short, the feeling of contact and identification emerges and one begins to feel more and more confident of the thing as a whole. The superficial analytical approach comes in as a supplementary movement. Thus a fine clarity and confidence of knowing and being able to handle it comes about.

IV. This seeking of knowledge itself becomes an aid to the seeking, realisation and enjoyment of the psychic poise of consciousness.

V. This attempt and its relative success have been a thrilling experience and I

venture to propose to you all to make a personal experience of it.

VI. In this connection, we may recall what we have learned to appreciate from Sri Aurobindo, that mind is an instrument of ignorance, *i.e.*, ignorance struggling to know but succeeding only partially, whereas the psychic being is truly an instrument of knowledge, *i.e.*, can get into identification with the essential thing, truly know it and wield it as a whole.

VII. Of course, when the psychic being comes into its own and is active enough the pursuit of knowledge becomes a prosperous activity. But until then and as towards that end what we need to do is to seek within ourselves the best possible calm and deep poise and through an act of self-giving, of consecration, of love and adoration of truth, of patient waiting on truth rather than of greedy and anxious clutching at knowledge, pursue truth and knowledge and clarity regarding all the cherished objects of knowledge.

VIII. The psychic being is our first true instrument of knowledge. Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, Overmind and Supermind are other instruments of knowledge with their own distinctive capacities.

IX. The crisis of knowledge in contemporary life is a consequence of Mind's activity and its fruits of knowledge. It lacks constitutionally the capacity to know things as a whole and use its knowledge in life as a whole.

The psychic being and other higher ranges of consciousness are innately set for the perception of the whole at first. They are truly the instruments of Integral Knowledge.

X. The Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education and its young alumni are in that happy situation to seek a solution of the crisis of knowledge and demonstrate it to a world feeling much perplexed over this issue. They can show that there exist more effective instruments of knowledge, which can clearly see the whole as well as the parts, see them in their due relationship and offer proper guidance for life as a whole. Then alone could the present imbalance be remedied and a secure integrality of life restored.

INDRA SEN

IN TUNE WITH THE INFINITE

AN APPRECIATION OF THE SONNETS OF SRI AUROBINDO

SRI Aurobindo was a born poet. Neither his dazzling political career nor his glorious spiritual quest stilled the poet in him. On the other hand, everything he read and did, everything he experienced and explored became grist for his poetic mill. His capacious poetry that devoured every thought and experience and yet retained its identity and character is a puzzle to many and a marvel to all.

Never in the whole range of Indo-Anglian poetry and seldom perhaps in the entire English-speaking world do we find a poet with such a rare and sure command over language and intimate and profound knowledge of the English Muse. If his poetry looks, at times, unnatural and exotic it must be remembered that it was from the pen of an original mind that sought to bend the English tongue to the exigencies of oriental mystic thought and experience in spite of the inherent limitations of its genius. Yet he is no more artificial than Milton, Browning, Hopkins and Dylan Thomas. Few, if ever, would deny him his rightful place in the history of English poetry.

Whenever we think of Sri Aurobindo in relation to the English poetic tradition invariably his sonnets come to our mind. The sonnet appears to have been his first love and his last. His first sonnet was composed before 1890¹ and his last was done in 1950. There never was a period when he was tired of it. And it seems that every worthwhile poetic thought of his was first tested in the crucible of the sonnet and later included in *The Life Divine* or *Savitri* as the case might be. The sonnets bear the same relation to his major works as Shakespeare's sonnets do to the plays. They are the samples of his yogic poetry on a smaller scale.

The sonnets of Sri Aurobindo number seventy-seven, divided into three groups based on the chronology of composition.² The first five belong to the early period of his English days when Goddess Saraswati had not yet called him from her 'lotus heaven'. The next fifty-nine belong to the period between 1940-1950 when Sri Aurobindo scaled the heights of his poetry, plumbed the very depths of philosophy and yoga and scanned the credentials of science. They partake of the quality of the capacious, adventurous and inventive mind of the great sage. The thirteen sonnets comprising the third group are undated. In theme and technique they do not show any variation from the second group. Some of them appear to be the first essays of the poet whose final versions are included in the second group. As they do not show any deviation from the second group, there would be little justification for treating them separately. They do not belong to a different period in the life of the poet though no definite dates of composition can be assigned to them. For our purpose, we treat them as one with the second group.

The dialectic of form and content has ever been there in English sonnet tradition, the English bards steadily exploiting the imported Italian form to suit the needs of their national genius. 'Petrarch' had disappeared with Wyatt and Surrey while

'Laura' remained demanding the devotion of every poet worth his salt. In Milton's hands the sonnet became a trumpet of the republican cause and in the hands of the Romantic and Pre-Raphaelite poets it took an inward turn and shone with an elastic and elvish beauty. In the twentieth century, in the hands of Dylan Thomas it took a plunge headlong into the bottomless pit from which there was no return. All the while, each major poet has been achieving with it a synthesis in his own way though a few like Dylan Thomas deliberately left it open. It proved popular on both sides of the Atlantic and won the loyalty of Indo-Anglian poets too.

II

It is interesting to observe about Sri Aurobindo that the very first composition of the boy-poet seems to be a sonnet entitled 'Cuckoo' written before 1890; it is English all over, with its traditional form and rhyme-schemes. It is a conventional description of nature in the spring season with distant echoes from Chaucer. The syntax in the octave is none too clear. The concluding lines, however, bring out the essential sympathy between man and nature, a sort of prelude to the unitive consciousness that was to permeate the sonnets of a later date. The cuckoo brings life to dead nature but to the poet it chiefly appears to be the regenerator of hope in the desperate heart of the human race:

But chiefly to renew thou hast the art
Fresh childhood in the obscured human heart.³

Though written by a teen-ager who was hardly conscious of his own destiny, these lines yet strangely suggest the mission of the Yogi Sri Aurobindo who tried to bring new light and hope to the sad groping humanity on the earth. The adjectives have a Keatsian touch about them: 'dewy powers', 'new-bathed flowers', 'deep-light', 'lucid hours'. The image of a ray of light penetrating the deep dark bosom of the tree and waking to life 'the leaves that muse in golden peace' is as fresh and exciting as it is natural and significant.

'What is this talk of slayer and of slain?' he asks in the next sonnet and says in fine,

Even so the unwounded spirits of slayer and slain
Beyond our vision passing live again.⁴

Death, he demonstrates, is unreal. Mortality and pain seem to be real even as the actions of the actor on the stage appear to be real as long as the play lasts. The Shakespearean image of the world as a stage is finely paraphrased and elucidated to bring home the philosophical truth of life as an illusion. The lines —

Swords are not sharp to slay nor floods assuage
This flaming soul⁵ —

echo the well-known ones in the *Bhagavatgita* :

Nainam chindanti śastrāni
Nainam dahati pāvakaḥ

Na chainam Kledayantyāpo
Na śoṣayati mārutaḥ.

'To weep because a glorious sun' again affirms his belief that death is not the end of life. Death is not terrible, though the ignorant man thinks it so. It, on the other hand, is friendly and

... beckons us to farther life,

And is a bridge for the persistent breath...⁶

Pain, strife, despair, the ghastly company of fears and the terror of death are children of man's 'own folly' 'that believes the span / Of life the limit of immortal man.'

In 'I have a hundred lives before me yet' the poet once again asserts the reality of the Ethereal Spirit and affirms his belief that one day, if not in this life, after a hundred lives he will clasp the eluding but ever guiding hand of the Ethereal spirit, somewhere among the stars. He has no doubt of it "as 'twas decreed."⁷ The sonnet hints at the onward march of man under the aegis of the creative evolutionary process until he realizes the Godhead in him, a theme elaborated in his later sonnet 'Evolution.'⁸

The first four sonnets written on English soil are indeed like the poet's unconscious manifesto of his life's work and future philosophy of Life Divine. The later sonnets, by and large, are but variations on the themes introduced by these early ones.

How are we to account for the marked propensity for Indian thought and feeling on the part of young Aurobindo who was brought up in an alien atmosphere in an alien country under the strict instructions of his whimsical father not to mix with the natives of India? He had no first-hand knowledge of Indian Culture until his arrival at Baroda in 1893. Books perhaps will explain somewhat the Indian content of the sonnets but not the reason for his choice of it. Neither his knowledge of and proficiency in Greek and Latin classics nor his very intimate acquaintance with the Romantic poetry of England can explain the unique and characteristic Indian belief in rebirth and in the merger with the Absolute Cosmic Spirit as the ultimate goal of life as expressed in 'I have a hundred lives' cited above. Belatius in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* wonders regarding the royal behaviour of Guiderius and Arviragus:

That an invisible instinct should frame them
 To royalty unlearn'd, honour untaught,
 Civility not seen from other, valour
 That wildly grows in them but yields a crop
 As if it had been sow'd. (Act IV, Sc.ii)

We too may find for Sri Aurobindo an explanation in the 'invisible instinct' of nature which asserted itself in him.

There is no doubt, however, concerning the change that was taking place in the mind of the young scholar during the period in which these early sonnets were being penned.⁹ The intense awareness of his ancient Indian heritage can be seen in 'To a Hero-Worshipper'¹⁰ written in September 1891 and the 'Envoi'¹¹ of 1890-92. In the former he says:

Mine is not Byron's lightning spear,
 Nor Wordsworth's lucid strain
 Nor Shelley's lyric pain,
 Nor Keats', the poet without peer.
 I by the Indian waters vast
 Did glimpse the magic of the past,
 And on the oaten-pipe I play
 Warped echoes of an earlier day.

The early poems are echoes of an earlier day, no doubt, but not warped ones as he modestly claims. They are works of refurbished art.

III

Of the fifty-nine sonnets in the second group, two are devoted to the nature and destiny of man; two are for the evolutionary spirit, two for the hidden plan behind the being, two for liberation and one for Nirvana; one each for the divine sight, divine sense, divine hearing, one for body, four for science and the rest for the cosmic consciousness and the vision of beatitude.

The sonnets of Sri Aurobindo are poetic probes into the nature and reality of man. The poet defines man not only in positive terms. He describes him in negative terms too. In this, he follows the way of the Vedic seers who not only say 'Ritam brihat' but also enjoin 'Nanritam brihat'. They leave no room for ambiguity or conjecture. Following them, he says:

Earth was a cradle for the arriving God
 And man but a half-dark half-luminous sign
 Of the transition of the veiled Divine
 From Matter's sleep and the tormented load
 Of ignorant life and death to the Spirit's light.¹²

The dual nature of man is presented directly in another sonnet too:

There are two beings in my single self.
 A Godhead watches Nature from behind
 At play in front with a brilliant surface elf,
 A time-born creature with a human mind.¹³

But he knows that this two-ness is but a transition. Man, in reality, is a timeless, deathless being. Hence he says emphatically:

I am no more a vassal of the flesh,
 A slave to Nature and her leaden rule;¹⁴

In 'The Guest', he announces triumphantly his great discovery of the reality of man:

I have discovered my deep deathless being.¹⁵

The deathless being is the almighty Guest, substance of the soul that sits 'calm, formidable, luminous' when blows 'shatter Nature's house'. In another context he calls it 'Witness Spirit'.¹⁶ It is the uncircumscribed 'I', 'The Indwelling Universal'.¹⁷

is what remains when 'the whirling dance of mind is overthrown' and when 'the small self is dead.'¹⁸ It is nothing in particular because it is ubiquitous and universal:

No one I am, I who am all that is.¹⁹

To be supremely conscious of the state of is-ness and to achieve an identity with it is the goal of life:

There is a need within the soul of man
 The splendours of the surface never sate;
 For life and mind and their glory and debate.
 Are the slow prelude of a vaster theme,
 A sketch confused of a supernal plan,
 A preface to the epic of the Supreme.²⁰

As he made the profound discovery of the divine plan and destiny of man he refuses to believe that man can be explained in terms of 'electrons',²¹ hormones and glands.²² Scientific analysis is powerless to lead us to our goal, for intellect itself is an inadequate help for us:

An algebra of mind, a scheme of sense,
 A symbol of language without depth or wings,
 A power to handle deftly outward things
 Are our scant earnings of intelligence.²³

Man reaches his goal not by stumbling tardy intelligence but by 'the surer vision of his soul'.

The poet is fortunate enough to have such a vision. As his senses change into 'gold gates of bliss' he sees one Mind rolling through all — man and beast, leaf and stone:

Each sight is now immortal with thy bliss:
 My soul through the rapt eyes has come to see;
 A veil is rent and they no more can miss
 The miracle of Thy world-epiphany.²⁴

As he realises with ecstasy, 'All forms are Thy dream-dialect of delight',²⁵ he surrenders himself in entirety to the supreme creative spirit which works through him:

I have given my mind to be dug Thy channel mind,
 I have offered up my will to be Thy will:
 Let nothing of myself be left behind
 In our union mystic and unutterable.²⁶

When such a union between matter and spirit takes place, it augurs well for the world. In one of the finest sonnets that has ever been penned, he describes the union of the opposites under the guise of a mystical dance of Shiva and Sakti:

...her face
 She lifts to Him who is Herself, until
 The Spirit leaps into the Spirit's embrace.²⁷

While presenting the infinitude of man and the bliss of Brahman,²⁸ the poet does not forget the finite world and the 'human enigma'.²⁹ The finite world, the discoveries

of science and the icons of worship have their uses too. They all prepare us for the world epiphany:

O worshipper of the formless Infinite,
 Reject not form, what lives in form is He.³⁰

In 'The Stone Goddess', he adopts the same stance and says:
 In a town of gods, housed in a little shrine,
 From sculptured limbs the Godhead looked at me, —
 A living Presence deathless and divine,
 A Form that harboured all infinity.³¹

Sonnet after sonnet tells the same story of the divinity of man and his non-dualistic cosmic experiences. There is little thematic development discernible in these poems. Even words are often repeated. Yet no false touch comes anywhere, no monotony. His high seriousness of purpose gives an elevated look even to his satire and humour. Words are constantly on the wing and we feel as though an invisible power swept across them which, surrounding us unseen, lifts us aloft unawares. That, as we know, is the hall-mark of great poetry. At their best the sonnets near the grandeur of Shakespeare and Milton. At their worst they rival Donne and Hopkins. There is no dross anywhere in them. They are gold all over.

G. SRIRAMAMURTY

REFERENCES

- 1 *The Poetry of Sri Aurobindo: A Short Survey* (1969), Sisir Kumar Ghosh, Chatuskone Private Ltd., Calcutta, p. 60 (The proof-reading of the quotations has not always been adequate.)
 2. Sri Aurobindo — *Collected Poems* (The Complete Poetical Works) Birth Centenary Library, Volume V.
 - 3 *Collected Poems*, p. 123 4 *Collected Poems*, p. 124 5. *Ibid.*, p. 124
 - 6 *Ibid.*, p. 124. 7. *Ibid.*, p. 125. 8. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
 9. *Sri Aurobindo: A Biography and History* by Dr K.R.S. Iyengar (1972), Vol. 2, p. 66
 10. *Collected Poems*, p. 8. 11 *Ibid.*, p. 28. 12. *Ibid.*, p. 156 13 *Ibid.*, p. 141
 - 14 *Ibid.*, p. 161. 15. *Ibid.*, p. 144 16. *Ibid.*, p. 131 17. *Ibid.*, p. 131
 - 18 *Ibid.*, p. 133 19 *Ibid.*, *loc cit.* 20. *Ibid.*, p. 137 21. *Ibid.*, p. 130
 22. *Ibid.*, p. 145. 23 *Ibid.*, p. 167 24. *Ibid.*, p. 155 25 *Loc cit.*
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 143. 27 *Ibid.*, p. 140 28. *Ibid.*, p. 148. 29 *Ibid.*, p. 148.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, p. 136 31. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
-

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 March 1975)

6

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

(r)

I

OUR survey of *Intimate Letters* and of de Lubac's numerous Notes to it has picked out from the diverse mood-expressions over the years 1919-1955 the main persistent lines of Teilhard's attitudes and commitments. The lines show themselves in summary under two aspects. These aspects the Roman Catholic Church did not seem to Teilhard to accept. He hoped to make it accept them by a constant struggle not against its basic existence but with the narrow old-worldly non-evolutionary form under which it presented the meaning of Jesus's life and the ultimate nature of his role in the universe. What he¹ said as early as 11 August 1920 to Auguste Valensin held true up to the end: "... I cannot avoid pouring out, with all the force of my personality (small or great, it matters little), ideas on evolution which, I know it, are essentially repugnant to the teaching authority! — We shall then have always to love the Church, the true Church, through the one speaking to us, the one we are in touch with — and to serve it by forcing its hand?"

The two aspects come forth very well in a quotation from a letter of October 1953, which de Lubac makes in a note:² "... I should like to use as intensely as possible the last years left to me in 'Christifying' (as I say) Evolution (which implies both the

¹ *Lettres Intimes* à Auguste Valensin, Bruno de Solages, Henri de Lubac, André Ravier 1919-1955 avec Introduction et Notes par Henri de Lubac, pp. 67-8. "... je ne puis éviter de répandre, de toute la force de ma personnalité (petite ou grande, peu importe), des idées sur l'évolution qui, je le sais, répugnent essentiellement à l'autorité docens! — Il faudra donc toujours aimer l'Eglise, la vraie, à travers celle qui nous parle et que nous touchons, — et la servir en forçant la main?"

² *Ibid*, p 432, note 1: "... je voudrais employer aussi intensément que possible les dernières années qui me restent à 'christifier' (comme je dis) l'Evolution (ce qui suppose le travail scientifique pour établir la 'convergence' de l'Univers, et le travail religieux pour dégager la Nature Universelle du Christ de l'histoire. Cela, — et puis bien finir — c'est-à-dire mourir en témoignage de cet 'évangile'.")

scientific work of establishing the 'convergence' of the Universe, and the religious work of disengaging the Universal Nature of the Christ of history). This, — and then to end well — that is to say to die in witness to this 'gospel'." Also, the two aspects fuse in another citation by de Lubac in the same note:¹ "On this feast of St. Peter: My dream: to be able to confess, profess my answer to the question: 'Who do they say is the Son of Man?' ... Ans[wer]: ... *The evolutive focus of the convergent universe.*"

The traditional answer — the one returned by Peter to Christ's question — is: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Teilhard has surely transposed his own mind and heart to a theological context quite other than that of the Gospel of St. Matthew where the original conversation (16:15-16) occurs. So we may enunciate his full position thus: "The universe is to be taken as evolutionary and as converging or coming together upon itself to evolve ever new outer syntheses and ever new interiorisations, which will culminate in a supreme state of unified collective humanity. This state we may call Point Omega. But Omega is also a present Reality, an actual perfection and plenitude attracting evolution towards itself as to a culminating point. Christ who is figured in scripture as a perfection and plenitude that will gather up everything at the end of history into itself is to be identified with both the actual Omega and Point Omega. He is the converging universe's focus — at the same time the final evolutionary concentration and the present power within the universe driving it towards that end. As Evolver as well as Evolving, he is the Universal or Cosmic Christ, the only form of Godhead that can issue momentarily and ultimately, for the modern science-expanded consciousness, from the historic Jesus who emerges as a Divine Incarnation from ancient documents like St. Matthew's Gospel."

We have already dealt with the numerous facets of this theme. But one particular persistent *nuance* which Teilhard gives to it remains to be clarified. We mentioned that *nuance* when we commented on the incomprehensible Pauline idea Teilhard reiterates without being able to weave it rationally into his system — the pre-existence and pre-action not of Christ as the Divine Logos in his own status but Christ in his incarnate form, the "theandric" Jesus — that is, the God-Man in an earthly body. The *nuance* came in Teilhard's phrase about "the physical supremacy of Christ over the universe" and in his declaring himself a "physicalist" as against the "juridicists" and asking for a Christ who is related to the cosmos not as a landowner, a father or the head of an association, exercising moral rights, but as a sort of super-organism in whom the cosmos has its coherence and its evolution and by whom it will constitute a unity without sacrificing the individuality of its component parts. On that occasion we said: "at the moment we are not concerned with Teilhard's physicalism."² Now we are brought back to the issue by certain expressions in *Intimate Letters*. One of

¹ *Ibid.* : "En cette fête de St Pierre: Mon rêve. pouvoir confesser, professer ma réponse à la question 'Quem dicunt esse 'Filius Hominis'?' . . . Rép[onse] . . . *Le foyer évolutif d'un unv[er]s convergent.*"

² *Mother India*, September 1974, p 698

them occurred in our last chapter itself where we quoted Teilhard on Spinozism, the orthodox extrinsicist theology and his own position: "... there is room for an Incarnation that culminates in the building up of an organic whole, in which physical union with God is at different levels."

Two statements from the same book in tune with this expression may serve to focus our minds on the issue. There is de Lubac's quotation:¹ "The Universal Christ, that is the Christ influencing everything physically" — and there is Teilhard's phrase to Valensin in a letter on 12 December 1919:² "O[ur] L[ord] has physically the role of stabilising the World at all its levels."

Such statements remind us of the countless instances when Teilhard employs the term "physical" in relation to his Universal Christ. We may review the most significant of them and set alongside them several from *Intimate Letters* which tend to illuminate the content of the three statements we have just reproduced from the book. The precise bearing of the physicality of the Teilhardian Christ's cosmicity has never been formulated. Let us attempt to clutch this still "inviolable shade".

2

Piet Smulders, S.J., after quoting from *The Divine Milieu* (p. 101) the passage — "All the good that I can do, *opus et operatio*, is physically gathered, by something of itself, into the reality of the consummated Christ" — explained in a note³ that the word "physically" is opposed to a purely "moral" or "juridical" influence and that here it signifies "really". If this is true, what is meant by something being "really" gathered into something else's "reality"? Not much revelatory light seems thrown on the term used.

Christopher Mooney, S.J., tells us: "Perhaps the closest equivalent to Teilhard's 'physical' in current theological usage is the word 'ontological', which may be applied to whatever has existence in the present concrete order of things. 'Physical' is thus opposed to all that is juridical, abstract, extrinsic to reality."⁴

The above text is referred to by Bruno de Solages, S.J., and Henry de Lubac, S.J., after remarking on a certain passage thus: "Here, as often elsewhere, Père Teilhard uses 'physical' simply as opposed to 'juridical'."⁵ The passage in question is: "If things are to find their coherence in Christ, we must ultimately admit that there is in the nature of Christ, besides the specifically individual elements of Man — and in virtue of God's choice — some universal physical reality, a certain cosmic extension of

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 50, note 6. "Le Christ Universel, c'est le Christ influençant tout *physiquement*."

² *Ibid.*, p. 35: "N. S. a physiquement le rôle de stabiliser le Monde à tous ses degrés"

³ *The Design of Teilhard de Chardin. An Essay in Theological Reflection*, translated by Arthur Gibson (The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1967), p. 304, note 119. The passage from *The Divine Milieu* is quoted on p. 225.

⁴ *Teilhard de Chardin and the Mystery of Christ* (Collins, London, 1966), p. 85.

⁵ *The Prayer of Teilhard de Chardin: Selections from Writings in Time of War*, translated by René Hague (Collins, Fontana Books, London, 1973), p. 175, note 3. The passage quoted is from p. 20.

his body and soul.”

Well, if “physical” signifies, as explains Mooney whom de Solages and de Lubac follow, “ontological” or the opposite of “all that is ... extrinsic to reality”, we shall have Teilhard connoting by “some universal physical reality” a universal reality that is real or ontological. Again very little penetrating light appears to be cast on the word.

De Lubac¹ has also the remark elsewhere: “Teilhard’s realism was always hard (sometimes excessively so) on the theology that, in general, preferred what are called ‘moral’ or ‘juridical’ rather than ‘physical’ links (‘physical’ here meaning ‘organic’, and not being used as opposed either to ‘supernatural’ or ‘metaphysical’)”.

Mooney has a statement that supports de Lubac and gives a more comprehensive and positive presentation. He² writes: “In Teilhard’s system of thought all created reality is ‘physical’ and ‘organic’, and he applies these words equally, though analogically, to the material and personal, as well as to the natural and supernatural.”

It is certain that “physical”, contrasting to “juridical” and “moral”, carries the sense of “organic”. Teilhard has turns of expression like “organic or physical meaning”,³ “physical relationships and organic connections”,⁴ “organic and physical analogies”.⁵ We may also keep in countenance Mooney’s suggestion of “ontological” and therefore too Smulders’s “real”. In *Intimate Letters*⁶ we read: “All my effort has been precisely, for years, to criticise these juridical and vague terms and to rediscover for them an organic and ontological sense.”

Yes, all the commentators belonging to the same religious Order as Teilhard — the Society of Jesus — are not wrong when they thus understand “physical.” But within some of their comments there is a sign of the inadequacy of their explanations. As we have indicated, an element of facile tautology is at play at times if we confine ourselves to such glosses. They are too general and do not take us to any crystalline centre of significance which would add to our understanding of Teilhard. Surely some other focus of vision is needed in addition to them?

The first ray of genuine illumination comes in the opening half of a footnote by the editors of Teilhard’s earliest compositions:⁷ “Père Teilhard often uses ‘physical’ in its original Greek meaning: *e phúsis* = nature: *phúsikos* = pertaining to nature, or, we might say, organic.” But there follows the confusing phrase: “It is used as opposed not to ‘supernatural’, but to ‘superficial, artificial, or simply moral.’” How do the editors arrive at such a conclusion? If “physical” points us to “nature” and

¹ *Teilhard de Chardin: The Man and His Meaning*, translated by René Hague (A Mentor-Omega Book, The New American Library, New York, 1967), p. 41, fn. 20.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

³ *Christianity and Evolution*, translated by René Hague (Collins, London, 1971), p. 58

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁵ *Science and Christ*, translated by René Hague (Collins, London, 1966), p. 55.

Letters Intimes, p. 274. “Tout mon effort est précisément, depuis des années, de critiquer ces termes juridiques et vagues, et de leur retrouver un sens organique et ontologique”

⁶ *Writings in Time of War*, translated by René Hague (Collins, London, 1966), p. 171, fn. 16.

⁷ *Hymn of the Universe*, translated by Simon Bartholomew (Harper & Row, New York, 1965), p. 81.

indicates "pertaining to nature", why should it just mean "organic" and not be opposed to "supernatural"?

Actually, in the sentence cited by de Solages and de Lubac we have the phrase "a cosmic extension of his body and soul" to clarify the words "some universal physical reality". Does not Teilhard mean: "his body and soul extended in cosmic nature"? In that case, "physical" by itself would just denote "nature", and the contents of nature would be "body and soul" (ensouled embodiment). Then, with "organic" in mind, we may say that body and soul must be taken to form the structure of a natural organism, in which all the parts are close-knit and unified. Our entire universe, which Teilhard as a scientist looked upon as an evolving unitary system, is an organism in this sense, an organic whole manifesting various levels or degrees of body and soul or, to use another Teilhardian combination, outer synthesis and inner centration.

It is curious how all the commentators we have named either ignore or else fail to see properly the significance which stares them in the face: "natural" balancing "supernatural". Numerous instances of such a usage can be cited, where this meaning is either emphatically implied or undeniably explicit.

Take the assertion:¹ "Christ is the terminal point at which, supernaturally but also physically, the consummation of humanity is destined to be achieved." Put by its side this other:² "By the incarnation, which redeemed man, the very becoming of the universe, too, has been transformed. Christ is the term of even the natural evolution of living beings; evolution is holy." We can at once observe that the second quotation's "term" and the first one's "terminal point" mean the same, so that the former's "physically", which is counterpoised to "supernaturally", denotes the latter's "natural evolution", which is equivalent to "the very becoming of the universe". The suggestion of "naturally" by "physically", the coincidence of the two in meaning, as well as their contrast to "supernaturally", is as clear as anything can be.

Moreover, we have a direct equivalence in the following, which offers a reason "for the stagnation, since the time of St. Paul, of the concept of the Universal Christ": "This is the excessive emphasis in philosophy on logical, moral and juridical relationships. It is simpler, safer (*tutus*), more convenient (as our Lord's example shows) to express the relations between God and man as family or domestic relationship. Such analogies are true inasmuch as union in Christ is effected between persons, but they are incomplete. If we are to express the whole truth, we must correct them by analogies drawn from realities that are specifically *natural* and *physical*. The friendship of God and adoption of God are expressions that include an adaptation of the universe, a transformation, a recasting, that are organic and cannot be cancelled."

Perhaps this passage is the most comprehensive covering of the issue. We have not only the opposition of "juridical" and "moral" to "physical", but also the parity of the two former with "logical" and the parity of "physical" with "natural" as well as

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Science and Christ*, pp 18-19.

the parity of these two with "organic" and so the opposition of "logical, moral and juridical" to all these three.

In an inspired moment a recent Jesuit commentator has pointedly framed, though merely *en passant*, the former trio. Speaking of Teilhard's view that the "confluence of thought" which terminates in a collective super-consciousness is the prolongation of the "mega-synthesis" which has dominated evolution over its entire course and is the application, at the human thought-level, of the law of higher complexity engendering a higher consciousness, Jan Feys, S.J.,¹ writes of that view of Teilhard's: "This permits him to attribute an operative value in the building of future humanity to social structures, cultural exchange, economic cooperation or common scientific research projects. For, these are the 'hominised version' of natural, physical or organic factors of complexification."

These three factors are again brought together and made to play into one another by Teilhard's statement:² "... the elect would be *physically* incorporated in the organic and 'natural' whole of the consummated Christ."

Here the suggestion is that those who have lived in tune with Christ's presence in the universe will, at the end of history, be taken up by and made part of his Mystical Body which is an organic reality like the realities of nature and that they will reach such a destiny just as physical things are taken up and made part of nature's realities. Here the identical plane of the organic, the natural and the physical emerges.

The single plane of the last two comes to the fore even better — nay, in the most convincing manner — in the phrase which throws light also on the ultimate sense of "supernatural" and its relation to "nature":³ "The Incarnate Word could not be the supernatural (hyperphysical) centre of the universe if he did not function *first* as its physical, natural, centre."

A double point is made. "Physical" and "natural" are mentioned as mutually explanatory synonyms and the balance between "supernatural" and "physical" is from the start set up by defining the former as "hyperphysical". That is to say, the "supernatural" differs from the "physical" and stands over against it but by being a higher or greater degree of the latter. This proves "physical" to be a substitute-term for "natural", the usual antonym of "supernatural". That is the first aspect of Teilhard's point. The second is the removal of the difficulty set up by the common orthodox question: "How could Christ be ever conceived as a reality 'physical' in the sense of 'natural' or 'belonging to nature'?" If the "supernatural" is only the "physical-natural" raised to a superior pitch or, conversely, the "physical-natural" is itself the "supernatural" at an inferior pitch, then there is no barrier to Christ's being the one just as appropriately as the other. According to a phrase of Teilhard⁴ elsewhere, the difficulty, the barrier, arises "in consequence of a subtle and pernicious confusion between 'super-natural' and 'extra-natural'". The same confusion is bewailed in a

¹ *The Philosophy of Evolution in Sri Aurobindo and Teilhard de Chardin* (Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1973), p. 208.

² *Christianity and Evolution*, p. 70

³ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

communication in *Intimate Letters*¹ to de Solages on 17 January 1954: "O this 'supernatural' — one should say this 'Extra-natural' — dehumanising —! ... who will free us of this theological poison which paralyses us in all our movements?" In the book which castigates the confusion we are also told² about "many experts in the theory of Catholicism": "Without realizing it, they make the very common mistake of regarding the spiritual as an attenuation of the material, whereas it is in fact the material carried beyond itself: 'it is super-material.' Again, we learn³ that, while "the juridicists ... will always understand 'mystical' (in 'mystical body') by analogy with a somewhat stronger family association or association of friends", "the physicalists ... will see in the word 'mystical' the expression of a hyper-physical (super-substantial) relationship — stronger, and in consequence more respectful of embodied individualities, than that which operates between the cells of one and the same animate organism."

In the last quote we mark that "mystical", being "hyper-physical", is synonymous with "supernatural", which we have already seen to be "hyper-physical", and that, in view of the stronger relationship affirmed than the one between an organism's cells, "supernatural", "mystical", "hyper-physical" and "super-substantial" are identical with what may be called "hyper-organic". Further, all these emerge as "super-material" and so the "physical" and the "material" get paired.

Teilhard nowhere coins the term "hyper-organic" and he employs the common expression even where he talks of the supernatural, but the positing of it is in the logic of his thought. And it is obviously implied when in a letter to Valensin he stresses the complementary characters of the supernatural and the natural. In stressing them he also implies the pairing of the "material" with the "physical" in the course of pairing the latter with the "natural". On 10 January he⁴ bewails Father Maréchal's non-comprehension of his stand about the Universal Christ and he insists on two points relevant to this stand: "He thinks that Thomism *well understood* ... teaches how to unify the World without other factors than the divine act. — and he hesitates to see in Tradition the lineaments of a Universal Christ. — I have replied to him ... insisting on these two points: 1. the necessity, for the divine unifying act, of finding us (or making us) all *one same thing* ... (... it must seize us — or constitute us — all together *under some created form of unity*) that is to say, to the unifying action of God there ought to correspond a *unified aspect* of the created Universe. — 2. the impossibility of understanding a Christ who would be (organically) *central* in the supernatural Universe, and physically *juxtaposed* in the natural Universe."

¹ Pp. 433-3: "ô ce 'surnaturel' — il faudrait dire cet 'Extra-naturel' — dés-humanisant —! ... qui nous délivrera de ce poison théologique qui nous paralyse dans tous nos mouvements!"

² *Ibid.*, p. 68. ³ *Science and Christ*, p. 55

⁴ *Lettres Intimes*, pp. 47-8: "Il pense que le thomisme *bien compris* .. apprend à unifier le Monde sans autres facteurs que l'acte divin, — et il hésite à voir dans la Tradition les linéaments d'un Christ-Universel — Je lui ai répondu .. en insistant sur ces deux points: 1 nécessité, pour l'acte divin unifiant, de nous trouver (ou de nous faire) tous *une même chose* ... (. il doit nous saisir — ou nous constituer — tous ensemble *sub aliqua forma creata unitatis*) c'est-à-dire, à l'action unifiante de Dieu, il doit correspondre *une face unifiée* de l'univers créé. — 2 impossibilité de comprendre un Christ que soit (organiquement) *central* dans l'Univers surnaturel, et physiquement *juxtaposé* dans l'Univers naturel."

The passage is a little complicated, but the main idea shines through: "There has to be a natural focus to hold the Universe together and Christianity should put at such a focus a Christ whose function would be the holding together of the Universe. Unless there is a Universal Christ representing a unified aspect of the Universe the divine act cannot do its unifying work in the world of nature any more than there could be a unified world of supernature without a Christ who is the internal organic centre of it and not just an external presence side by side with it."

The vision behind the main idea is that the world of nature has to be seen in the same way that the world of supernature is seen. Both are grades of a single reality in which Christ is a universal Being intrinsic to their structure, and to speak of his being "physically juxtaposed" instead of being intrinsic to the natural world is to talk nonsense. The meaning emerging for the word "physical" from this vision is, on the one hand, that it applies only to the natural world and, on the other, that it is there compatible only with such organicity, intrinsic centrality and unifying universality as we attribute to the supernatural world: it can never be compatible with the juxtaposition which traditional Christianity implies for Christ if it does not view him as Teilhardianly Universal.

Intimate Letters further sets "physical" and "material" in rapport while giving us Teilhard's discussion of his own view of the "possible" as against the view of Scholasticism. He¹ writes to Valensin on 19 November 1919: "For Scholasticism, the 'possible' represents a group of abstract characters reconcilable among themselves, studied *without taking any account of their physical conditions of realisation*; each 'possible' is considered like a little All, holding by itself, and realisable *immediately and in isolation*. This has for me the air of 'geometry', not of Reality.—Side by side with the 'intellectual' possibility of a being (that is to say the non-contradiction of its abstract traits), it seems to me that there is its *physical possibility* as demanding as the other, — to which, nevertheless, that other *ought* to return, and will return on the day when one will have better understood the structure of the real), that is to say the impossibility for that being to exist outside certain laws of development, and certain

¹ *Ibid*, pp. 24-5 "Pour la Scholastique, il me semble, le 'possible' représente un groupe de caractères abstraits, conciliables entre eux, étudiés *sans tenir aucun compte de leurs conditions physiques de réalisation*; chaque 'possible' est considéré comme un petit Tout, tenant par lui-même, et réalisable *immédiatement et isolément*. Ceci m'a l'air de 'la géométrie', non de la Réalité. — A côté de la possibilité 'intellectuelle' d'un être (c'est-à-dire de la non-contradiction de ses notes abstraites), il me semble qu'il y a sa *possibilité physique* (aussi exigeante que l'autre, — dans laquelle du reste elle *doit* rentrer, et rentrera du jour où on aura mieux compris la structure du réel), c'est-à-dire l'impossibilité de cet être à exister en dehors de certaines lois de développement, et de certaines associations avec un Multiple

"Supposons Dieu résolu à créer. En vertu des *lois de possibilité physique*, Il n'a pas seulement à choisir des termes à son action parmi un groupe d'entités cohérentes en elles-mêmes et cohérentes entre elles — Il se voit lié (ex natura entis participati) pour obtenir un être déterminé (un individu), à mettre en train le développement d'un Univers tout entier Et ce n'est pas encore tout. On entrevoit que les divers développements de l'Être participé ne sont pas absolument arbitraires ni indépendants les uns des autres. Il est possible qu'ils soient assujettis, tous, à quelques mêmes lois très générales, *c'est-à-dire* qu'il n'y ait qu'un seul processus de création concevable pour l'Être participé (par exemple simplification progressive d'un Multiple, (émersion de la quelque matière) "

associations with a Multiple.

"Let us suppose God resolves to create. In virtue of the *laws of physical possibility*, He does not only have to *choose* the terms for his action among a group of entities coherent in themselves and coherent among themselves.—He sees himself bound (by the nature of participated being), in order to obtain *one* determined being (one individual), to set going the development of a universe whole and entire. And that is still not all. One glimpses that the diverse developments of participated being are not absolutely arbitrary or independent of one another. It is possible they may be subject, all, to some very general laws which are the same, *that is to say* that there is *only one sole process of creation conceivable for participated being* (for example progressive simplification of a multiple, emersion from some matter ...)."

By "participated being" Teilhard means what is created by God and the context involves that the creation is the world of nature whose origin is in his terminology "a pure multiple"¹ that is reduced or simplified, stage after stage, by a unifying process. This multiple he calls "matter". Teilhard is mostly ambivalent about the significance of that "matter". He would like it not to be considered "an *antagonistic co-eternal*",² a pre-existent "stuff"³ but inasmuch as he is always at pains to distinguish it from "pure Nothingness",⁴ which he regards as "an empty concept, a pseudo-idea",⁵ and inasmuch as he calls his Multiple "*true nothingness, physical Nothingness*"⁶ no less than "creatable Nothingness"⁷ and regards it as "a 'gate', an *obligatory entrance* (channel)"⁸, for God, he does refer not only to a restraining or limiting condition for God's creative act but also to a sort of primordial shadow-state at the opposite pole to God's absolute unity of being. In any case the Nothingness that is "physical" is essentially linked with the material cosmos, the universe of organic nature within which and as part of which we exist. So, "physical possibility", in opposition to "intellectual possibility", focuses the sense of "physical" on this universe as a Real and does not have merely a broad ontological bearing.

(To be continued)

K. D. SETHNA

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27, note 5

² *Ibid.*, p. 25

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27, note 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 279, note 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

(Continued from the issue of March 1975)

(This is the final 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 deeper possibilities of psychotherapy in service of the common man who is not always ready for Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga.)

Practical Application of Concentration and Consecration

It is often the case that advocates of the use of spiritual techniques for growth in consciousness establish certain ground rules, one being that the person be emotionally stable or that he not manifest signs of highly neurotic or psychotic behavior. I would like to emphasize that the application of yogic techniques does not exclude people with deep psychological problems but rather that this approach has the power to both reach and heal areas that are often inaccessible to other modes of psychotherapy. I have discovered that this yogic approach has tremendous healing potential in cases of extreme torture, brainwashing and attempted murder which have occurred during childhood. While it is not possible to give a full exposition in this context I would like at this time to indicate both the nature of the problems that can be eliminated through a yogic approach to psychotherapy and the method of approach.

When Jeff came to me seeking help he could remember very little of his experience as a child, in fact, clear memories extended only about five years into the past. He was constantly plagued by deep fears of people hurting him, breathing difficulty, blacking out, voyeurism, intestinal disorders, persistent physical discomfort and pain and a general fear of "going crazy". By the time he was five years old he, for extended periods of time, shut down his hearing and did not respond when either spoken to or shouted at. Along with this withdrawal he developed a severe facial tic and several other tics. He was sent to a psychiatric clinic where he received over five hundred hours of therapy extending over a period of five years (ages: 7-12). He later went to several psychiatrists and analysts of different persuasions but without alleviation of the above stated problems. He became involved with Transcendental Meditation and during a period of meditating near a gerbal cage felt himself to be in the cage running around like the gerbals. This evoked a tremendous fear that he would compulsively act like a gerbal, which caused him to hallucinate the gerbal cage near his bed for several months after. There has been a general difficulty in carrying on his day to day life whether attempting to work, go to school, associate with people or participate in pleasurable activities. He had been told by his mother while he was in therapy with a Jungian analyst that his father had beaten him severely with a belt when

he was one year old. This was done repeatedly because he would not eat and Jeff's mother said that she was afraid that the father would not be able to control himself during the beatings. Jeff also suffered from deeply ingrained habits of both obsessive and compulsive behavior. Although I have not given a fully detailed account of the manifest problems, the above is offered to indicate the nature and depth of the psychological problems which can be approached *via* yogic or spiritual techniques.

Since Jeff had done some therapy with me before I started employing a yogic approach, I have some sense of the relative power of various techniques to reach the source of the psychological problems. Previously, I had been most influenced by an existential analytic approach whereby the problems that were appearing on the surface were confronted with an emphasis on a full expression of feeling. I felt that the expression of feeling would allow the source of the feeling, usually residing in childhood, to come to consciousness. I had been most influenced by the perspective of R. D. Laing and the trance-inducing techniques of Robert Masters and Jean Houston. While the initial work that Jeff and I did together effected a release of tension and fear for a period of several months, there was a recurrence of all of the problems.

When Jeff came back to see me we began approaching his problems by using concentration and consecration. I told him of my own experiences of using these techniques for my own personal growth and asked him if he could entertain the possibility of a "higher consciousness" being brought to bear on the present mental, emotional and physical problems that he faced. He said that he could, and I proceeded to explain the principle and technique of consecration. Essentially in this psychotherapeutic context, consecration means an offering or opening of the presently manifesting problems (feelings of fear, images of fear, or memories of past experiences) to the "higher consciousness" which has the power to bring the source of the fear fully into consciousness on both a conceptual and feeling level, *i.e.*, a re-experiencing. Secondly, it is a surrender of the attachment to a way of being that perpetuates the fear and the allowing of the "higher consciousness" to effect an integration of what was once unconscious blocked energy with the conscious aspects of our being. This is done on a mental, emotional and physical level by a consciousness (higher or spiritual) that both knows and has the power to effect such an integration. This implies, as I have indicated in the beginning of the paper, a will to surrender our attachment to a certain egoic construction of consciousness that has been formed through a particular conditioning process (in Jeff's case extreme fear). It is a recognition that we are "more" than the mental, emotional and physical forces that we have received, primarily from our parents, and that this "more" or higher consciousness has the power to effect a healing, an expansion and ultimately a transformation of our mental, vital and physical instruments.

To illustrate the nature and power of consecration more concretely I would like to discuss some of Jeff's experiences. In the beginning of the therapy he remembered vaguely an experience of his father yelling at his brother and saying, "Do you want to end up going to the clinic (psychiatric) like Jeff?" Jeff concentrated on the images

that he could remember of this event and offered and opened them to the higher consciousness. After ten or fifteen minutes a tremendous amount of fear and anger started to manifest accompanied by a much more vivid seeing and feeling of the early scene (7 or 8 years). There was also the accompanying feeling of release of tension and being filled with a peace and a more harmonious energy. As we continued to consecrate the expanded image and feelings other scenes appeared such as Jeff seated at the dinner table being ridiculed for having "something wrong" with him by his parents, brother and sister. The re-experiencing of events such as these come often as "revelations" not only with a vivid seeing, but also with smells, hearing and other sensations. The more deeply or fully they are experienced, the stronger the descent of "new energy", peace and calm. Events have been re-experienced that were not remembered even vaguely and remembered events become much more conscious on a mental, emotional and physical level. There is a clear indication that one's entire psychological history can be brought into consciousness in detail. Even very subtle details can become conscious: for example, Jeff could see the different shades of color of grass in his backyard when he was five or six, where the dog used to defecate, and feel and hear how his father's milk truck accelerated.

It must be emphasized here that this experiencing does not have the quality of what we usually call memory but rather that of a happening again whereby one could fully participate (sensationally, emotionally and conceptually) without becoming completely identified. This was extremely important for Jeff since it was precisely the fear of becoming identified or "stuck" in a particular space of consciousness that he associated with "going crazy". He has found through consecration that there is the experience of a "more" or wider consciousness that supports his re-experiencing. The experience which was once unconscious but, nevertheless, exerted pressure (fear, anger, "going crazy") on the waking consciousness can be brought fully into consciousness without the fear of being overwhelmed, lost or identified with the original experiencing. The mode of being or living (mental, vital, physical) that was originally erected to protect against the fear can "let go" or surrender and allow the unconscious energy to come to consciousness:

Fear is a phenomenon of unconsciousness. It is a kind of anguish that comes from ignorance. One does not know the nature of a certain thing, does not know its effect or what will happen, does not know the consequences of one's acts, ... one fears what one does not know.¹

It is crucial in a healing context to allow what is unconscious energy that causes pain and limits growth to come fully into consciousness. "... that which knows has no fear. That which is perfectly awake, which is quite conscious, and which knows, has no fear."²

Jeff has experienced many times during our work that what was at one time experienced as the fear of "going crazy" gradually diminishes and disappears as more

unconscious fears become fully conscious, *i.e.*, are re-experienced. What has made this experiencing without identification possible is the experienced presence of a higher and wider consciousness which both stands behind and also brings into waking consciousness what was originally subconscious. This has been a crucial experience for Jeff since his enormous fear and mistrust of people has made it very difficult to enter into an intimate trusting relationship with a therapist. Although there is a strong feeling of trust and love which has been established between us as a result of our work, Jeff acknowledges that the central object of trust is the higher consciousness which he has experienced at work in him. There have been many times when he felt that he must stop the therapy, when I became a person he could not trust. At these times he could only look to his higher self. He has gradually discovered that what was once almost a total preoccupation or identification with a way of being whose primary reason for existing was to protect itself against the unconscious source of fear is now seen in a much larger context of consciousness.

We discovered during our work that Jeff used to have a recurring "dream", "reverie" or "fantasy" that a devil was coming to smother him as he lay in his bed. As we consecrated that image he gradually saw that the devil was his father who attempted to kill him when he was a small baby. We have discovered through Jeff seeing his father's face, hearing his laugh and threats and generally experiencing his lack of control that he was plagued by a deeply ingrained sadism. Jeff's father was very jealous of the attention that his mother would give Jeff after his birth. In this connection Jeff experienced, during a period of consecration, his mother holding and kissing him. He could smell her perfume and feel her kiss which filled him with pleasure but in the next moment a huge fear came up in him and he felt that he was going to lose consciousness. It has been confirmed through other experiences that Jeff's father would either physically hurt him or humiliate him for being near his mother. He further conditioned Jeff to actually feel an aversion for little girls when he was quite small. We have found also that Jeff's mother condoned the brutality of his father and even incited him to acts of violence. There is a great deal of evidence to show that she used Jeff to work out her sado-masochistic relationship with his father. Jeff was caught between two disturbed people who were bent on destroying him.

It is again not possible to discuss here the complexities of this process of conditioning that has made Jeff's life so filled with pain and suffering. This will be done later in a much broader context. What Jeff has allowed to come into consciousness through a yogic approach he, by his own testimony, could never have allowed before. He has experienced profoundly the presence and force of the higher consciousness which is allowing him to face these deep fears and to lead a more creative and open life. He is experiencing that:

One of the great remedies for conquering fear is to face boldly what one fears. You are put face to face with the danger you fear, and you fear it no longer. The fear disappears.³

The key realization that Jeff has experienced during the course of our work is that "therapy" and a continuing evolution of consciousness in life are not separate. In this context Jeff is beginning to rediscover his creative ability as a poet. Although it is too early to speak of lasting changes, there have been periods when the obsessive-compulsive behavior has been arrested. As the fear diminishes this kind of behavior will gradually disappear since it is used to protect the egoic construction of consciousness against the fear. Jeff is, for the first time in his life, confident that he can not only eliminate the fear which has crippled him but moreover develop all of the deeply felt potential in him. He is able to face and act in many areas of his life that before would have seemed to be impossible. The unfolding of his higher self is an evolutionary process, not only in what we call a psychotherapeutic context but in a continuing manifestation of this higher consciousness through the interplay of the mental, vital and physical instruments.

In conclusion I would like to note briefly some of the implications of an evolutionary psychology for the therapist. A yogic approach to therapy which essentially means opening to the healing power of a consciousness beyond the mental implies that the therapist, and not only the person he is working with, be open to the power of that consciousness. I have experienced, during my work with several people, the force of the higher consciousness working in me in terms of bringing to consciousness certain unconscious forces needed for my own growth. Beyond this I find more and more that I must surrender my mental judgements about what "should happen" next in the therapy. I have found that by consecrating the work that is being done in the therapy many things happen in a creative way that were not planned mentally. When a person consecrates an image, feeling or physical manifestation I also consecrate or open to the higher consciousness. I am especially aware of the enhanced capacity of intuiting what a person is feeling or asking key questions that open the other person to realizations or feelings that are momentarily crucial for his growth in consciousness. There is the realization that both myself and the other person are instruments for the manifestation of the higher consciousness. In this regard, it is a common experience to feel the force of the higher consciousness as the other person is experiencing a breakthrough or a deep movement of consciousness. The implication here is that the higher consciousness works in a collective as well as an individual way. The role of therapist as one who "knows" what is to happen and how it is to come about must be re-evaluated in light of an evolutionary psychology, the knowledge and power of which reside in a consciousness beyond but not excluding the mental, vital and physical organization presently called man.

(Concluded)

CHARLES MALONEY

NOTES

¹ The Mother, "Questions and Answers", *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 1. (Feb. 1974), p. 79. ² *Ibid*, p. 79 ³ *Ibid*

THEY

THEY climb up mountains laughing
Laughing as they climb
And it does not hurt them
For pain they have no time

They fall off clifftops laughing
Laughing as they fall
And it does not kill them
They glide their way through all

They meet in mid-air laughing
Laughing as they meet
And it does not hurt them
Their meeting is so sweet

They part in mid-air laughing
Laughing as they part
And it does not kill them.
To separate the heart

They meet and fuse and part again
Forever going round and round
And it does not hurt them
To stay above the ground

They come together and fly and fall
Forever going up and down
And it does not kill them
To often come aground

They are two white blissful subtle bodies
On a celestial affair
And it has not hurt them
To leave the Earth for air

They will be Earth's two strongest people
When at long last they come down
And it will not kill them
To be looked upon as clowns

AJIT S. RAO

**LOTUS-FLAME
OR
SURYAMAN**

(Continued from the issue of March 1975)

BOOK I: CANTO 2 *(Contd.)*

PREGNANT, seeking, the mire could sense a light
Break on its stirring clay with force unborn —
The bird of thought with wings of dusk and light,
The mystic fluttering from beyond the shores
Rousing the life, moving the deeps of its drowse.
A strange and nameless pang shattered its poise;
A hand unseen touched its unmoving space,
A cry was heard from behind the dormant veil.
Somewhere a revelation flamed and awoke
Casting its glory on the life and mire,
The frozen mud now beat with secret life
And the sperm of thought touched its deeps undivined,
And roused its ancient somnolence and the pit.
Then a sudden violence shook its blinded base.
A volcano burst with vehemence and fire
And the night's bed-rock lay bare to the gaze of the sun.
The cracks healed slowly like the mouth of a cave.
The fret and rush gave way to lull and peace.
But a hand of light had touched the abysmal walls,
A bright finger of bliss visited dull nooks.
A white wonder left its deep trace in the mire.
The memory of a kiss, a touch, a clasp
Between the aerial vistas and the sod.
The earth could feel the ancient Mother's arms
Embrace its lost limbs with forgotten love,
A wonder-grace that built the Universe.
The gods of life and mind gazed down like skies
Pouring their bounties on the upgazing globe,
Priests of a new and amazing hour divine.
Slowly the trace of wounds of Night was healed.
Slowly life came back to its accustomed dreams
And white rapture and brilliant conquering winds,
The felicity of a new-born child in Time.

Sovereign intensity of love outpoured
 From hidden source and uncaught vastnesses.
 Wisdom's first index pointed to the Beyond
 With its world-escaping beatitude and light.
 The earth and Lotus-Flame arose like waves
 Antheming the advent of a luminous world.
 His co-eval Flame smiled and waited unseen
 For the measureless moment of their union.

End of Canto II, Book I.

ROMEN

THY CHILDREN

ONLY in Thee is my faith's nest of peace,
 To be nurtured by Thy love my one endeavour;
 I yearn to live in eternal ecstasies
 Wreathing myself around Thy feet for ever.

Men foolishly foster doubts about Thy care,
 Ignoring Thy presence wallow in mud-life,
 Indeed they succeed being caught in deception's snare
 And take false charm, false love, false wealth to wife.

Endless is Thy Compassion and Thy Grace,
 Thou wilt not abandon those who are sincere,
 These Thou overstriding Time's and Nature's pace,
 Wilt ever, under Thy wings, keep lovingly near.

Defaulters may blame, lament or court dejection,
 But Thy children shall never be denied protection.

HAR KRISHAN SINGH

FLOWER OF LOVE

A STORY FOR CHILDREN

ONCE there was a princess of unearthly beauty. She had long black hair, darker than a night without a moon. Round her lips played ceaselessly an expression of profound love for all life. Her forehead was as clear and pure as the sky in spring and it rose above her tender face like a dome of eternal wisdom. Most beautiful of all were her large brown eyes, shining into this world like stars of truth; but their gaze was infinitely sad, for they had to witness so much suffering and so much human weakness.

The princess, whose name was 'Flower of Love', used to sit next to the throne of her father when he took decisions and when his people expressed their wishes and opinions. Ananda — that was the king's name — always listened to the counsels of his daughter, for he knew what a glorious soul and what a pure heart lived in her. In this way all his decisions were made out of true love for the people, but the princess saw again and again that in most human beings only a little goodness was married with an overwhelming measure of hard-heartedness and falsehood, and that this impurity caused even the most noble of kingly decrees to fail.

Many a night Flower of Love spent in deep meditation. She knew the true beauty and the wonderful world of divine selflessness, but she did not know the path which would lead all men to that state of true happiness. Therefore her face remained always grave and sad. But it happened one night that Flower of Love, while sleeping, saw a golden light descending gently upon her and heard a voice saying,

"Man will change only when you no longer wish to keep anything for yourself."

Then the light rose up again and as if through a faint haze she heard the voice saying softly,

"Let a portrait of you be made."

Flower of Love opened her eyes and it was as if she could still see a little of the beautiful golden light in her chamber. She sat up and gazed through the large window to the stars. It was the hour of dawn and a fine veil of mist covered the palace garden stretching before her room.

"All my treasures and all my love and knowledge are at the service of Man. What is it that I still want to keep for myself?" The princess could not find the answer. Finally she said to herself, "I will follow the advice of the Voice. My portrait shall be painted. For what purpose I do not know, but it may be a greater wisdom which gave me this advice."

At this moment the birds in the palace garden awoke and burst into their morning hymn.

"As if they were jubilantly singing 'yes, yes'," the Princess thought in wonder. And in the shining purple-red sky the sun majestically rose.

That same day the Princess told her father about her experience. Ananda listened attentively to his daughter and then said,

“Do not hesitate to obey the Voice. Today you shall look for an artist who is able to make the likeness of your noble face.”

*
**

In the city where the King's palace stood there was also an entire quarter where lived the most gifted painters, musicians, poets and sculptors, for the arts were highly appreciated by King Ananda. They lived in pleasant houses surrounded by gardens through which flowed cheerfully murmuring streams.

The painters and sculptors displayed the finest of their works in the open air so that everyone might enjoy them and the poets read out their verses in a shady grove which had been especially planted for them. The musicians played in a large white marble hall, in which plays could also be presented. Into that quarter the princess drove in her delicate ivory coach. From house to house she went, looking for the finest of painters. She was welcomed with joy and honour everywhere and the news of her arrival soon spread all over the artists' quarter. How much each of them wished to be the chosen one! For no one had ever before been allowed to make a painting of a member of the royal family.

The day drew towards its end, but the princess was still undecided, when she saw a narrow path disappearing into a rose garden. She suddenly knew that this path would lead her to her goal. She entered the garden and came into a small silent house with huge windows. She could not see anyone, so she entered.

The light of the sinking sun poured its golden peace into the room; a delicious smell of fine colours permeated the air and paintings of wondrous beauty were hanging on the walls. The room was divided by a blue velvet curtain. Indrawn and deeply moved, Flower of Love was standing before the paintings when a tall, slim man appeared from behind the curtain. The Princess turned around and met two eyes which looked at her like magnificent planets out of the silence of space. The man knelt down before her in reverence and said,

‘ Be welcome, O Flower of Love. What is your wish?’

“I have come to have my portrait painted,” she said, and he answered,

“Of all joys it is the greatest, noble princess.”

“Then let us begin soon, Master — and tell me your name.”

“I am called Sat-Chit,” he replied and prepared a chair for the princess.

Then followed a long time of silence while Sat-Chit painted the portrait of Flower of Love. Like a magic wand his brush moved over the canvas and each time his eyes looked into hers the heart of the princess was filled with unspeakable joy. She thought, “What fate has led me here? All my heart is drowned in love for him.” She became aware that for some moments Sat-Chit had been quietly looking at her.

“Your portrait is completed,” he said and placed it before the Princess. She saw a face full of heavenly beauty, and a sadness deeper than the world.

“You have fathomed my soul,” she whispered. “You are no ordinary artist.”

A smile of sincere gratitude illumined his face.

“Your recognition is a priceless treasure to me, Princess,” he said in a tone full of devotion. After a short hesitation he continued, “But permit me one question, O Flower of Love. What is it that makes you so sad? You, who are so beautiful and filled with such deep goodness and humility? Excuse me if I am immodest, but I feel as if I would myself carry a part of your burden — although I am only a humble painter in your service.”

The Princess rose and stood before Sat-Chit in all her nobility. She looked at him and in that moment their hearts grew one and they recognised the marvel of Love, which, since times immemorial, again and again has bloomed between human beings.

“The night before you came I had a dream of you,” he said with a smile. “A golden light carried you from heaven down into the rose garden. We looked at each other and your sadness vanished. Your face shone with bliss, and then the light again lifted you up into the heights. On a rose leaf I found a golden drop which carefully I brought into my house, and then I awoke. It was early in the morning, and the birds were just beginning their song of dawn.”

A tremendous force seemed to flood the princess. She told Sat-Chit of her attempt for a just and loving direction of the people, and of the incapacity of men who by their insincerity hindered the better world which she so much wished to be realised. Sat-Chit listened to the princess, deeply moved, as they slowly walked through the rose-garden. It was already dark and candles were flickering in the houses of the artists. From the grove one could faintly hear the voice of a poet and the streams murmured gently and glittered in the silver light of the moon. In the calm sky they could see the evening star. Finally the princess told of her dream and what the Voice had said.

“Now I understand, Sat-Chit. In order for man really to change, one must give up all longing.” Thus spoke the princess and he answered, “You noble soul, your pure love cannot remain between us two. It flows out into the hearts of all men. You are the Flower of Love of us all and I will always be your sincere servant.”

Thus the Princess renounced the fulfilment of the only wish which she had for herself — a life together with Sat-Chit — so that her love from then on could pour itself out in perfect selflessness into all life and all men. Tenderly she took his hand and in it, as a farewell, she wept one shining golden tear. Then they parted. Sat-Chit remained motionless in the darkened rose-garden, in his hand the priceless golden tear. The Princess walked gracefully down the path, her noble head erect. The sad expression had disappeared from her face — now it was transfigured by the beauty of bliss. As if called by magic, all the poets, musicians and painters came out of their houses and stood along both sides of the street and Flower of Love went to her ivory coach. They all bowed to her in reverence and were filled with joy.

From that day on, men were changed as if by a mysterious invisible spell. Now, whoever came to King Ananda had first to wait in a room where hung the portrait

of the Princess; and whoever looked at her sad face at once remembered all his pettiness and insincerity. Thus it happened that many who stood before the portrait suddenly had to weep bitterly. Only after seeing the painting was one allowed to enter the King's Hall. There the Princess sat at the foot of the throne and smiled with sweet love at all; and in that moment they forgot their desires, and were content; if they had questions they suddenly heard the answers in their hearts.

More and more people from all over the land came to receive silently the smile of Flower of Love, and many among them left the King's Palace as if new-born, ready to reject all insincerity from their hearts, for they had seen the beauty, and the happiness, of pure Love.

MICHEL KLOSTERMANN

(Translated from the German)

THE HAWK

THE golden hawk of swift wings
Has vanished into the woods;
His cage and hood,—futile things,
He has soared through the clouds.

Will he come and alight on our wrist?
Will he hearken to our call?
Will he come, cleaving the mist,
And again be our thrall?

No small prey can lure him now
He has learnt to prize the vast;
The distant purple-fruited bough
Has beckoned him at last!

He will drink from silver rills,
He will soar to the moon;
He will perch on orange hills
And float in the meridian noon.

KAMALAKANTO

SEMINAR ON NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION*

PRINCIPLES OF APPROACH AND IMPLEMENTATION

FOR any social programme to be meaningful and effective the individual must be accepted as the key. Secondly the orientation of life must be changed; it should proceed from within outward.

Individuals who accept this discipline of inner change should organise groups of like-minded individuals for the preparation of the needed climate and the means for the execution of the programmes. These Groups or Centres are to be autonomous bodies deriving guidance direct from their source of Inspiration — The Mother.

The background of this work is the spiritual vision of India as the Soul of the World. The aim is to rise out of the various imperfections, deformations and deviations that characterise the present society towards increasing enlightenment, progression and perfection. The endeavour at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram is the working model for this purpose.

These Centres, as they develop, should have distinct wings for the development of the Youth and of Women. Facilities should be provided for a sound programme of physical education as a strong physical base is indispensable for a total growth. Apart from studies, exercises in self-discipline etc., there should be a dedication to social service for the Divine.

Naturally the main motive force for this movement is spiritual. But this spirituality is not anything that touches only a part of oneself; it is the central truth around which everything is to be organised. Each individual must exert himself to awaken in himself his soul or psychic centre utilising all means that are available: study of spiritual literature, especially that of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, elevating association (*satsang*), practice of psychological disciplines like prayer, meditation, etc. to deepen and heighten the level of one's consciousness. It is equally important to normalise these elevations of consciousness by expressing them in day-to-day life.

Studies must be undertaken in order to recover the spiritual bases of religions and ethics as they have come down to us; side by side explorations into the future expressions of spirituality must be promoted. This endeavour — both individual and collective — is best carried on under the guidance of the Ashram.

Application of the Teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for the integration of personality, resolution of the conflict between the individual and the collectivity, integration of values of the different civilisations of the East and the West, on the lines attempted at Auroville, must be given priority.

The importance of the right type of education that alone can help in an organised realisation of these Ideals cannot be gainsaid. A total change in the attitude to the child who is to be educated, a radical change in the role of the teacher and in the

* Held at the Ashram Theatre (February 18-20, 1975). This is the text of the integrated statement at the end of the proceedings.

relation between the teacher and the taught, are called for. The ideal education is that which is imperceptibly woven into every detail of day-to-day life of the student. Taking advantage of the breakdown in the current systems of education in the country, the encouraging results of the modes of integral education developed in the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education must be propagated. Teachers from outside who are open to new ideas and feel the need to revise their methods must be encouraged and helped to imbibe the spirit and learn the techniques of the New Education. Orientation camps in the Ashram may be provided under expert guidance. A cell may be created at the Centre of Education to keep contact with teachers and groups who are interested in New Education and to guide them. A periodical bulletin on the subject may also be considered for a larger propagation. A small committee is recommended to be set up to maintain the link between teachers in the Ashram and teachers outside who are trying to work out this programme in their respective institutions to the extent that is possible.

Lastly the state of economy in the country is in a state of self-perpetuating drift. A breakthrough has to be effected and that can be done if:

1. A positive will to achieve is developed in the people;
2. A professional collective management system is allowed to replace the existing, outmoded system of proprietary management;
3. The individual is educated to identify himself with the collectivity.
4. There is a change of attitude to wealth, and money is recognised to be a Power of the Divine to be used for the manifestation of the Highest in all walks of life.

The individual should change — in his attitude and living. He must create an area of influence around himself and generate action. Existing models of such an enterprise should be publicised.

It should be recognised that problems cannot be solved at the same level of consciousness that has given rise to them. One has to rise to a higher level and seek their solution.

There is much in the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that could help in revolutionising the attitude and creating new dimensions in the field of economy. Committees must be set up to collect apposite passages on these themes and present them in an effective manner. There should also be a kind of clearing-house Committee to receive queries from those interested and feed them with the right answers from the Teachings of the Masters.

It is strongly recommended that to guide and direct such a many-sided movement of regeneration as this, a Central Coordinating Committee be set up in Pondicherry with a representative each from the participating organisations and a convener from the Ashram. This Committee may coopt members for specific assignments as and when necessary. The Committee must meet periodically and review the developments.

Joint Seminars of the type now held must be organised at least once a year to take stock and prepare programmes for the next years.

EUROPE 1974

A TRAVELOGUE

(Continued from the issue of March 1975)

(3)

WE touched down at the international airport in Rome at eight o'clock in the morning. It was the middle of June, but the air was cool and bracing, and after the Indian heat and the sultry atmosphere a very pleasant change.

To a student of European history, the very contact with Roman soil gives a thrill. So, this is the far-famed Eternal City, the capital of the great Empire over which the Caesars ruled, this the hub of the ancient world to which all minds once turned. And before the Caesars sat on their throne, long before them in fact, there was the colossal figure of Hannibal the Carthaginian, standing on the African shore and pointing to his men Rome their eternal enemy whom they must capture or destroy.... This is the land of Seneca and Cicero, of Virgil and Horace, the place of martyrdom of St. Paul the delegate of Christ, the place where the Emperor Constantine atoned for the sins of his predecessors by raising Christianity to its pride of place. Rome is the founder of European law, the great pioneer in political experimenting with monarchy and oligarchy, dictatorship and democracy, city-state and empire. All-conquering Julius Caesar and Saraswati's child Augustus made it what it was to become. A Nero could see it burn, and Attila the Hun might hope to march upon it.... But Rome lives on, its glory undiminished to this day.

As we come out of the air terminal, we are confronted with a gigantic statue of Leonardo da Vinci, standing with his brush and scroll in one hand and a scale and other geometrical instruments in the other. One is at once reminded that here is the land of Italy where the Renaissance of Europe began and reached its highest point, a new birth that was to make Europe the leader of the world for centuries, even as ancient Rome led Europe for a millennium.

The drive to the city is a joy. The surrounding country is hilly and undulating, covered with green Mediterranean shrubs and trees and flowers. The road runs through the hills and at places comes out into the open, from where one can see the Seven Hills made vivid in the legend of Remus and Romulus. One could almost see the mythic she-wolf feeding the two infant founders of this fabulous city. A lifelike model of the scene can be viewed today in Rome's Municipal building. Who can say that the age of mysteries is over?

*
**

Rome is a beautiful city. Augustus Caesar, say the history books, found Rome a

city of bricks and turned them into marble. Much of the marble has gone during the last two thousand years. But the later Romans rebuilt many of the suburbs and other outlying parts — the centre could not be touched as it contained so many sacred relics of the past — but this time not with marble but with ornamental bricks for the façades. And what lovely bricks they are and how well the new buildings are designed! No new Augustus, but the Olympic Games gave the needed push.

The seven hills of Rome are clearly visible and there are smaller mounds where the natural foliage has been left undisturbed. Yet, the slopes nearer the city streets are kept in good trim with well-preserved grassy lawns and flower-bearing shrubs. The streets of the old city are naturally not so wide as the new roads built on the outskirts. But even the narrowest lanes are paved with tarmac and, strangely enough, sufficiently wide in most cases to admit a modern luxury coach in single file. There are a number of parks, and Piazzas abound — the Italian equivalent of a French Place or an English Square — often with a gushing fountain and decorative sculpture in their midst. A street is a Via, meant perhaps at one time to be a place where most of one's life was to be spent. Even today, we saw some people, not all of them very young children, nor the residents of slums either, playing ball in the evening over the heads of passersby and nobody seemed to mind. Of course one does not play ball in the Via Veneto where the jet set throngs the fashionable cafés on the sidewalk and the costliest cars and dresses are to be seen.

A strange peculiarity of almost all the great cities of Europe is that there is either a river or a number of canals flowing through them. That gives them an added charm. Through the heart of Rome flows the Tiber, Tibéré to the Romans, a small canal, though, according to Indian standards. On its banks once strolled the mighty Caesars. And Cleopatra might have stooped to see her reflection in the rippling waters below. Today the cars dash along the banks at fantastic speed, and Egypt has no queens to send. The new and the old jostle side by side in Rome, as in every other ancient city. But they seldom collide.

**

We often hear that the Romans are a loud people, and that the Italians talk too volubly. This may or may not be true, but when we reached our hotel, a neat and beautiful little spot somewhere among the new suburbs of Rome, we automatically began to ask ourselves, "Where has everybody gone?" — so silent was the place.

At ten, after a shower and a continental breakfast, we moved out to "do" the city, and see the "musts". The ancient Forum was our first "must". In front was one of seven hills covered with green foliage. Between the hill and the modern road lay the excavations. Standing on the road we gazed down some thirty feet to look at the great Forum. What we saw with the naked eye was not really much: a few marble pillars and broken bits of marble and other rubble that covered an area of some hundred square feet. But the scene was awe-inspiring because of the things we did not see. This then was the place where old Cato thundered day in and day out, "Delenda

est Carthago", "Carthage must be destroyed", or else Rome could not prosper. Here was the place where the grave Senators sat wrapped in their togas, and gave their fiat to build the greatest empire Europe had seen to date. Julius Caesar gave vent here to his proud boast, "Veni, vidi, vici", "I came, I saw, I conquered." Here too he may have uttered his last words of disappointment, "Et tu, Brute?" at the treachery of a lifelong friend. One could almost hear Antony perorating in Shakespearean style over the dead body of Caesar. One stands here hypnotised for a few minutes, when suddenly a woman shouts from her booth, "Gelati", and the crowd of tourists, including many in our company, rush in with their dollar bills. Italian ice-cream is the best in the world....

*
**

So, the days pass, in visiting one monument after another.

Vatican City, the little enclave assigned to the Pope after his dethronement by the secular state in 1871, is naturally the best show-piece in town. The most remarkable spot within this City is, apart from the great Cathedral and the Sistine Chapel (both of which I have already mentioned earlier), the sumptuous Art Gallery. It has such a stupendous collection of painting and tapestry, marble busts and statuary that it should take at least a fortnight to do it any justice. Our time was limited, and we had to come out of it rather sad at heart. Another time perhaps....

We came down the staircase leading towards St. Peter's. This was the private staircase used by the Pope alone at one time. The carpet and the wall ornaments are no longer there, but one can well imagine what the place looked like when a Hildebrand or Innocent III — the latter not so innocent, though, as the name suggests — ruled Europe in all his glory. The Pontifex Maximus governed western Christendom as no emperor had done before, enthroning and dethroning at his will proud sovereigns who were but secular heads of state, placing an entire country under the interdict so that no prayers could be said or the dead given a decent burial, making a Henry IV stand penitent in the rain in beggar's clothes before the closed doors of the Papal residence at Canossa until he asked for pardon. Even the haughty Bismarck of yesterday had to "go to Canossa", in spirit though not in body, because he had dared offend the Pope by his secularising decrees, even though the Pope chose to call himself a "prisoner" in the Vatican. A rare Frederick II might put up a heroic fight against the Popes, but he too, one of the strongest medieval Emperors in the "Holy Roman" line, had his crown snatched away because he had displeased the Pontifex. "Gia", naturally of course, as the proud Roman of today would tell you.

After this awe-inspiring scene, we were next taken to rather macabre Catacombs on the outskirts of Rome, where they have preserved the graves of early Christian martyrs. Twenty square miles of subterranean passages, dimly lit and giving an eerie sensation as one moves about these relics of a savage past. Why tourists are taken there on specially arranged trips it is difficult to understand. Perhaps it is to serve as a reminder that such things could happen again, as they have happened again in our day,

at Dachau for example, only a few miles away from the smiling woodlands as we pass by them in Germany. The only redeeming feature of the Catacombs was the charming young man with a fine Oxford accent who hailed from Tamil Nad; he showed us round.

The Coliseum was the other "sight" of Rome which I found truly abominable. The guide waxed eloquent over its architectural details, truly a marvel of mathematics for those early times. But as he went on computing all the tons of stone and masonry that had gone into the making of this colossus, I kept on repeating to myself, "Not Roman glory, but the most hideous extant specimen of Roman shame." No better monument to the brutal side of the old Roman character could be conceived, a place where naked men in their hundreds were paraded in the sight of fifty thousand respectable citizens, including the Emperor himself, and driven to their certain death under the claws of savage animals. This splendid piece of architecture should be banished from sight. Instead, they illuminate it at night!

The evening drive through the city of Rome when all the lights are on is a delightful experience: We purposely avoided the Coliseum; but the illuminations at Tivoli are an unforgettable experience. The nearest to it we have are the Vrindavan Gardens near Mysore.

(To be continued)

CHANDAUNA & SANAT K. BANERJI

TO OUR MOTHER THE INFINITE

INVOCATION AT THE MATRIMANDIR CONSTRUCTION SITE

DRUNK on your suns
 we dance with noon
 and pans of fierce
 cement-mix
 up and
 up passing hand over
 heart the substance
 to house your streams
 of Force;
 in dream
 intense we pore and
 pour our selves over

and into the shuttered
 caverns;
 more and more!
 level by level vi-
 brating our Matter
 till from its blue-
 metal base
 rise up
 piers of our offering:
 Come, Infinity, Mother!
 Home in this sphere, our
 love concrete.

SEYRIL
Peace, Auroville

SEVEN LIVES

A SAGA OF THE GODS AND THE GROWING SOUL

(Concluded from the issue of March 1975)

CHAPTER IX

ONCE the Golden One and Mélisande had passed between the waiting gods and fallen pale and limp at the Great One's feet, Silent Daughter gathered both of them in her arms at last and sped them to her havens of roseate peace. Unicorn meanwhile flew before them in anticipation of its mistress's long-awaited homecoming to their mountain retreat, and the Divine Master retired that the goddess may proceed with her patient work.

By the time Silent Daughter reached the spot she sought, Mélisande was already on her way to recovery from the long travail of her earth life and the sudden, wrenching shock of untimely death. After all, hers had not been a creative life into which she had had to fling the very energies of her soul, but one of pure service through which for the most part she had been able to stay inwardly detached from what she was given to do. So for her the transition from physical to non-physical life was comparatively easy, and inflicted no scars such as the ones Unicorn had borne when he had returned from the body of Vir Bahadur; nor did any clinging attachments or unrequited memories drag upon her being. All she needed to do was to simply lie down beside Silent Daughter, rest her head against Unicorn's downy flank and sink into a dreamless sleep in which her ethereal energies could be restored to her.

For the Golden One it could not be so straightforward. A third time he had returned as a mortally wounded warrior cut down at the height of his human power and vigour, keen with the love of life and all it meant to him — anxious for the victory he would not see. And it was difficult for him to cope with the fretfulness of his own being — involved as it was in the love of the task, involved in seeing the world grow and change around him, involved in watching man transcend himself.... Yes, it was difficult to die at such a time.

The exasperation of it faded from him only slowly, ever so slowly, before the deeper truth emerged again — the truth as the gods knew it and the Divine One knew it — that the human instrument had been withdrawn not through an excruciating mischance but through a predestined calculation. It had happened as it was meant to happen — though the Dark Lord would boast till the end of his days (the Golden One could almost hear the vain words) that the Light and its minions were his playthings and he could topple them for sport whenever it pleased him.

The Golden One turned now to look at Silent Daughter, for though he had been sitting beside her for some time his agitation had been so great that he had scarcely noticed her presence. He found her eyes upon him, for she had been gazing at him from

the beginning, waiting for the storm within him to subside, waiting for the detachment that inevitably comes to a soul after an earthly life, either quickly or slowly, painfully and grudgingly or freely and with relief. Still, she found the dismay and sense of loss lingering in her beloved's eyes so that she was forced to speak — "No more, my dearest one, no more. Cast it all from you now. As surely as the sun rises in the east over the earth globe, the work will proceed. The Divine Master himself is seeing to it. But a new sun and a new horizon wait for you, if only you would consent to sleep. Come, my love, and shed your earthly care just one more time."

She held out her golden arms and he resisted no longer. Tearing himself from the last knots of concern that held him to the formation that had so recently been Eric Torgeir, he sank against the goddess's shoulder and lost himself in that profoundest of sleeps — the sleep of the yet unborn.

The Golden One awoke again only after an unconscionable length of time during which both Mélisande and Unicorn had departed and Silent Daughter had long since slipped into an absorbing trance. He found himself lying once more with his head in her lap, her hands upon his forehead, and he found too that he had been cleansed of all traces of earthly life, his last existence swimming in his recollection as a dream of long ago among other dreams, each as dearly cherished as another in the peculiar way a soul has of cherishing its treasures like so many distinctive and precious gems in a collection to be lovingly preserved forever.

As he stirred in his new wakefulness, Silent Daughter too returned to herself and smiled upon him delightedly. For he was as resplendent before her gaze as a newborn star, and all the freshness of heaven glimmered in his limbs, while his eyes flashed with a light they had never had before — the light of a new vision and a new awakening. A triumph too that had not been there previously was in his answering smile as he looked back at her and said, "This time it will be different, won't it?"

"Yes," she replied as the ecstasy of her own being played about her in dancing whorls like sun-illuminated smoke.

"You know how it will be?" he pressed on like an irrepressible child, while he pushed himself impetuously to his knees.

"Tell me," she whispered.

"I will — I must." And the words burst from him in a thrilled and melodious torrent, words that spoke of dreams that were about to become realities: "This time, my most dearly beloved, will be the life we have waited for —"

"The life you have died for so many times"

"The life the Dark One swore would never come, for you should have become his bride long since, and the earth would have wept into eternity for shame at the joy that it would never know, except in the transient cells and cages of Death's menagerie. But you are free, my love; you have already been carried forward in the midst of the Sun God's hosts, and the Dark One has shrunk forever before the onslaught with his little prison cages crashing about him in ruin and disarray. So that this time all the barred divisions will have disappeared. Now surely I will find that earth and heaven

are one, time is one, and man is one with himself, while you, treasure of my heart, can smile at me through all things, all beings, all faces as you were created to do, with your gentle and beguiling delight. Behind you and through you moreover, your mother, the Universal Creatrix of all things, must certainly embrace all we see and know in her exquisite grasp and her compelling passion, while the pure splendour of the Divine Master's peace sets each living being afloat in its tranquil ecstasy."

"Yes, beloved, and now at last even your White Lion can come forward and roam the earth unhindered —"

"Indeed, for it shall belong to him and his noble sweetness. Yet when I think of it, to what shall the earth not belong, for what can be left out when the cage bars are gone? Even those of time — so that the essence of the past can merge with that of the present and future? Dearest one, for me, it shall belong to Apollo and Athene. The glades of Arcadia and the summits of Olympus shall live around me in the spirit as they once lived, for none shall deny them their reality. Within me the boy hero Asterion shall come alive again rejoicing in his forests, his horses and the common Being he saw alike in the eagle and the waves of the Aegean Sea. Similarly the Roman youth will once again emerge, his having been the most blessed childhood of any man's, sheltered as it was by the poignant and marvellous presence of his goddess mother. And surely no day shall unfold without the kindly watchful gaze of Shukratma and the deities of the Himalayan hermit valley —"

"And Shankaradev?"

"Yes, beloved. I will return to Deogarh and reclaim every particle of the love, so long orphaned, that we poured out on her rocks and plains, and lay it at my Divine Master's feet as our offering, for to speak the truth it was the dearest of all our lives."

"Then to vindicate Edward Everton, poor martyr that he was."

"Yes, the truth he realized I will now be able to manifest, for the science of the intellect shall no longer plague man's mind and shuttle through the narrow cavities of his brain, so obvious shall be the free touch of the Creator's hand in all life. And finally even Eric's ghost shall I lay at rest, for I know that while I slept, long since did the earth realize his aims and surpass them by an inner unity of which only the gods could have dreamed while Eric lived and strove."

"Correctly have you sensed the turn of events, my Golden One, resplendent as you are with all the mature and burnished beauty of your past that glistens in your skin and eyes and limbs and, further, spreads behind you like a kingly, multi-jewelled cloak trailing back into the dawns of time. Return now to a new world and reap the harvests for which you have lived and died so many times under the Divine One's golden banner. The world as you will find it is the most precious of the boons he has so far presented to his adored children."

Tears once again sprang to the Golden One's eyes to hear her speak of his Lord, the immensity of his divine love, and the magnitude of the divine boons with which his son had been so often blessed. Nor had he ever been able to find any sufficient means to express his gratitude but to weep the clear sparkling tears that welled from his soul,

and these he now allowed to drop on Silent Daughter's outspread hands. As he wept he realized his time of departure had come — he could feel the beginnings of the familiar magnetic pull upon his being that would draw him away — and he cried out to the Divine Master, for he yearned to be near him once again before he set out upon his next life's journey. At once the Great One was there, and both Silent Daughter and the Golden One knelt at his feet so that the Golden One's tears fell upon them and were swallowed up in their radiance.

Then at last the Golden One rose and drew slowly away like a ship leaving a much-loved harbour, fading from view as the coils of birth gathered him in for a new earthly existence. Silent Daughter for her part watched his departure with a joy she had not felt for many ages, and then curled up at her divine parent's feet, which in all the Universe was her favourite spot, to fall into a trance of ecstatic contentment.

When the Golden One awoke he immediately knew that all he had foreseen of earth's new life was indeed the truth. For though he was only an hour old, he was no infant as humanity had previously known infancy, but a sentient being with a form and limbs as capable of conscious movement as his mind, his heart, and his inner wells of knowledge and recollection. So it was that he still remembered everything, saw and understood all around him with his soul's memory, his soul's vision, and his soul's wisdom, and even now felt within him the familiar and beloved presence of the White Lion and his Divine Master.

Furthermore, upon looking around him, he immediately knew himself to be cradled in the heart of the Himalayas, with the gentle summer sun playing upon the oak and pine beyond the opening of the cocoon-shaped dwelling wedged within the mountain rock, in which he lay. The walls and floor of the cocoon, though immaculately white, radiated a soothing heat, and the green cushions on which he was lying echoed the green of the trees outside. The breath and pulse of the earth and sky that flowed into him were the same that Hiranyamaya and Shukratma had known. Yet this time a new sense of unity and vastness vibrated through the air and coursed through his just-born body. It was a unity in which the fjords mingled, as also the woods and lawns of Pennsylvania, the languorous beauty of the Roman Empire's Adriatic coast, and the enchanted wonder of ancient Arcadia, while from within him flowed the bewitched essence of the battlefields of Troy and that of beloved Deogarh. As he had foretold, all these various parts of him had merged in his heart and sought now their final fulfilment of synthesis and a total expression of a soul's identity.

Now all at once he thought of rising and climbing out of the cocoon house to greet this new world he knew and felt to be as undivided as himself. He could already move, not as well as he would later be able to do, for his powers of mobility both mental and physical were as yet untried, but he could make a start.

Beyond as a magnet to his curiosity, lay a world to which harmony had returned — the long-lost harmony of the divine dream — where man lived among the trees and grasses, the rocks, the plains and the mountains as the kind, luminous spirit the Divine One had destined him to be when he had first conceived him from the womb

of a struggling beast. No champion of murder and rapine now, the new man nurtured the earth with his budding godly love so that even the creatures of the forest had begun to graze and forage by his doors without fear. Indeed, as the Golden One edged tentatively towards the large window-like opening of the cocoon, a pair of purple, Himalayan magpies, with their sweeping tails and orange crests, regarded him from just beyond the sill with a fearless curiosity. Before them they saw a small, gently glowing figure that radiated a vague, sun-like warmth, and they felt an instinctive kinship to it behind the external curiosity of their bright, beady eyes. The Golden One, for his part, looked back at the birds and smiled as one would smile at a pet dog, warmly, welcomingly and without any sense of surprise at their proximity. Acknowledging his response, the magpies cocked their heads at him for a moment, croaked absent-mindedly, and then returned to their worm-picking among the grass tufts.

At the same time, the Golden One allowed his mind to drift forward and onward beyond the opening of his cocoon room, and it occurred to him that perhaps somewhere in the new race of man he would find Shukratma once more, or the Divine Master himself, seated serenely in all his white magnificence amidst some enchanted forest grove. Anything was possible in this earth as the Divine One had recreated it, and he longed to be able to explore and experience it for himself. Already he could sense the gods calling from the valleys, the ridges and the sky outside, the wind god catching the trees in his wild, momentary embrace, and the tree deities trembling with the pleasure of his touch; the earth spirit pulsating with life, and the victorious Sun God enfolding her — the great primeval earth mother and his unveiled and splendid bride — with ardent delight after having wrested her so dearly from the Dark Lord's shrouds.

The Dark Lord? The Golden One pondered over the unaccustomed words that had sprung out of his own memory and suddenly realized how old, disused and obsolete they seemed. For his soul reminded him that the Dark One lived no longer. He had already become the pale, vanishing shadow of the retreating night in the great white fire that sprang from the Universal Creatrix's impassioned heart.

But what of himself and other men? Slowly, the just-born mind of the Golden One drifted back to his own situation, and an overwhelming desire gripped him to see the person who would nurture him as a mother. Would it be Silent Daughter herself? She had said nothing before his departure and somehow Fate had not given him time to ask. Now he must know immediately. In a burst of impatience he cried out as he crouched by the opening of his cocoon room that looked out into the exquisite green world of the pine-clad Himalayan valley. His voice emerged as a long, melodious note that wove its way through the trees. The magpies looked up momentarily and skipped away a few steps before resuming their grass picking. The Golden One glanced at them imploringly as though to ask them where his mother was and they responded with a display of tail-wagging self-confidence that would have given courage to an abandoned mouse. Reassured, the Golden One let out a long breath and waited.

After a short time she appeared making her way towards him along a small, steep path that wound between the rocks and tree trunks. A tall, beautiful being in white robes with a carriage of a dignity unknown to even the noblest queens of the old human race, she came up to him and cradled his face between her white, slender hands. Looking up into her eyes he knew it was not his beloved goddess, but another that bore her imprint to an extraordinary degree. All that he had ever known or remembered of Silent Daughter looked into his face from the hazel wonder of his mother's eyes. All that he had ever cherished of the goddess's love and beauty rained down upon him from her marvellous smile. Even Silent Daughter's touch came to him through her hands and arms, while a voice spoke to him in his heart which was indeed Silent Daughter's own voice:

"My splendid one," she said, "Enjoy the fruits of victory, for the world seeks to embrace you, and the Divine One awaits your presence in the fields of his delight and his luminous action. Your mother whom you see before you is my final gift to you. Accept her as the last remembrance of our love and our long travail together which will now find its true and culminating meaning in the life before you. Keep her with you till I return, for now I too must continue on my own voyage, which I had already embarked upon some centuries ago, and pursue it as the Divine Mother wishes, for even the gods can outwear their ancient forms and must then develop new ones." With those words, before the Golden One's incredulous gaze the formation that had been Silent Daughter dissolved to leave behind only a crystal-bright well of anticipation in the depths of the Golden One's heart — a well of liquified prayers and tears that had been the jewel Silent Daughter had presented to him before he returned to life as Edward Everton.

Momentarily anguish filled the Golden One. He looked desperately at his mother and was immediately relieved for he realized that she had understood. Kneeling down before him, she said in a voice like a drifting song, "My darling, would you deny the gods their destiny, those that have done everything for you, lived for you, watched over your every step, and poured out their love for you at every instant? Allow her then to recreate her own brilliant future as she has created yours, and believe at the same time that she will never truly leave you, for she cannot, the essence that binds you being indissoluble."

At last, reassured, he laid his head on her shoulder, for he was still only a few hours old and tired easily from the strain of his concern. In that position he fell blissfully asleep, all his impatience to explore the world temporarily forgotten while he dreamt of the wonders he would know and see when he would be strong enough to immerse himself in this new life of the Divine Master's delight.

(Concluded)

BINA BRAGG

“LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL”

(Continued from the issue of March 1975)

AUROVILLE—THE CITY OF SRI AUROBINDO

I

OVER three centuries ago François Martin founded the city of Pondicherry. On February 28, 1968 the Mother founded Auroville — the city for “those who thirst for progress and aspire to a higher and truer life”. In 1964 the idea of Auroville had started developing when an office had been opened in Pondicherry and primary studies made.

Auroville began in a dramatic way. The *Times of India* wrote: “The simple ceremony represented history in the making with all countries in the world participating in the first attempt ever to provide mankind with ‘a place where all human beings could live as citizens of the world!’”

The function assumed the form and colour of a big festival and the Government of Pondicherry declared February 28 a public holiday. About 30 buses were engaged to take us to the ceremonial ground. Two thousand, mainly visitors, were taken by the first trip. We the Ashramites numbering another two thousand went by the second trip. The police regulated the whole route and directed the one-way traffic. All the buses moving in a line presented a very pleasing sight.

There was no road, only some primitive paths, cattle trails, were there. The date fixed for the function was very near. Within 20 days these were turned into a motorable road by the young people of the Ashram and Auroville. They had to work day and night. All the arrangements for the function and the amphitheatre were done under the supervision of “Nata”, an Italian engineer named thus by the Mother. Before coming here he had read, while in America, the French version of *Essays on the Gita* several times. Since joining the Ashram he has translated several major works of Sri Aurobindo into Italian and is the editor of an Italian quarterly, *Domani* (*Tomorrow*), devoted to the Ideals of Sri Aurobindo. The first settlement “Promesse” at Auroville was also built under his supervision. It has six model houses and a maternity centre where the first citizen of Auroville — Auroson, son of a German father and a Swedish mother — was born.

It may be added here that among those from Auroville who took active part in building the road was a young Englishman, John Fisher, of indomitable will, who spent all the energy he could muster in building the road. When returning home he gave to Auroville all he could, including the car in which he had been touring and had come from Nepal. When Navajata, during his foreign tour, met him in London, these words burst from his joyous heart: “The road was my offering to Auroville. I am collecting money and will come again.”

While on the way, still far away from the ceremonial ground, the first thing that caught our eyes was a big crimson-coloured balloon, floating high in the air. A welcome arch was created for the occasion. *The Indian Express* gave a vivid description of the whole function. To quote a few lines:

“It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the Mother’s project. When the world is torn asunder by suspicion and hostility, when India herself is forgetting its great ideals, she has come forward to set up nothing less than a world city, to live in which what is needed is not mundane qualifications but to become ‘the willing servitor of the Divine consciousness’. The function was organised with the efficiency one expects of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. On the stroke of 10.30 a.m. the commencement gong was sounded. Then the entire gathering was electrified by the message of the Mother as she said in French, ‘Greetings from Auroville to all men of goodwill.’

“This was followed by the Mother reading the charter of Auroville in French, the translations of which were read in Tamil, Sanskrit, Chinese, Dutch, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Tibetan.”

An extract from *The Statesman*:

“The earth which went into the foundation urn came from many lands including China, South Africa, Portugal, the Soviet Union, Ghana, Britain, America, Japan, Ceylon, Nepal, Israel and the United Arab Republic. The world’s first experimental city will cover an area of 15 square miles adjoining the Bay of Bengal. The Sri Aurobindo Society, which is sponsoring the project, has estimated its overall cost at well over 500 crores.

“The township, if it materialises, may well be the dream city of the world: no beggars, no unemployment, no caste, no communal or religious disharmony and no scramble for material wealth. This is indeed a difficult dream to realise but if the sponsors succeed Auroville may become a modern-day Shangrila.”

When the ceremony was over, we had our lunch in the open space, served by the Ashram Dining Room. Each of us was given a packet of cooked food, which contained even a spoon. According to Ravindra 5000 persons had their meals there. Such was the beginning of this “town dedicated to the Youth of the World”.

Let me narrate here the significant story of a teenager — young in mind and spirit just returned from his six months’ foreign tour (1974). He is so simple and unassuming in his nature that he does not impress you at all at first sight. He is purely a product of our Centre of Education. He joined the kindergarten at the age of four and passed his engineering course from our institution conducted by the Ashram engineers.

When he was in the first year of his engineering course, he went to see the Mother on his birthday. The Mother looked at him intently and asked with a loving smile:

“Are you interested in Auroville?”

“Yes, Mother,” was his reply.

“Would you like to work with Roger?”

“If it is the Mother’s wish,” he submitted in a quiet tone.

He is now the Secretary of the Auroville Planning Group.

Auroville wants to represent the best in the culture of each nation. About three months before his departure to Canada, various kinds of questions began to gather in his mind. What does Bharat Nivas stand for? What is culture? Can culture be made a living experience? If so, how to create such an environment and how to live it? What is expected of us and what is it that we should achieve? Mere thinking will not take us far; we must act, and in a true way.

To find an answer to these key questions P's enquiring mind turned to the pages of Sri Aurobindo's *Foundations of Indian Culture*.

Then something unexpected happened. Of a sudden on March 9 (1974) he received a cablegram inviting him to join the Canada World Youth Conference in Ottawa, Canada. On acceptance he received a ticket by air. The ticket was open for one year, he could break his journey anywhere and charter his own route so long as he covered a certain air-mileage. The authorities had paid for it \$1800. P was asked to join by April 21 (1974). He had to run a lot to secure a passport. No time was left for any kind of preparation yet he did very well.

This was P's first venture. How did he make his first mark? A raw youth from India could hardly be expected to speak in French. So the Executive Director of the organisation spoke in English. When he answered in French, there was a surprise especially to hear his French accent. They asked whether P had studied in France?

There was a lot of discussion in the conference on the definition of culture. P remained a silent witness for a while. At the end he presented what he had read in *The Foundations of Indian Culture*. It proved so impressive that the Director distributed his version to all the delegates. On the last day of the conference the Director expressed his desire to meet him personally and explained why P was invited. The organisers had wanted to help the youth from all over the world to find their future in Auroville. What could Auroville offer to them by participation? They were willing to bear the travelling, lodging and boarding expenses of Aurovilians.

The Canada World Youth Organisation is an organisation subsidised by the Canadian Government. It undertakes programmes of youth exchange between Canada and twenty other countries. The youth selected visit a country to live its life and culture for 6 months and then return home accompanied by the youth of the country they visited. These in turn spend 6 months likewise. Some of those who underwent this exchange programme expressed their feelings. Their comments were very interesting. They all remarked that, when they visited a country and lived its culture for some time, then, on returning home, they for the first time in their life questioned what their own culture was. But there was nothing in the exchange programme which helped or allowed them to delve further to find answers to these queries.

P suggested to them a two-phased programme. In the first the youth should be given the responsibility to organise the discovery of their own culture, its past, its present and its future direction. They should take the help of those who can say something from their experience, each in his own field of culture. This first phase is con-

fined to their own country.

The second phase would be the youth coming to live in Auroville and study to see how their culture could be so presented that it could be made a living experience (as is the vision of the Mother). They would have to understand and study these objectives and participate in the designing and building of their cultural environment wherein the pavilion or structure would be an integral part of the cultural presentation.

The Executive Director was very excited by this proposal and a project was drafted on these lines. Also the Unesco Youth Division have been given the same project since they too evinced great interest. Further results of their processing are awaited.

On similar lines P would like to pursue the Indian Cultural Participation in Bharat Nivas. Ideas and suggestions would be most welcome to him, since Bharat Nivas, being the first to come up, would automatically set the example for other countries to follow. Hence we have a tremendous responsibility in rediscovering our culture and letting India rise to her great mission for which Bharat Nivas would be a tool.

P's foreign tour programme was for two months but it extended to six months during which he visited Canada, America, England, Holland, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Iran, and everywhere he received a happy welcome. He had to bear practically no expenses for his stay or travel. P found that everywhere in the world, in the U.N.O, in the UNESCO, in the Universities, in private organisations there is an earnest searching for true values. They still hesitate to use the word “Spirituality” but they are searching for the “quality of life” with a “holistic”, *i.e.* global, approach to life. They look up to Auroville as one of the practical experiments in these directions and eagerly await its results, difficulties and successes. They are also eager to participate and bring whatever knowledge and help they can if fields for their participation and collaboration can be identified.

It is remarkable that P took no notes, spoke extempore wherever he was called and never felt nervous. He explained his experience as: “We cannot see our exact future, but there is one who is ever ready to lend a helping hand if we take the step and make the effort. Occasions are not rare when one finds everything was prearranged and this I am speaking from personal experience. I could see what I had to do and what my steps should be.”

There is no sense of pride in P's nature, no desire for applause and appreciation. The glamour of the West could not lure this young man of 25. He belongs to a big family among whom there are eight youngsters and all of them are sincere aspirants. P says the Western people's height of efficiency and love for beauty and perfection are worth emulating.

One cannot fail to mark in this budding adolescent the growth of inner and outer qualities, the main elements of the Ashram's educational system.

Such are the youths who hold the future. What we elders are unable to achieve, we hope they will realise.

(To be continued)

NARAYAN PRASAD

BOOKS IN THE BALANCE

Koshishto Karish: A Novel in Gujerati by *Sunanda*, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry-2, pp. 239, price Rs. 8/-

THIS is a pleasing little novel by the authoress whose short stories and plays for children are already well-known.

It is her first attempt at fiction on a large scale. She has to be congratulated for her understanding of human nature with its frailties as well as its higher aspirations, all of which are well expressed in a simple style. Her heroine Purvi, though a bit emotional, can be quite firm when firmness is needed in dealing with her friends and relatives. Purvi is best understood when we come to know later of her visits to Sri Aurobindo's Ashram at Pondicherry and of her contact with the Divine Mother.

Having been separated since early childhood from her parents in Africa and sent to her uncle and aunt in Bombay to be brought up as their own child, she suffered a lot psychologically but she bears them no grudge for their thoughtless and harsh treatment of her and even insists on being married from her foster-parents' place. Sugami, her lover and later her husband, whom she has met under very unusual circumstances, is hard put to it at first to understand his wife's desire to keep their relationship on a higher level. Afterwards when he understands the motive behind it, he not only consents but appreciates her wishes and abides by them.

Zankruti (her ever-amusing friend), Hemantbhar (her friend's lover), as well as Dr. Parshad, Hemraj and others, each represents a type of human nature, and not the least interesting is their eagerness to help (each in his or her own way) in the successful establishment of a small colony for the workers of the factory (International Enterprise) where both Sugami and Dr. Parshad are serving.

We wish the authoress success and look forward to reading many more of her works.

LALITA

Coming shortly

SELECTIONS

from

SAVITRI

256 Pages

Rs. 15/-

SRI AUROBINDO BOOKS DISTRIBUTION AGENCY
PONDICHERRY-605002
